GVICENZINO - HOMEWORK

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A compromise may be an agreement that satisfies different, most likely opposite or contrasting, ideas. It is related to the Victorian age because it was a complex and contradictory era; it had both positive and negative  aspects, consequences or developments.

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| **Noun** | **Adjective** |
| *stability* | stable |
| *duty* | dutiful |
| respectability | *respectable* |
| comfort | *comfortable* |
| charity | *charitable* |
| patriarchy | *patriarch* |
| chastity | chaste |
| prudery | *prude* |

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The Victorian Age was a complex and contradictory era: on the one hand, it was an age of progress, **stability** and great social reforms; on the other, it was also characterized by poverty, injustice and social unrest.

The Victorians were great **moralists**: they faced a large number of problems on such a scale, that they felt obliged to support certain values which offered solutions or escapes. Thus they promoted a code of values that reflected the world as they wanted it to be, not as it really was, based on **dutiful**, hard work, respectability and charity. These values were refined by the upper and middle classes, who had political and economic power, but they were of equal application to all strata of  society.

In fact, one of the most important notions throughout the 19th century was the need to work hard. The idea of being **respectable** distinguished the middle from the lower class. Respectability was a mixture of both morality and hypocrisy, severity and conformity to social standards. It implied the possession of good manners, the **ownership** of a **comfortable** house with servants and a carriage, regular attendance at Church, and **charitable** activity. Philanthropy was a widespread phenomenon; it addressed itself to every kind of poverty, to “stray children, fallen women and **drunk** men” and absorbed the energies of thousands of Victorians, large numbers of whom were women.

Middle-class ideals dominated Victorian family life. The family was a **patriarchal** unit where the husband represented authority and the key role of women concerned the education of children and the managing of the house. Victorian society was deeply concerned with female chastity, and single women with a child suffered the worst of society’s punishments: they were emarginated as “fallen women”. Sexuality was generally repressed in its public and private forms, and being **prudish** in its most extreme manifestations led to the denunciation of nudity in art and the rejection of words with a sexual connotation from everyday vocabulary.

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1. Values were necessary as a point of reference in difficult or complex situations.
2. It was refined by upper and middle classes, but applied to all social classes.
3. The Victorian code of values was quite strict and very little open-minded: respectability was the criteria to distinguish social classes; as for work, people were supposed to work hard and respect their own duties; the family was based on hierarchical relationships with the husband/father at the top, while women had to take care of the children and the house; sexuality was a taboo subject and was generally repressed, even in language.
4. The compromise has to do with the both positive and negative aspects brought by the Victorian Era.