



DBQ—Document-Based Questions

You went down one step even from the foul area into the cellar in which a family of human beings lived. It was very dark inside. The window-panes many of them were broken and stuffed with rags....the smell was so fetid as almost to knock the two men down....they began to penetrate the thick darkness of the place, and to see three or four little children rolling on the damp, nay wet brick floor, through which the stagnant, filthy moisture of the street oozed up.

- Elizabeth Gaskell,
Mary Barton (1848)

1. Does this seem like a healthy place to live? Why or why not?

2. Why did families live under conditions such as these?

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