

# Reading Comprehension



Before you read or listen to this storybook, look at the cover.

- What do you think the book will be about?
- Why do you think so?
- Who are the main characters?
- Where are they? And when?



## Arriving at the museum

- Where does this story take place?
- Why is a museum like a time machine?
- What would you expect to find inside?
- Can you spot the two main characters?
- What does *co-operation* mean?



## Dressing up

- What kind of shop is this?
- What things did it sell?
- What happened when the main characters got dressed up as Victorian children?
- What time period would you like to visit?



## Meeting the Pioneers

- What happened on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1844?
- Who were the Rochdale Pioneers?
- What did they do?
- Why did they need to use a wheelbarrow?
- Why is their shop now a museum?



## On Toad Lane

- How has this scene changed since 1844?
- What can the children smell and hear?
- How do you think they are feeling?
- What differences can you see between rich and poor people?



## Child workers

- Where are these barefoot children going?
- Do you think they are rich or poor?
- What kind of work did they do?
- Should children be made to work?
- Does it still happen today?



## In the mill

- How do the main characters feel now?
- Why is the boy in danger?
- What other dangers are present?
- If you owned the mill what would you do to improve conditions for your workers?



## By the canal

- How much money did the children earn?
- Would you choose dry bread as a snack?
- What is the horse doing?
- Where are the children going?
- What might happen if they are late?





## At school

- How were Victorian children taught?
- Did boys and girls learn the same things?
- What happened if a child made a mistake?
- Were the children treated fairly?
- How long should children stay at school?



## The courtyard

- What games did Victorian children play?
- Can you imagine sharing one toilet with all your neighbours?
- Who owned the homes of poor families?
- What changes would improve their lives?



## In the home

- Why did this family sleep “six to a bed”?
- How many founding members did the Rochdale Pioneers co-operative have?
- How much did it cost to become a member?
- How long did it take them to save up?



## Greedy shopkeepers

- How did air pollution affect people?
- Why else did their friends feel ill?
- What does it mean to *adulterate* food?
- Why do you think some shopkeepers and manufacturers did this?





## The grand opening

- What was better about the new shop?
- Why was it so difficult for the Rochdale Pioneers to open their shop?
- What rules would you make if you were starting a co-operative?



## In the shop

- Are there still co-operative shops today?
- What has changed about the way we shop?
- How did the Rochdale Pioneers make sure that they traded fairly?
- Why did they use candles to light the shop?



## Back to the future

- Why are there no photographs of the Rochdale Pioneers grand opening night?
- Do you think the two time travellers would be glad to return to the modern world?



## On the bus

- What is the name of the museum?
- Can you remember the address?
- How has the building changed?
- What does the story teach us about co-operation?





# The Rochdale Pioneers Story

A long time ago, in the year **1844**, the people of a town called **Rochdale** had some very big problems. Living conditions were bad and wages were low. Many people, including children as young as six, worked long hours for low pay in the noisy, dangerous cotton mills.

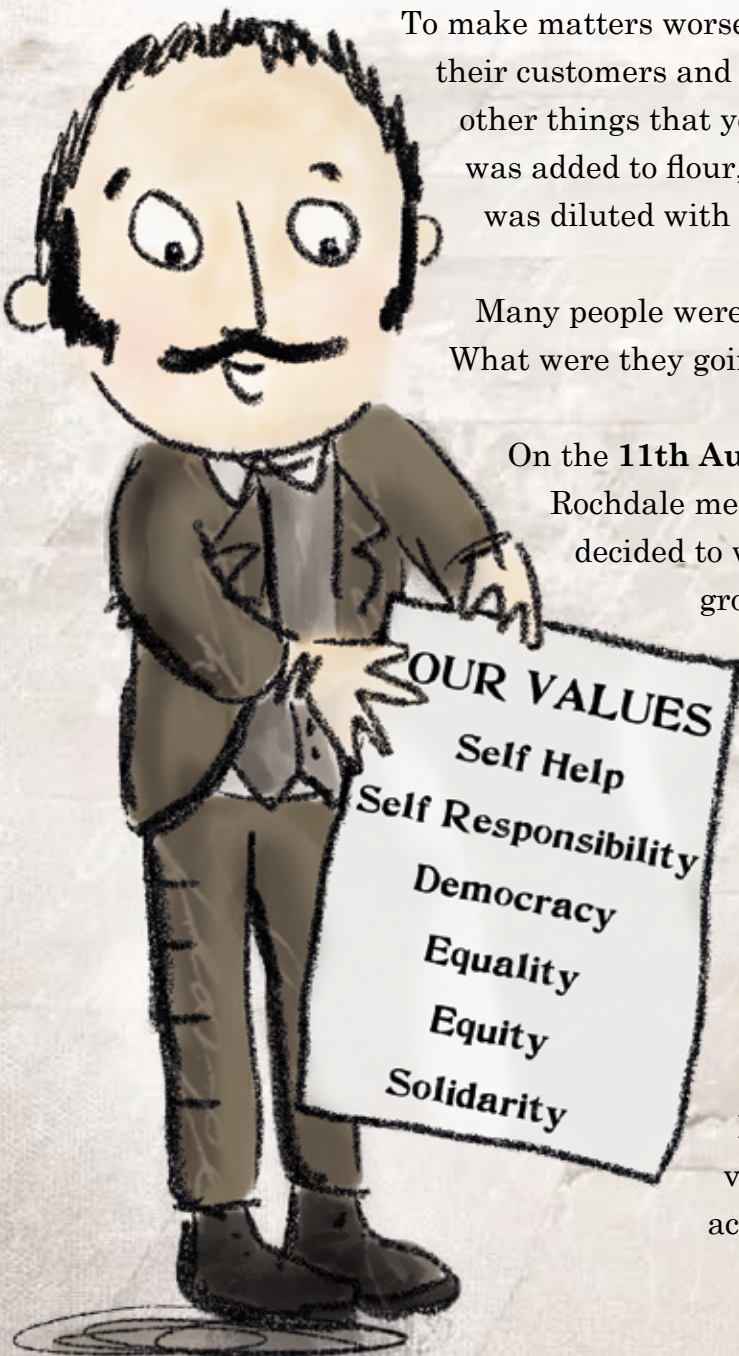
To make matters worse, the shopkeepers often cheated their customers and sold food that had been mixed with other things that you really wouldn't want to eat. Chalk was added to flour, dirt was mixed with cocoa, and milk was diluted with water. Yuck!

Many people were in debt and felt trapped in poverty. What were they going to do?

On the **11th August 1844** some of the workers of Rochdale met to discuss their problems. They decided to work together to open their **own** grocery store – one where everyone

could buy good food at fair prices.

Twenty-eight people wanted to be involved and each agreed to save up one pound. Six months later those **Rochdale Pioneers** had saved enough money to start their society, and they decided to write rules about how their co-operative would be run. These were developed and became known as the **Rochdale Principles**. The same values are still held by co-operatives across the world today.



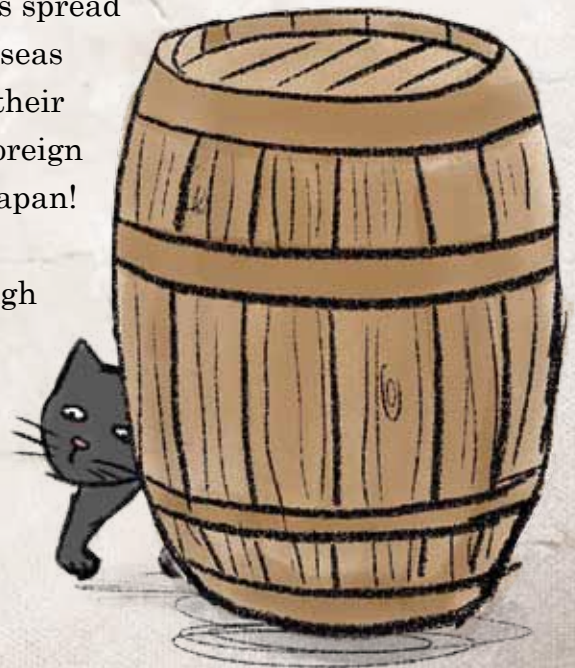


The Pioneers rented a former warehouse at **31 Toad Lane** in Rochdale to serve as their shop. Because they didn't have much money, they used wooden planks and barrels to make a counter. No local businesses would sell the Pioneers food to stock their shop, so they walked twelve miles to **Manchester** with a borrowed wheelbarrow and bought butter, sugar, oatmeal, a sack of flour and some candles. The gas company wouldn't supply the Rochdale Pioneers because they thought they wouldn't be able to pay the bill, so the Pioneers used the candles they had bought to light the shop.

The shop opened for the first time at 8pm on **21 December 1844** and became a success. More and more people became members, owning the shop together. The profits of the shop were given back to the members as their dividend. This allowed the people of Rochdale to save up and pay off their debts. There was a sense of community – people helped each other and were responsible for their own future.

Eventually the Pioneers were able to sell more products and open more shops. They also used some of the profits to provide education for their members, opening a library and a Sunday school. Other people saw what they were doing, felt inspired, and soon co-operative stores spread across the country. People even came from overseas to visit the Rochdale Pioneers and learn about their successful co-operative way of working. Early foreign visitors came from as far away as Russia and Japan!

You can still see co-operative stores on many high streets today. Next time you visit one, take a moment to remember that it all started in the town of Rochdale, thanks to twenty-eight ordinary people who shared an idea, worked together, and changed things for the better!

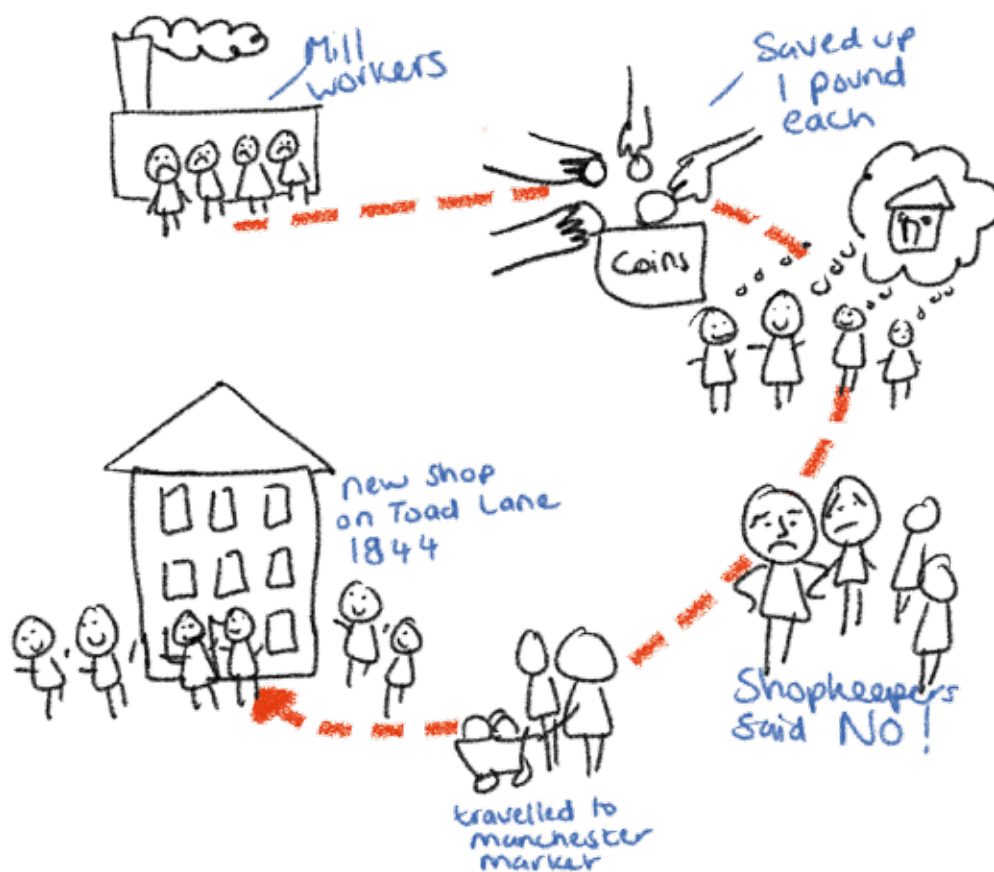


# Retelling the story...

There are many methods for retelling stories to reinforce the memory of the key events and the sequence in which they occurred. Four featured here are story maps, storyboards (*see opposite*), minibooks, and video animations.

## the story map

After reading *The Rochdale Pioneers Story* to the class, encourage children to recall the main points by asking open-ended questions. Then help them to order those events into the correct chronological sequence, and demonstrate how to make a story map (*example below*). The children can then make their own individual story maps, using yours as a guide. This will help them to internalise the narrative.



## the storyboard

Photocopy this page. Divide the story into key events. Sketch a scene in each cell, writing a description on the lines below it.



---

---



---

---



---

---



---

---



---

---

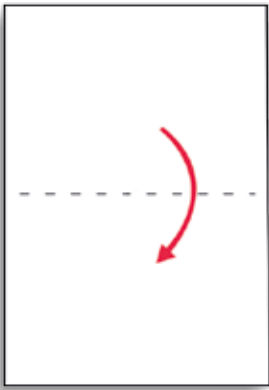


---

---



## the minibook



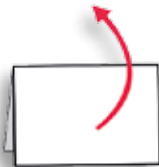
1. Fold an A4 sheet in half.



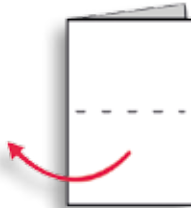
2. Fold it in half again.



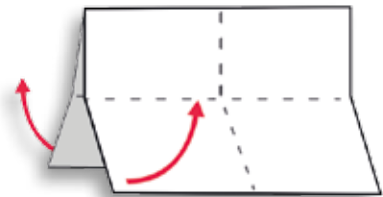
3. Fold again, and crease the edges.



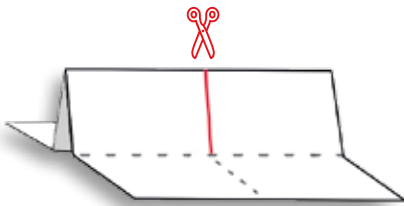
4. Now reopen the last fold.



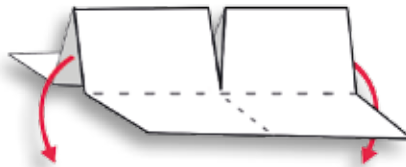
5. And unfold it once more.



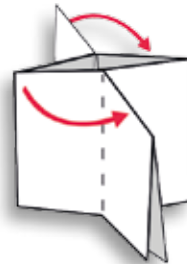
6. Raise the loose edges halfway.



7. Use scissors to cut the centre.



8. Fold both sides until they meet.



9. Close the book!



10. Write your name and the story title on the front cover. On the back cover write a brief introduction that would make someone want to read the story. Use the three double-page spreads within to record the beginning, middle and end of your story.

## the animation

Try using an animation app, such as PuppetPals for iPad, to retell the Rochdale Pioneers story in a cartoon video format. From within the app children can photograph scenes to use as backdrops, and then digitally capture and crop the characters from the pages of this book. Children love to swipe, pinch and zoom to move the characters through the story, and can easily record their narration and dialogue at the same time.

As an extension to this activity, children can dress up and roleplay scenes from Victorian Rochdale. By photographing each other in costume they can use these images within the app, becoming part of the story!

- What different scenes are needed to tell the story?
- Does the story have a beginning, a middle and an end?
- Will writing out a script improve the production?

Familiarise yourself with the app in advance so that you can help the children to add their names to the movie title and save their work. Afterwards, they can share their animations with the rest of the class.





# Start your own co-operative ...

The Rochdale Pioneers formed their co-operative society to meet a real need in their community. It was only by sharing resources and ideas, and by working together, that they could successfully open their first shop. By sticking to their principles and values they left a legacy that has improved the lives of millions of people worldwide. Can you be enterprising like the Rochdale Pioneers?

## identify the need

In this whole class discussion activity, brainstorm ideas about areas of need for your class, school, or community. Perhaps the school needs new books or equipment; maybe you would like to arrange a class outing; there could be local charity or a national event that needs your help. Write the suggestions on a whiteboard and highlight those that could be resolved by a collective fundraising or creative activity.

## generate ideas

Divide the class into groups of four to six children for this stage. Each group chooses one area of need and discusses ways that the class could work together to meet the challenge. By giving each child a different colour of marker pen, all will be able to see their own contribution to a mind map or spider diagram. Here some examples of enterprising ideas:

- Design a wildlife haven or vegetable garden for the school.
- Arrange a *Wear it Wild Day* to raise funds for an animal charity.
- Organise a *Fairtrade Bake-off* and sell the cakes at an upcoming fete.
- Map out a fun run that collectively covers the distance of a school trip.
- Plan a sponsored reading challenge to buy books for the school library.

## agree on a plan

Next, each group democratically chooses one idea to develop and share with the rest of the class, and then selects a spokesperson. Once all the groups have taken a turn to present their proposals, the class cast votes by ballot or show of hands to decide which plan everyone will action. Older children could agree a set of criteria and a simple scoring system for judging the proposals. Afterwards encourage reflection:

- Did everyone think that the selection process was fair?
- Does anyone have any suggestions that could improve the plan?
- How can we organise ourselves so that everyone has a role to play?

## work together

The time has arrived to put the plan into action! Encourage the children to organise themselves into teams to effectively implement their plan. Teams may be assigned responsibility for such different tasks as poster design, seeking sponsors, making products, or sending thank you emails.

## review and reward

Encourage the children to reflect on how, by working together, they were able to be more successful:

- How did the class agree on a common plan of action?
- What did you do to make sure that everyone was included?
- In what ways did your enterprise benefit yourselves and others?

For more ideas on classroom co-operatives visit:

[www.co-op.ac.uk/schools-and-young-people/young-co-operatives](http://www.co-op.ac.uk/schools-and-young-people/young-co-operatives)





# The Time Machine . . .

Step back in time by visiting the Rochdale Pioneers Museum. The things you see and hear and touch will fire the imagination, taking you on a journey into the past.

**visit the museum**

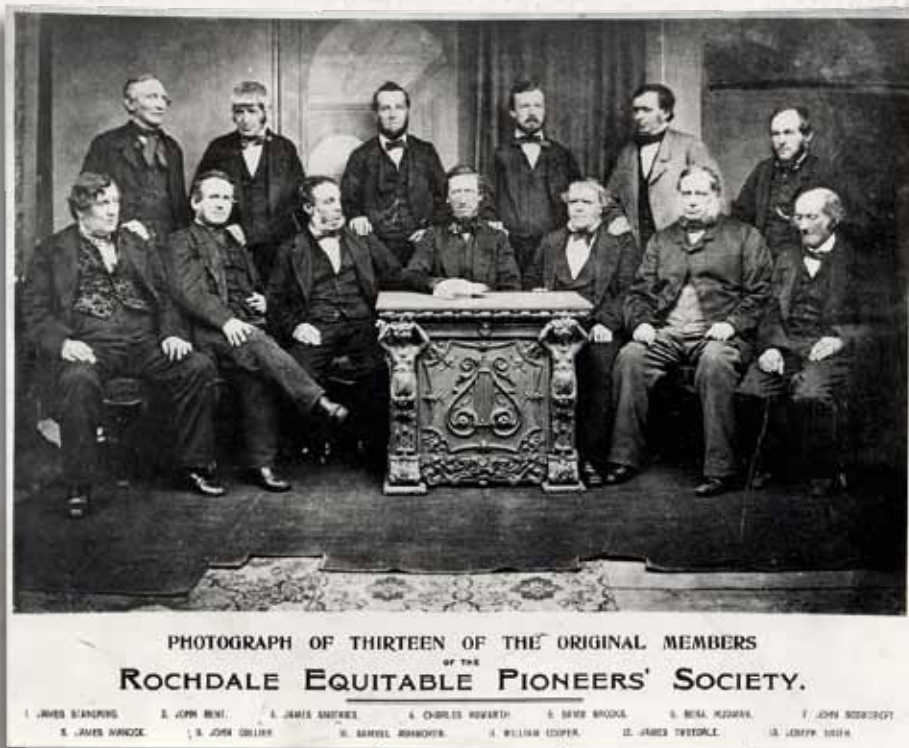
The Rochdale Pioneers Museum welcomes visits from Primary and Secondary Schools, Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges. Free coach parking is available. To book a visit to the Museum or to discuss your requirements, please call **01706 524920** or e-mail: **museum@co-op.ac.uk**

You can learn more about the Museum, and download a programme of workshops for schools, by visiting its website at: **[www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/](http://www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/)**

**“A museum is just like a time machine,”  
their teacher said. What could she mean?**







## **– The Twenty-eight Original Members –**

<b>Miles Ashworth</b>	<b>John Kershaw</b>
<b>Samuel Ashworth</b>	<b>James Maden</b>
<b>James Bamford</b>	<b>William Mallalieu</b>
<b>John Bent</b>	<b>James Manock</b>
<b>David Brooks</b>	<b>Benjamin Rudman</b>
<b>John Collier</b>	<b>John Scowcroft</b>
<b>William Cooper</b>	<b>Joseph Smith</b>
<b>James Daly</b>	<b>James Smithies</b>
<b>John Garside</b>	<b>James Standring</b>
<b>George Healey</b>	<b>Robert Taylor</b>
<b>John Hill</b>	<b>William Taylor</b>
<b>John Holt</b>	<b>James Tweedale</b>
<b>Charles Howarth</b>	<b>Samuel Tweedale</b>
<b>Benjamin Jordan</b>	<b>James Wilkinson</b>



The Co-operative Heritage Trust is a registered charity (*charity number 1121610*) founded in 2007 by the Co-operative Group, Co-operatives UK and the Co-operative College to safeguard the movement's unique and irreplaceable heritage. The Trust's mission is:

*"To inspire people within and beyond the co-operative movement about the origins, development and contemporary relevance of co-operation by collecting, safeguarding and making accessible artefacts and documentation through lifelong learning and research."*

The Co-operative Heritage Trust is custodian of the Rochdale Pioneers Museum (the building where the Pioneers commenced trading on 21 December 1844) and also of the National Co-operative Archive, which holds 200 years of co-operative records. The Co-operative College manages the Museum and Archive on behalf of the Trust.

To find out more about the Rochdale Pioneers go to [www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/](http://www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/) and visit the Co-operative Heritage Trust's website [www.co-operativeheritage.coop/](http://www.co-operativeheritage.coop/)

The story of the Toad Lane Time Travellers has been generously supported by:

*Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Paul Getty Junior Foundation*



co-operative  
college



CO-OPERATIVE  
HERITAGE TRUST