



Year 9 into Year 10

English Transition Work

19th Century Non-Fiction



- **Complete all tasks in this booklet.**
- **Deadline for submission- Week of 7th September 2026**

Task 1: Read the following article.

Education History: A Brief History of Ragged Schools

Ragged schools is a name commonly given after about 1840 to the many independently established 19th century charity schools in the United Kingdom which provided entirely free education and, in most cases, food, clothing, lodging and other home missionary services for those too poor to pay. In many ways the movement embodied the notion of education as human development.

Often they were established in poor working class districts of the rapidly expanding industrial towns. Lord Shaftesbury eventually came to be the chairman of Ragged schools and championed the movement for thirty nine years. Several different schools claim to have been the first truly free school for poor or 'ragged' people but free education is a tradition which spans time and culture.

The 'crippled cobbler' as he was sometimes called, began teaching poor children without charging fees, in 1818. Rev Dr Thomas Guthrie (1780-1873) of Edinburgh was also an early promoter of free schooling for working class children. He started one of the first Scottish free schools for the poor.

Sheriff Watson established another in Scotland in 1841, in Aberdeen – initially for boys only, until its sister school opened 1843 for girls, and a mixed school in 1845. From here the movement spread to Dundee and other parts of Scotland, partly by the work of Thomas Guthrie.

Close to London, the tailor Thomas Cranfield offered free schooling to the poor at an early date. Having gained educational experience at a Sunday school on Kingsland Road, Hackney, near London, in 1798 he established a day school on Kent Street near London Bridge and began to admit significant numbers of poor children without any payment.

By the time of his death in 1838, he had built up an organization of nineteen Sunday, night and infants schools situated in the poorest parts of London that offered their services free to many children of poor families, and destitute children.

Adoption of the name 'Ragged School' The term Ragged School appears to have been first introduced by the London City Mission. Beginning in 1835, it appointed paid missionaries and lay agents to assist the poor with a wide range of free charitable help from clothing to basic education (including Penny Banks, Clothing Clubs, Bands of Hope, and Soup Kitchens).

Charles Dickens' visit to the Field Lane Ragged School in 1843 inspired him to write A Christmas Carol. Appalled by what he saw at Field Lane (now Farringdon Road), he initially intended to write a pamphlet on the plight of poor children, but realised a story would have more impact.

By 1844 there were at least twenty free schools for the poor in London maintained by the London City Mission, by the work of chapels, and philanthropists. An association was suggested to share

experience and promote their common cause. To this end four people (Locke, Moutlon, Morrison and Starey) connected to the existing free schools formed a steering group.

The Ragged Schools Union

In 'Sixty Years of Waifdom', C.J. Montague wrote about the formation of the Ragged School Union. Four men met and prayed together in a private house off the Gray's Inn Road. On April 11th, in 1844, Mr Locke, a wollen-draper; Mr. Moulton, a dealer in second-hand tools; Mr. Morrison, a City Missionary, and Mr Starey formed the beginnings of the Ragged Schools Union.

The Ragged Schools Union was duly established; it later became the Shaftesbury Society (since 2007 part of Liveability). Wealthy individuals such as Angela Burdett-Coutts gave large sums of money to the Ragged Schools Union.

The Ragged School Union begun with about 200 teachers in 1844. This grew to about 1600 teachers by 1851. By 1867, some 226 Sunday Ragged Schools, 204 Day Schools and 207 Evening Schools provided a free education for about 26,000 pupils.

The chairman for the first 39 years of the Ragged Schools Union was the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, and in this time an estimated 300,000 destitute children received a free education. Under his chairmanship, the free school movement became respectable, even fashionable, attracting the attention of many wealthy philanthropists.

Today, a Ragged School Museum is open (founded 1990), at Copperfield Road, Tower Hamlets. It occupies buildings were previously used by Dr Barnardo to house what is said to have been the largest Ragged School in London. The history of the Ragged schools is extensive and arguably involved in different forms, involvement from every part of UK culture.

Taken from <https://raggeduniversity.co.uk/2012/08/08/history-ragged-schools-2/>

Task 2: Answer the questions below in full sentences. Write your answers in the space provided under each question.

1. Where were most Ragged Schools established?

2. What were Ragged Schools designed to provide?

3. Who became the chairman of Ragged Schools?

4. Who was Thomas Cranfield?

5. What did Charles Dickens' visit to the Field Lane Ragged School inspire him to do?

6. What was he originally going to write?

7. How many teachers did The Ragged School Union begin with in 1844?

8. **Challenge:** To what extent have conditions in schools improved since the 19th century? Write a short paragraph to explain your ideas.

Task 3: Read the source attached (*'Source for tasks 3, 4 and 5- Ragged School'*), which is from the diary of the Master of a London Ragged school.

Task 4: How does the writer use language to express their opinions about the Ragged School? Fill in at least two rows of the table below to present your ideas.

<u>Point</u>	<u>Evidence</u>	<u>Analysis</u>	<u>Effect</u>
What is the writer's opinion about the Ragged School?	How do you know this?	Which words/phrases stand out and what impressions are created? What other methods are used and what impressions are created?	How do you feel as a reader, based on the writer's opinions, textual evidence and words/methods used by the writer?

Task 5: How does the writer use language to express their opinions about the Ragged School?

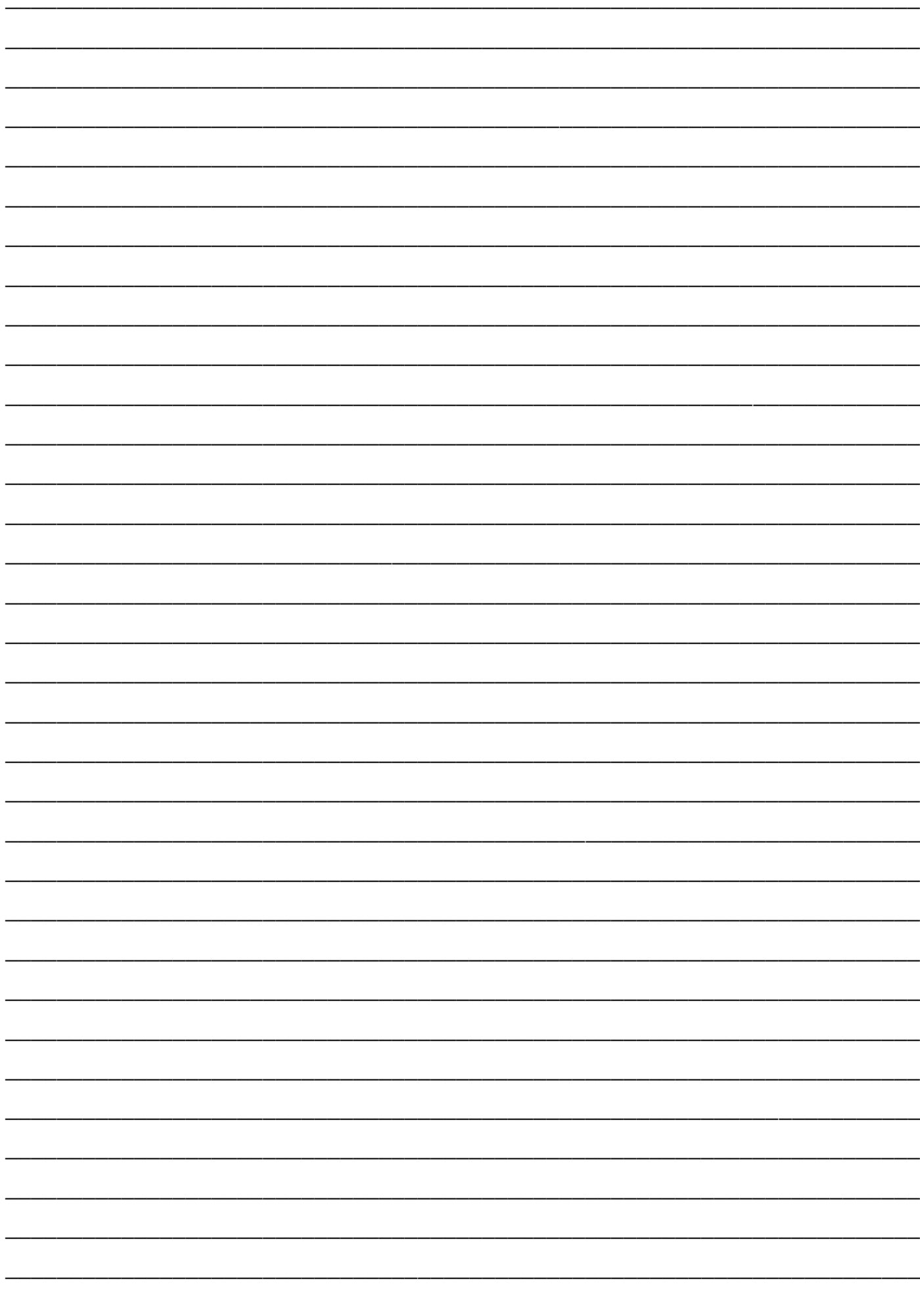
Write an analytical paragraph to answer this question.

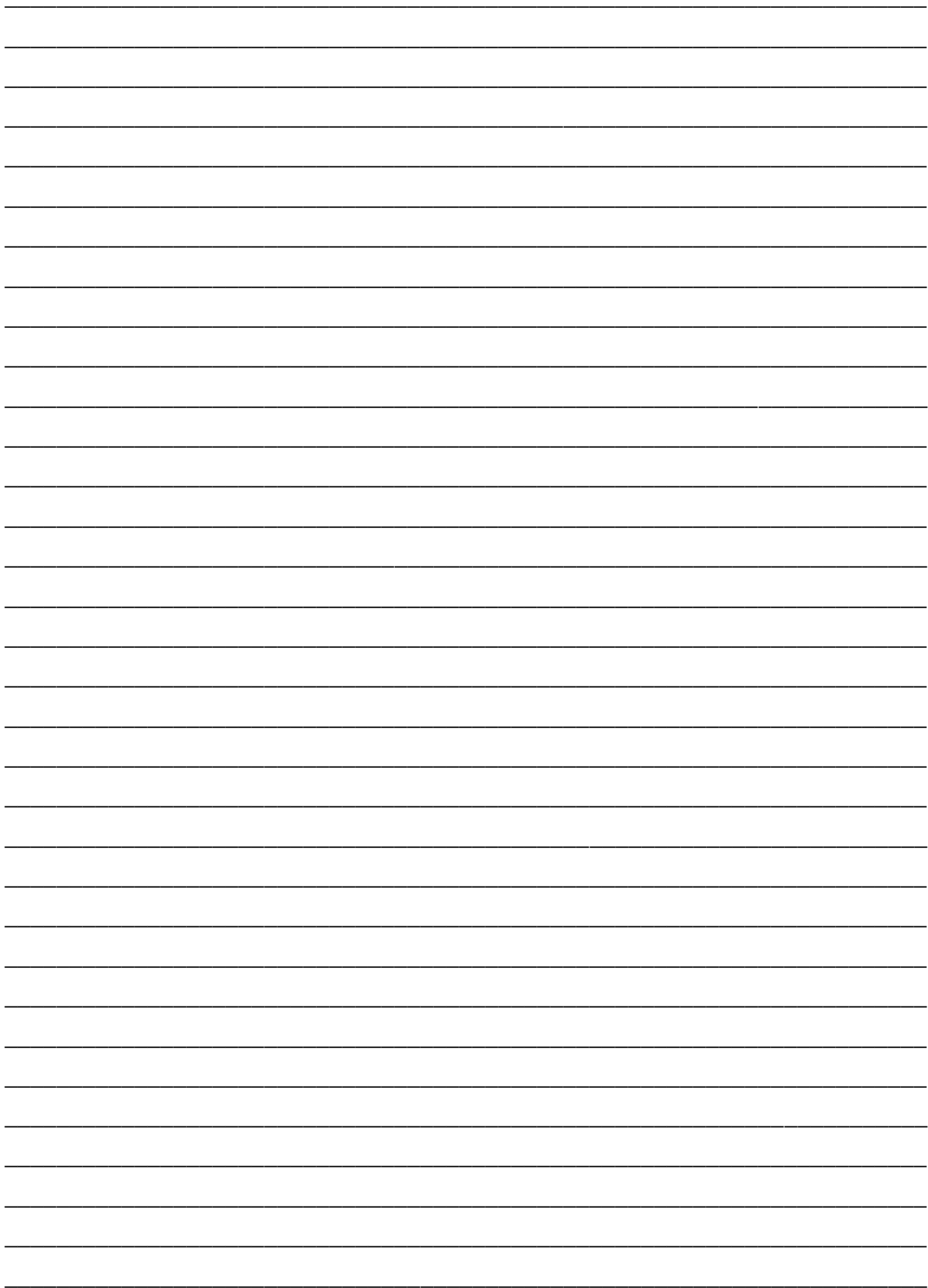
- Refer to the slide below and challenge criteria to aid you.
- Write your answer in full sentences, in the space provided on the next two pages.
- Check your work at the end of writing.

Section of paragraph	What to include	Sentence starters
Point	• This should form your topic sentence for your paragraph, which presents a clear argument.	• <i>The writer presents...</i> • <i>Through the character/text/extract, it is clearly visible that...</i> • <i>One way the character/writer/text demonstrates...</i>
Evidence	• Embed words or short and sharp quotes throughout your paragraph	• <i>This is evident when...</i> • <i>The writer describes... as "..."</i> • <i>The writer uses the word/phrase "..."</i> • <i>The quote "... " has been used.</i>
Analysis	• Zoom in on specific words/phrases/techniques in your quotes and explain why they are powerful, what they could symbolise or the tone created by the writer. • You should make clear connections between pieces of evidence here.	• <i>When examining the use of the word/quote "... " it is clear that...</i> • <i>The writer has used this phrase to demonstrate...</i> • <i>The writer's use of "...", "... " and "... " creates an image of...</i> • <i>The noun/verb/adjective "... " clearly symbolises...</i> • <i>The use of the word/phrase "... " also supports this idea because...</i>
Effect	• What might the writer be trying to show readers? • Explain how readers may respond, react or feel. • You may also make links between readers during the time the text was set/published and 21st century readers to compare different reactions.	• <i>Through the writer's description/portrayal/use of..., they are clearly reflecting...</i> • <i>The writer is trying to show readers/the audience...</i> • <i>One possible way of interpreting this is...</i> • <i>Readers/an audience may respond/react by thinking/feeling...</i> • <i>Similarly/On the other hand, a reader/audience during the ... era may have...</i>
Link	• Link your analysis back to your point, to keep your ideas and arguments clear and relevant.	• <i>Ultimately, the writer has presented...</i> • <i>Linking back to the point...</i>

Challenge criteria

- Include at least three quotations in your paragraph.
- Alternative interpretations- offer at least two layers of analysis per quotation
- Effect- comment on effects of methods on 2026 readers, compared to effects on Victorian readers.
- Make links to context- what could the writer be trying to reveal about life in the 19th century?





Optional Challenge Tasks

1. Victorian Voices Investigation

Choose a 19th-century non-fiction writer, explorer, journalist, scientist or social reformer. Research their work and explain:

- What issue or topic they wrote about.
- Who their audience was.
- How they tried to persuade or inform readers.
- Whether their ideas would still be convincing today.

Extension: Compare their methods with a modern newspaper article, speech, or online campaign.

2. Language Detective

Find a short extract (200–500 words) from a 19th-century non-fiction text, such as a speech, travel writing, diary or newspaper report.

Annotate the extract by identifying:

- Five examples of persuasive or descriptive language.
- Three examples of language that sounds old-fashioned.
- The writer's purpose and intended audience.

Extension: Write a paragraph explaining how language has changed since the 1800s.

3. Then and Now Comparison

Choose one issue that was important in the 19th century. For example:

- Child labour
- Public health
- Education
- Women's rights
- Poverty
- Industrialisation

Compare how it is presented in a 19th-century non-fiction text with how it is explored today.

Include:

- Similarities
- Differences
- Which text you think is more effective and why.

Extension: Include quotations from both texts to support your comparisons.

4. Become a Victorian Journalist

Imagine you are a journalist living in the 1800s. Write a newspaper report (400–600 words) about a significant event, such as:

- The opening of a railway
- A factory accident
- A scientific discovery
- A public protest
- An important speech

Try to imitate the formal style and detailed reporting of Victorian newspapers.

Extension: Add a headline and an editorial paragraph expressing an opinion.

5. Debate the Past

Read a famous 19th-century speech or persuasive article and then answer the following:

- What is the writer arguing?
- Which persuasive techniques are most effective?
- What might someone from this era have disagreed with?
- Do you agree with the writer? Explain your reasoning using evidence.

Extension: Write a modern version of one paragraph using contemporary language while keeping the original message.

6. Presentation Task

Create a presentation or short video titled "Why 19th-Century Non-Fiction Still Matters."

- Include examples from at least three different texts and explain what modern readers can still learn from them.

Extension: Answer the following question: *"If Victorian era texts (fiction or non-fiction) were written today, what would need to change and what could stay the same?"* Support your ideas with evidence from the texts and your wider reading.