

Horrible Histories

"Work, Terrible Work"

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In good old Queen Victoria's day
Industrial revolution
Bosses said 'Please, we need more employees'
We needed a solution

Who will climb our chimneys?
Who will power our grids?
Victorian families to desperately poor
They'll let us employ their kids for

Work, terrible work
From very young ages
Up chimneys to clean
Paid pitiful wages
Work, terrible work
Pins make you work faster
If we grow too big
Get sacked by the master!

Now you're all in my employ
Cleaning in the factory
We're not very strong
And the hours are long
This work is unsatisfactory!

There not to get caught in spokes
Or trap our hands in gages
To stop machines and get you out
Will cost you a week's wages!

Work, terrible work
There's no health and safety
So if we get hurt
They will just replace me
Work, terrible work

Now that I am short of cash
I have to pick pockets
Wallets from gentlemen
And lady's lockets

Small enough to get away
Hardly ever caught
And if we are, we're kids you see
To cry is what we're taught

Work, terrible work
Dangerous and demeaning
No time to complain
Get back to your cleaning
Work, terrible work
Guess what we are dreaming
School, glorious school!
Wonderful school!
Marvellous school!
Wish we went to school!

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