Working in the factories of the Industrial Revolution was hazardous. The factory workers faced safety hazards, health hazards, and cruel treatment.

Factory machines were the latest technology, and factory owners were anxious to get their machines up and running. Safety was not a major concern. Dangerous parts of machines were not screened off. Machines were not equipped with features to make them shut off in case of an accident.

Machine operators in textile mills, many of them young women, often had to reach over and around operating machinery as they did their job. Children hired as scavengers had to crawl under the machines to retrieve loose bits of cotton. Slightly older children hired as piecers had to step up onto the machines to tie loose threads back together. Injuries to these workers were frequent. In mill towns, many workers could be seen who had lost an arm or a leg to the machinery.

Workers in the factories developed medical problems, too. The pollution and dust that were constantly in the air led to the illness known as mill fever. It was a dreaded disease, and it took many lives.

Factory work caused physical deformities which especially affected children since their bones were still forming. The constant stooping under machines wore out the arches of the children's feet. Many found that after a few years of factory work, their arches simply gave way.

Ankle injuries were also common. Factory workers - men, women, and children - were on their feet all day long, for as long as fifteen hours. This constant standing led to many ankle injuries.

Workers' knees also gave out after a number of years in the factory. Once a person's knees could no longer support his weight, the knees began to turn inward leading to the injury known as knock-knees.

As a result of these illnesses, many workers in their thirties and even younger found that they were no longer able to keep up with their work. They were forced to give up their jobs and had little chance of finding new work. Workers who were injured in accidents on the job were simply fired.

Another hazard faced by factory workers, particularly children, was cruel treatment. Overseers found that children got sleepy by the middle of the afternoon. The children needed rest and were too tired to stay on their feet and stay alert. In order to keep them working beyond their limit, some overseers beat the children.

Workers of all ages suffered from fatigue. The thirteen to fifteen hour day, the constant standing, and the six day work week were hard on everyone.

Men, women, and children who worked in the factories faced some or all of these hazards. The factory workers who fared the worst were the ones least able to defend themselves - the factory children. As these young people walked to their jobs each morning, they showed their courage. During their long days of tedious work, they must have daydreamed about a better future.
3. The illness caused by the dust in the air was known as ______.
   A. factory fever
   B. mill fever
   C. mill dust
   D. dust allergy

4. The young children who worked as scavengers often suffered ______ injuries.
   A. knee
   B. hand
   C. elbow
   D. foot

5. Knock-knees were caused by constant ______.
   A. standing
   B. running
   C. lifting
   D. changing positions

6. From the information in this article, you can infer that most factory workers continued to work in the factories until they retired at the age of sixty-five.
   A. true
   B. false

7. Children were most likely to get beaten by the overseer in the afternoon because that was the time when they became restless and playful.
   A. true
   B. false

8. The word fatigue means ______.
   A. injury
   B. weakness
   C. tiredness
   D. boredom

List and describe several hazards faced by factory workers during the Industrial Revolution.
Why do you think children were allowed to work in factories during the time of the Industrial Revolution?