

## David Livingstone: Mill Boy

An educational worksheet for children aged 9-13 published by  
[LivingstoneOnline.org](http://LivingstoneOnline.org)

In *Missionary Travels*, his first book, David wrote about his education.

At the age of ten I was put into the factory as a "piecer", to aid by my earnings in lessening her anxiety. With a part of my first week's wages I purchased Ruddiman's "Rudiments of Latin", and pursued the study of that language for many years afterward, with unabated ardor, at an evening school, which met between the hours of eight and ten. The dictionary part of my labors was followed up till twelve o'clock, or later, if my mother did not interfere by jumping up and snatching the books out of my hands. I had to be back in the factory by six in the morning, and continue my work, with intervals for breakfast and dinner, till eight o'clock at night. I read in this way many of the classical authors, and knew Virgil and Horace better at sixteen than I do now. Our schoolmaster—happily still alive—was supported in part by the company; he was attentive and kind, and so moderate in his charges that all who wished for education might have obtained it. Many availed themselves of the privilege; and some of my schoolfellows now rank in positions far above what they appeared ever likely to come to when in the village school.

David Livingstone



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## Experiences and Outcomes:

### Literacy and English

Students can practice deep reading and textual analysis to explore Livingstone's letters.

### Social Studies

Students can explore historical and cultural changes, especially the ways in which school has changed in the past 150 years.

## Suggested Questions:

How many hours did David work in the cotton mill per day?

How many hours did David go to school each day?

Imagine you are David. Describe your day. What do you do and how do you feel?

## Further Reading:

David worked in a cotton mill that made cloth using machines that worked much more quickly than people could weave by hand. The image below shows a man operating a cotton machine similar to the machines in the mill at Blantyre. Click on the image to see a film from 1937 showing textiles being made. The film is held at the Scottish Screen Archive in the National Library of Scotland.

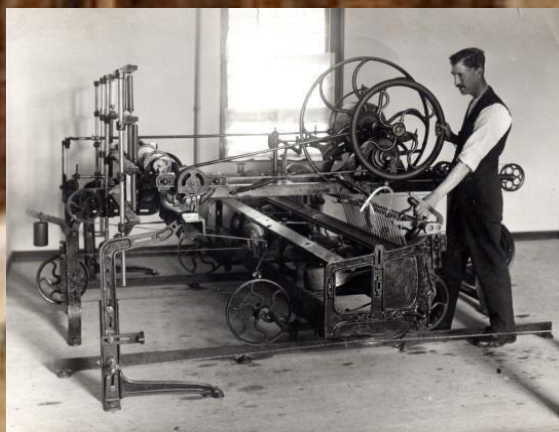


Image courtesy of the David Livingstone Centre

This educational resource was developed by Kate Simpson and Megan Ward, who are staff of *Livingstone Online* ([livingstoneonline.org](http://livingstoneonline.org)). *Livingstone Online* is the leading site for learning more about the life and writings of David Livingstone. Visit our site to discover an array of images and texts that supplement the educational material found in this worksheet.