Working-Class Education

Much of the rise in literacy was brought about through increases in the provision of schooling during the nineteenth century, especially for working-class children. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, education for the working classes was available on a haphazard basis in England and Wales. One of the primary providers of education was the churches, which ran Sunday schools and day schools. However, as late as the 1850s, approximately half of all children in England and Wales attended no school (other than Sunday school). Day schools were not as popular as Sunday schools for working-class children, as they charged fees and operated during the week. Stephens, William Brewer. Education in Britain 1750-1914. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998. The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world’s greatest libraries. We hold over 13 million books, 920,000 journal and newspaper titles, 57 million patents and 3 million sound recordings. Open to everyone, the Library also offers exhibitions, events and a Treasures Gallery that displays over 200 items, including The Lindisfarne Gospel, Leonardo da Vinci’s notebook, Shakespeare’s First Folio, lyrics by The Beatles and the world’s earliest dated printed book, Diamond Sutra. Your views could help shape our site for the future. Choose Yes please to open the survey in a new browser window or tab, and then complete it when you are ready. Yes please No thanks.