

Name _____



Labor Union Stance

Directions: Read the short debate prompt below. Then, decide your position: **for** or **against** labor unions during the Industrial Revolution. Use the provided statements to build your argument. Write a short response (5-7 sentences) defending your side and explain how unions affected industrial progress.

Debate Prompt: During the Industrial Revolution, workers began organizing into labor unions to demand better wages, safer working conditions, and shorter hours. Some believed unions were essential to protect workers from factory owners' unfair practices. Others argued that unions slowed production, caused strikes, and hurt economic growth.

Were labor unions necessary for industrial-era progress, or did they cause more harm than good?

Supporting Statements (Choose and use evidence):

Arguments FOR unions:

- Workers faced 12-16 hour days in unsafe factories with little pay.
- Child labor was widespread, with no protections.
- Early unions fought for safety laws and shorter workdays.
- Collective bargaining gave workers a voice against powerful industrialists.

Arguments AGAINST unions:

- Strikes sometimes shut down entire industries and hurt families' income.
- Business owners claimed unions discouraged innovation and competition.
- Factory growth provided jobs for millions who might otherwise have been unemployed.
- Governments feared unrest and economic instability caused by union protests.