

TEXT 4 : Child labour in the Industrial revolution 2/2

« The sexual division of the metropolitan child labour market was also striking. Boys were assumed to be working outside the home for a small income whereas the natural place for girls was assumed to be the domestic sphere. This tendency was described aptly by Mayhew in the early 1850s when he observed that ‘the boy is far more the child of the streets than is the girl’. Indeed, much of the general shortfall in the enumeration of female occupations compared with males is thought to have resulted from the tendency of females to work in ‘unofficial’ domestic labouring tasks. Girls between the ages of nine and 15 were frequently called upon to care for young children in their own homes or in those of relatives to allow mothers to perform work outside the home. »

« Victorian towns and cities offered greater employment opportunities to young, unmarried, females than did rural districts and this fact was partly reflected in a higher ratio of females to males among urban populations. In 1851, London contained 223,753 females aged 10-19 compared with only 206,310 males. Much of the migration of young females to London was directed in search of work in the diverse domestic service sector. Domestic service was popular because it offered accommodation and a wage sufficient to establish a young migrant in a town or city. Young females were less attracted by the long periods of training and lower pay associated with skilled occupations. In 1851, general domestic service formed **the most popular occupation** for London females aged 10-14 . In England and Wales (exclusive of London) child domestic servants (i.e. children aged 10-14) formed about 23 per cent of all occupied females aged 10 to 14 whilst in London the comparable figure was nearly 59 per cent. Concentrations of domestic servants were even higher in Westminster and the City of London where the employment of servants was four to five times the national per capita average. Nonetheless, the age structure of metropolitan servants was much **older than** in the rest of England and Wales and this probably reflects a larger proportion of older migrant females in the London domestic sector. General domestic servants in London aged below 20 formed only 33 per cent of the total of female servants compared with 42 per cent in the rest of England and Wales. »

Kirby P, « A Short Statistical Sketch of the Child Labour Market in Mid-Nineteenth Century London », *Continuity and Change* (2005)

I. Vocabulary. Find the English for :

- revenu =
- Emploi qualifié =
- Logement =

III. Understanding :

Paragraph (1) : Rephrase with your own words : What was a big difference between males and females' areas of employment or work, in London ?

Paragraph (2) :

1. Were there more female or male youths in London in 1851 ? What is the explanation raised by Kirby here ?
2. Why was domestic service considered a valid choice as an area of employment for young females in London ?
3. Did domestic servants in London represent a larger or smaller share of employed female children than in the rest of the country ?
4. What other difference was there between female child domestic workers in London and those of the rest of England and Wales ?

IV. **GRAMMAR FOCUS 4** : Observe the phrases in bold—>What are they ? What are the rules of these grammatical structures ?