

Inquiry Lesson Plan: Why Did the Triangle Fire Occur?

Abstract

In this inquiry students will investigate the factors contributing to the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire of 1911. New York City with its diverse immigrant population and manufacturing base became a microcosm of the social, political, and economic changes resulting from industrialization and immigration. Students will evaluate various data sets related to the fire to determine why it became such a tragedy. Students will learn to evaluate materials with different points of view on the same event and develop their skills in evaluating primary documents. This lesson has a strong link to the present in the evaluation of the continuing existence of sweatshop conditions in the U.S. and abroad and the economic benefit that the students themselves derive from these conditions.

Rationale

It is important for students to engage in this inquiry from both a process and content perspective. The inquiry process used in this lesson will help students understand how to evaluate materials with different points of view on the same event. Students will also develop their skills in evaluating primary documents. From a content perspective, this lesson is important for its historical value and its relationship to the present day. Students will learn about some of the social and economic effects of rapid urbanization in the face of increasing immigration and how workers and factory owners responded to those phenomena. This lesson has a strong link to the present in the evaluation of the continuing existence of sweatshop conditions in the U.S. and abroad and the economic benefit that the students themselves derive from these conditions.

Audience

8th - 10th grade United States History or Global Issues course addressing the topics of immigration, economic interdependence, societal effects of technological change, labor relations, and/or justice.

Academic and Intellectual Objectives

Students will:

- Evaluate and analyze information presented verbally or through pictures.
- Identify points of view presented in documents and pictures
- Interpret pictures and cartoons
- Create a list of hypotheses regarding responsibility for the Triangle Fire
- Synthesize their findings with prior knowledge and their hypotheses to come to tentative conclusion about the responsibility for the Triangle Fire
- Compare and contrast events of the early 1900s with current events

- Provide editing and feedback to peers on written work

Objectives from Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies

As a result of this lesson, students will:

- Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches.(WMAS SS B.12.1)
- Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion (WMAS SS B.12.2)
- Select significant changes caused by technology, industrialization, urbanization, and population growth, and analyze the effects of these changes in the United States and the world. (WMAS SS B.12.9)
- Use economic concepts to analyze historical and contemporary questions about economic development in the United States and the world. (WMAS SS D.12.6)

Time 4 days

Materials

Computer with Internet access and speakers

Computer projector (like an InFocus or other similar device)

Whiteboard, blackboard, or flip chart

Overhead Slide: Wisconsin factories today (photos from newspapers or internet)

Handouts: Data sets (1 set per group of 4-5 students)

Handouts: Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet

Overhead Slide: Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet

Handouts: NCSS Triangle Fire Role Identification Sheets

Handouts: The Global Production Investigation

Overhead Slide: blank graph paper

Aaron Lebedeff "vos ken yu makh! s'iz amerike" ("What can you do! It's America", Vocalion recording A 67140). <http://www.yiddishvoice.com/#audio>

American History at the Smithsonian <http://americanhistory.si.edu/sweatshops/>

Lower Broadway / American Mutoscope and Biograph Company. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?papr:3:./temp/~ammem_LUIH::

Mapquest 23 Washington Place @ Greene Street

N.Y. Fire Department returning / American Mutoscope and Biograph Company.(American Memory Library of Congress)

New York City "ghetto" fish market / Thomas A. Edison, Inc. (American Memory Library of Congress) <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/papr/nychome.html>

Webcam of Times Square <http://www.earthcam.com/usa/newyork/timesquare/>

PROCEDURE DAY ONE

Min.	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
(cum)	ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE & ENGAGE STUDENTS IN THE INQUIRY	
2	Tell students they will see a presentation of a fire in a New York City factory in 1911 known as the Triangle Shirtwaist Co. Fire. It was a terrible fire where 146 people died. But first, we're going to talk about NYC. Show ss NYC on classroom map. Ask ss if they have been to NYC. If so, elicit comments about the city.	SS share responses.
2	Tell ss that in order to understand what NYC was like 100 years ago, we need to know what it looks like today. Tell ss to watch the clip and try to identify things that might have been different 100 years ago. Tell ss to jot down notes.	
	Show the Times Square webcam site.(1)	SS watch and take notes in their notebooks. Not to be handed in.
2	Ask ss to share their observations and predict what might have been different in Times Square 100 years ago. Call on 2-3 ss.	SS share responses.
4	Tell ss they will see a clip of a street scene in NYC circa 1903. Ask ss to watch for confirmation of their predictions and jot down notes. Let ss know you will call on 2-3 to share after the video. Show "Lower Broadway" video clip. (2)	SS watch and take notes in their notebook. Not to be handed in.
2	Ask ss if they confirmed some of their predictions about NYC. Call on 2-3 other ss.	SS share comments
3	Remind ss that they will be learning about the Triangle Factory Fire. Ask ss to define "factory." Ask ss to share any experiences	SS share responses.

(15)	they or their families have with factories. Ask for clarification about conditions and the products made. Elicit comments about the buildings and their size.	
2	Show pictures of current Wisconsin factories.	SS observe.
2	Ask ss if they have any other information about factories.	SS share responses.
2-3	Tell students they will see the presentation of the Triangle Fire and they will see a different sort of factory in NYC located in the upper floors of a multistory building with offices on the lower floors. They are going to investigate why 148 people died in the fire. They should watch for evidence of why the people died. Tell ss they should jot down notes as they watch.	SS watch and write
	Proceed with PowerPoint presentation of Triangle Fire images (set up to automatically advance every 5 seconds, accompanied by Lebedeff song, "vos ken yu makh! s'iz amerike") (3) Repeat if desired. [Turn off projector after PowerPoint presentation]	Watch and listen. Write notes.
	ELICIT STUDENT HYPOTHESES	
2	List inquiry question on the board and ask ss to individually look at their notes and come up with at least 4 reasons they think caused the fire to be such a tragedy.	SS review & reflect.
	Hand out Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet (4) Why Did So Many Workers Die in the Triangle Fire?	
2 (26)	Tell ss to write their four reasons at the top of the hypotheses column on the left side of the page.	SS write.
	<i>Possible hypotheses: workers were careless, there weren't enough emergency exits, the factory was too crowded, the fire department didn't come quickly enough...</i>	
	As ss are writing, go around and count off students into groups of 4-5 ss each.	
	Tell students to move into their groups based on the number you just assigned them. Tell them where the groups are to sit.	Students move.
2	Tell students they will be discussing historical evidence from the Triangle Fire and their job is to figure out what caused the fire to be such a tragedy. Who's fault was it that so many people died? First, they should compare the 4 reasons they each wrote down. If one of their team mates has a different reason, all the students in the group should add that reason to their own list. Tell ss you will call on each group in a minute after they've had a chance to compare their notes.	SS compare and add any different reasons from their team mates to their paper.
2	Call on the first group and ask for ONE possible hypothesis from that group. Write it on the board or overhead slide of the Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet .	One student from each group contributes a hypothesis

	Ask the whole class if any other group had that same hypothesis. If so, put tallies next to each reason (one tally per group.) Ask students for unusual or outlandish hypotheses, too.	SS may have additional comments
5-10 (35-45)	Repeat until all of students' initial hypotheses are on the board or overhead. Have groups choose a different spokesperson for each round.	
	DATA GATHERING, PROCESSING, HYPOTHESIS REVISION	
2	Tell ss they will now receive their first piece of historical evidence (data set # 1) and they are to evaluate and see if the data set supports, calls into question, or does not apply to their hypotheses. If it does not apply, does the data set create a new possibility?	SS discuss and take notes.
	Hand out Data Set #1 Interior of Garment Factory. Restate that SS are to evaluate it and see if the data set supports, calls into question, or does not apply to their hypothesis. If it does not apply, does the data set create a new possibility?	
5	Walk through the evaluation of the first data set together as a class. Does the Data Set support or undermine any of the students' hypotheses? Which ones? Does it support any hypotheses? Which ones?	SS discuss and respond.
	Record SS responses on the board or overhead and conclude discussion for today. Let SS know they will continue with this activity the following day.	SS copy responses onto their Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet
	Assign a student to collect the Data Set no. 1 card.	
	Assign and distribute Global Product Investigation HW. Tell ss to fill out the charts for tomorrow.	SS note assignment in planner

PROCEDURE DAY TWO

Min.	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
3	Put Journal Prompt on board before class: <i>Which is more important for understanding history, photographic evidence or written evidence? Why?</i> http://www.cthistoryonline.org/classrm_activ_writing.html	SS copy prompt into notebook and respond in writing.
	Start PowerPoint from previous day. Call students' attention to the PowerPoint as they are writing their responses to the prompt.	
	After a few minutes, tell the students to close their journals and put them away.	
4	Tell students to take out their Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet and their Global Product Investigation HW	Student take out materials and move to new seats.

	assignment and move to their groups from yesterday. [You may not get to the HW assignment. If not, use the following day.]	
(7)	Tell students you will be handing out the next data set (no. 2) and they will evaluate this one in their groups like they did yesterday as a class.	
	Ask the ss to determine if this new Data Set supports or undermines any of their hypotheses? Which ones? Does it support any hypotheses? Which ones? Does it cause any new questions or hypotheses?	In their groups, SS discuss and then write responses onto their Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet
2	Call on the first group and ask them to explain which hypothesis this new data set addresses. Write it on the board or overhead slide of the Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet .	One student from each group contributes a hypothesis. SS copy responses from board.
1 (10)	As each group contributes, ask the whole class if any other group had that same hypothesis. If so, put tallies next to each reason (one tally per group.)	SS may have additional comments
5	Continue until you have asked each group.	
5 x # data sets (35)	Repeat process with additional data sets.	
2	Periodically ask students if their initial hypotheses are being supported or undermined. Discuss as needed.	SS respond.
5-7	After all the data sets have been considered, ask students to review their notes and write a Tentative Conclusion on their Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet. Tell SS to use at least 3 pieces of evidence to support their conclusion.	SS write.
5-7	After SS have written a preliminary conclusion, have them share within their groups and then call on 2-3 students to share their conclusion with the class. SS may modify their conclusion before turning it in. Collect Worksheet from ss [formative assessment]	SS discuss and respond.
	Let ss know they will be discussing their Global Product Investigation worksheet the next day.	

PROCEDURE DAY THREE

Min.	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
(cum) 3	Put Journal Prompt on board before class: <i>On the first Monday of each September, we celebrate Labor Day. This holiday was first</i>	SS copy and write

	<i>celebrated in 1882, in honor of American workers and their achievements. List all of the different community jobs (firefighter, police officer, city clerk, etc.) in your town and then select the one you feel is most important. Explain why you chose that particular job.</i> http://www.theteacherscorner.net/daily-writing-prompts/september/index.htm	
	After a few minutes, tell the students to close their journals and put them away and take out their Global Product Investigation worksheet.	
5-10	Have two student volunteers come up to the wall map and put pins or sticky notes on the map as classmates name the countries on their lists.	SS respond.
5	Call on students to answer questions 2-3 on the Global Product Investigation Worksheets.	SS respond
5	Put the students into groups of 4 and have them total up the number of clothing articles they had from each region	SS add figures on region of origin
5	Call on 1 spokesperson per group to give their totals and another to plot on an overhead graph. [Blank graph paper on overhead slide.]	SS respond and draw line graph
5	Hand out Partial List of 1996 Apparel Imports to the US. Have students review list for highest and lowest value imports by country of origin and highest and lowest wages paid by region and overall. Ask students to discuss in their groups what they notice about the relationship between wages in the region that had the largest number of items on our class list of regions from Global Product Investigation Worksheets and the volume of imports. Ask ss if they think sweatshops still exist in the US..	SS read and discuss
5	Direct ss to Smithsonian sweatshop site using LCD projector. http://americanhistory.si.edu/sweatshops Show ss most recent information and have them compare current conditions with what they've read about Then compare with offshore sweatshops at http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/sweatshops/ or Unite!	SS view.
2	Hand out the Letter to the Editor Identity Sheets. Introduce Letter to the Editor activity/assessment and rubric to the students [see attached, summative assessment] Tell them they will each be given an Identity Sheet and will write a letter to the editor from the point of view of the person described in the identity sheet.	SS listen
2-5	Tell SS they will write the letter to the editor using the evidence they discussed during the last 2 days. SS will use the National Archives Analysis Worksheets [see attached, formative assessment] to describe the documents/photos/ images they use as evidence. [If work samples from prior years are available, show	Ss listen and begin writing

	samples to ss to give them an idea of a 4 response, a 3, and so on.]	
10	Give students about 10 minutes of class time to get started on their draft letter to the editor. Circulate and check on ss' progress. Have ss share and review their work with a classmate who makes positive comments and constructive suggestions about the content of the letter so far.	Students write, read, and discuss
	Ask ss if any of the information they saw today changes their tentative conclusion. If so, they should revise their conclusion on the Hypothesis Worksheet. Tell ss to finish letter as HW and bring back tomorrow.	SS respond

PROCEDURE DAY FOUR

Min.	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
2	Remind ss of prior day's discussion and their groups. Have students move into groups based on their Letter to the Editor identity sheet so that there are multiple groups of 4 students with each student having received a different identity sheet	SS move
10-15	Tell ss to share their letters in their groups. They can go in numerical order by identity sheet number. Each student should explain why s/he chose the evidence s/he did. After reading all four letters, students should discuss which hypothesis seems most plausible at this point. They should also pick the letter they think shows the strongest evidence to be shared with the whole class.	Students discuss
10-15	Have each team share their hypotheses and conclusions as well as the letter they thought was most persuasive	Students share and listen
	Record student responses by "identity" on the board	
5-10	Lead students in a discussion about why sweatshops still exist today, what is similar to 1911, what is different, and what (if anything) they think should be done about sweatshops today and who should be responsible to do it.	SS respond
5	Offer students the opportunity to follow up with a personal project in response to what they have learned.	
5-10	Final journal activity: Students respond either to a journal prompt or a drawing prompt: <i>What responsibility do workers and employers have to prevent dangerous sweatshop conditions? Should the community in general get involved? Why or why not? Is there anything you plan to do to follow up on what you have learned in this lesson?</i>	SS write or draw

Supplemental Materials



Tactical Training Systems Factory in Wisconsin

Why Did 146 People Die in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire?

March 25, 1911
U.S. History

What's a "shirtwaist?"

- The full name of the company was The Triangle Waist Factory
- But, what's a waist or shirtwaist?
- It's just an old-fashioned style of blouse.



Shirtwaist Blouse as Those Made At the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Factory, National Museum of American History (Smithsonian Institution), Gift of Book and a Hat/Purse: A History of American Dressmaking 1823-Present. Smithsonian Institution, Oct. 2008. <http://www.history.si.edu/whetshp/shirtwaist.htm>

The Asch Building

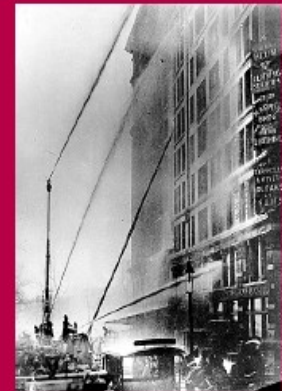


- A recent picture
- 23 Washington Square Place in New York City
- Now part of New York University

Doherty, Andrew S. Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Building (Brown Building), National Park Service, New York. Photo Shows Workers Made History. U.S. Department of the Interior, Oct. 2008. <http://www.nps.gov/history/parks/shirtwaist.htm>

Firefighters at the Scene of the Fire

- Fire broke out at 4:40 pm on the 8th floor
- Once firefighters arrived, it only took 20 minutes to put out the fire



146 Lives Were Lost in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911, Including a Public Outcry for Reform in the City's Fire Codes, General Fire Safety Commission and Educational Dressmaking Corporation, New York. House of Grand Jurors, Oct. 2008. <http://www.phs.org/news/newsstory2.html>

On the Sidewalk Below

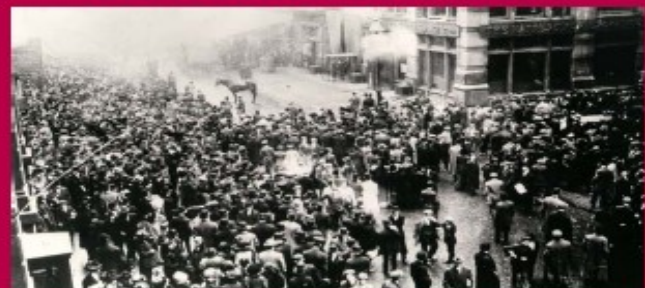
- Workers jumped from the 9th floor
- Bodies on the sidewalk
- Police and others look on



International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire 1911, 1911. Linn Magazine, 90 Philadelphia Ave. Copyright Ed Mark, 12 Mar. 2007. <http://magazineand.org/>

Photograph by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union

The Scene of the Fire



- A crowd gathers on the street

Photo 1911, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Ithaca, NY. The Triangle Factory Fire. Cornell University, 10 Mar. 2007. <http://www.kheel.cornell.edu/1911.htm>

After the Fire

- A broken fire escape
- The metal was not strong enough to hold the people on it
- <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/narrative3.html>



The 9th Floor After the Fire

- The remains of the sewing machines
- Back-to-back chairs and baskets in the aisles blocked the exits



April 1911. Street Order for Labor-Management Cooperation and Justice, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 1911. <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/1911/>

The 10th floor After the Fire

- The company offices were on this floor as well as some work areas
- All but 1 person from this floor survived

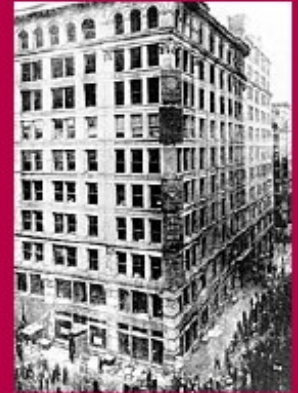


April 1911. Street Order for Labor-Management Cooperation and Justice, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 1911. <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/1911/>

The Asch Building

- After the fire on the 8th and 9th floor

April 1911. Street Order for Labor-Management Cooperation and Justice, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 1911. <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/1911/>



146 People Died in the Fire

- The New York Evening Journal
 - March 28, 1911
- Who's responsible?

April 1911. Street Order for Labor-Management Cooperation and Justice, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 1911. <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/1911/>



IDENTITY SHEETS

Identity # 1

Rose Safran, Shirtwaist Factory Worker

You are Rose Safran, and you have worked at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory for more than four years. Many of your best friends were lost in the fire, and you believe it is a tragedy that could have been avoided. If the management at the Triangle Factory had listened to you two years ago, they would have made the factory a safer place to work. You want to tell everyone about the terrible working conditions that your fellow shirt factory workers had to endure. The exits were blocked, the floor was littered with paper and cloth and the aisles were too small for many people to use at once. You think that Mr. Smith, the factory owner, should be punished for allowing the women to work in such unsafe conditions that ultimately caused their deaths.

Write a letter to the newspaper telling everyone how you feel about the fire.

IDENTITY SHEETS

Identity # 2

Joseph Smith, Shirtwaist Factory Manager

You are Joseph Smith, and you own the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. You feel very bad about how many women lost their lives, but it certainly isn't your fault. The doors of the factory needed to be locked to keep the women working and to keep the women from stealing cloth. When you tried unlocking the doors, women left early and many yards of cloth were missing. It is your job to see that the factory owner has the greatest amount of profit with the lowest possible costs. The more machines that you put in the factory, the more cloth you can prepare and the more money the factory can make. The government talks about making the owners improve conditions, but they don't offer us any money to help with the cost. If the owner had to spend thousands of dollars to improve the fire escapes and to install a sprinkler system, dozens of workers would have to be laid off to pay for it. Why isn't anyone blaming the fire department? They should have taller ladders to rescue people when a fire occurs. If the fire department had longer ladders, many of these women wouldn't have jumped to their deaths. Besides, Fire Marshall Beers said that there are more than 140 buildings in this city that are more dangerous than this. Also, these women came here even though they knew that it was dangerous, and although it is sad that many died, no one forced them to work.

Write a letter to the newspaper explaining your side of the story.

IDENTITY SHEETS

Identity # 3

Edward Worth, Fire Battalion Chief

You arrived on the scene just after the fire started. Unfortunately, the ladders on your fire trucks only reached to the sixth floor. Your hoses didn't reach all the way up to the eighth floor and you had to wait for other fire companies to arrive so that you could attach the hoses together. Your men tried to put out safety nets to catch the women who jumped from the building, but they were going too fast for the nets to stop their fall. What the building needed was a sprinkler system that would spray water on the fire to put it out before it spread. In your opinion, every building that is more than three stories high should have a sprinkler system in it so that tragedies such as these can be avoided. Also, the fire department should be allowed to inspect factory buildings to ensure that they are safe places to work. There are more than 140 factory buildings in New York right now that are far worse than the Triangle Shirtwaist building; hopefully this fire will open people's eyes, and something will be done.

Write a letter to the newspaper explaining what you think should be done.

IDENTITY SHEETS

Identity # 4

Robert Wagner, Senator

As both a member of Congress and of the Commission on Fire Safety, you are appalled at the conditions at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. You want to pass strict new laws that will force factory owners to make their factories safer for workers. You think that all factory buildings taller than three stories should have to practice fire drills, they should have to install sprinklers and fire alarms, and that every floor should have a fire escape that is inspected yearly. You want to pass a law that makes it illegal to operate a factory if these conditions aren't met. If business owners can't afford to make their places of business safe, then they should be forced to close down. Workers should not have to come to work in a place that endangers their lives.

Write a letter to the newspaper about the new law that you want to pass.

Supporting Materials

US History

Name: _____

Date & Hour: _____

Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet

#	Hypothesis	Evidence

#	Hypothesis	Evidence

Tentative Conclusion:

The Global Production Investigation

Be a detective! Discover the origins of the clothes in your closet. Look at the tags. Identify the countries where the clothes were made. List at least 5 articles of clothing (shirts, pants, jackets, etc.) and at least 2 pairs of shoes. The regions are listed in the table at the bottom of the page.

Article of Clothing	Country of Origin	Region

1. Come to class prepared to locate these countries on the map in class. If you are not sure where a country is located, check your atlas BEFORE class.
2. Did you find a label from a really small country? If so, write it here: _____
3. Did you find a label from a country that you didn't think manufactured clothes? If so, what country was it? _____
4. How many pieces of your clothing and shoes listed above are made in each region:

Asia	
Canada & Mexico (NAFTA)	
South America	
Central America & Caribbean	
Middle East and Africa	
Europe	

U.S. HISTORY

TRIANGLE FIRE LETTER TO THE EDITOR RUBRIC

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards
Position Statement	The position statement provides a clear, strong statement of the author's position on the topic.	The position statement provides a clear statement of the author's position on the topic.	A position statement is present, but does not make the the author's position clear.	There is no position statement.
Support for Position	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).
Audience	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the potential reader and uses appropriate vocabulary and arguments. Anticipates reader's questions and provides thorough answers appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates a general understanding of the potential reader and uses vocabulary and arguments appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates some understanding of the potential reader and uses arguments appropriate for that audience.	It is not clear who the author is writing for.
Transitions	A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. They clearly show how ideas are connected	Transitions show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety	Some transitions work well, but some connections between ideas are fuzzy.	The transitions between ideas are unclear OR nonexistent
Sentence Structure	All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure.	Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure in the essay.	Most sentences are well-constructed, but there is no variation in structure.	Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied.

COMMENTS

TOTAL POINTS

A Partial List of 1996 Apparel Imports to the United States

Region	Country	1996 Apparel Imports to the US*	Average Apparel Worker Hourly Wage**	Region	Country	1996 Apparel Imports to the US*	Average Apparel Worker Hourly Wage**	
Asia	Bangladesh	\$ 1,124,942,517	\$ 0.31	Middle East and Africa	Algeria	\$ 631	\$ 1.14	
	Burma	\$ 83,303,722	\$ 0.13		Egypt	\$ 255,290,009	\$ 0.63	
	China	\$ 3,769,503,724	\$ 0.28		Israel	\$ 297,599,984	\$ 5.65	
	Hong Kong	\$ 3,860,782,910	\$ 4.51		Kenya	\$ 27,379,281	\$ 0.30	
	India	\$ 1,187,232,780	\$ 0.36		Madagascar	\$ 11,025,936	\$ 0.29	
	Indonesia	\$ 1,325,623,877	\$ 0.34		Mauritius	\$ 164,650,630	\$ 1.02	
	Japan	\$ 52,478,406	\$ 16.29		Morocco	\$ 42,431,843	\$ 1.38	
	Macao	\$ 750,104,007	\$ ---		Nigeria	\$ 129,316	\$ 0.51	
	Malaysia	\$ 647,862,436	\$ 1.64		Oman	\$ 116,082,019	\$ 1.51	
	Pakistan	\$ 561,322,697	\$ 0.26		South Africa	\$ 61,034,931	\$ 1.26	
	Philippines	\$ 1,502,734,000	\$ 0.62		Tanzania	\$ 4,106,032	\$ 0.98	
	Singapore	\$ 325,608,047	\$ 4.11		United Arab Emirates	\$ 201,901,070	\$ ---	
	South Korea	\$ 1,380,716,816	\$ 4.18		Zambia (1995 figures)	\$ 231,803	\$ 0.38	
	Sri Lanka	\$ 1,006,572,301	\$ 0.41					
	Taiwan	\$ 1,973,691,533	\$ 5.10					
	Thailand	\$ 1,049,230,351	\$ 1.06					
Vietnam	\$ 23,562,702	\$ 0.32						
	SUBTOTAL	\$ 20,686,272,828		SUBTOTAL	\$ [redacted]			
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)				Europe	Austria	\$ 15,193,487	\$ 16.28	
	Canada	\$ 947,650,262	\$ 9.88		Bulgaria	\$ 41,836,059	\$ 0.47	
	Mexico	\$ 3,560,115,231	\$ 1.08		Belgium	\$ 8,319,449	\$ 19.00	
	SUBTOTAL	4,607,786,493			Czech Republic	\$ ---	\$ 1.99	
South America	Argentina	\$ 4,531,767	\$ 3.45		Denmark	\$ 4,872,075	\$ 20.78	
	Bolivia	\$ 12,104,407	\$ 1.34		Estonia	\$ 5,522,257	\$ 1.34	
	Brazil	\$ 84,487,818	\$ 1.92		Finland	\$ 1,168,354	\$ 14.67	
	Chile	\$ 26,940,543	\$ 2.33		France	\$ 161,604,167	\$ 15.31	
	Columbia	\$ 311,658,044	\$ 1.05		Germany	\$ 90,395,086	\$ 18.43	
	Paraguay	\$ 63,800	\$ 1.38		Greece	\$ 23,213,884	\$ 7.31	
	Peru	\$ 146,797,531	\$ 1.39		Holland	\$ 1,172,489	\$ 17.03	
	Uruguay	\$ 7,513,754	\$ 3.18		Hungary	\$ 55,179,728	\$ 2.26	
	Venezuela	\$ 3,593,134	\$ 1.96		Ireland	\$ 11,557,750	\$ 9.58	
		SUBTOTAL	\$ 697,890,798			Italy	\$ 1,148,774,723	\$ 14.32
	Caribbean Basin	Costa Rica	\$ 704,044,010		\$ 2.38	Malta	\$ 1,361,177	\$ 5.63
		Dominican Republic	\$ 1,753,452,264		\$ 1.62	Norway	\$ 3,140,179	\$ 20.07
		El Salvador	\$ 721,284,232	\$ 1.38	Portugal	\$ 65,815,224	\$ 3.91	
		Guatemala	\$ 796,359,571	\$ 1.25	Poland	\$ 42,592,175	\$ 2.10	
		Haiti	\$ 99,053,273	\$ 0.49	Romania	\$ 59,681,150	\$ 1.17	
		Honduras	\$ 1,219,549,671	\$ 1.31	Russia	\$ 51,618,986	\$ 0.58	
Jamaica		\$ 505,342,418	\$ 1.80	Slovakia	\$ 22,859,193	\$ 1.47		
Nicaragua		\$ 142,170,195	\$ 0.76	Spain	\$ 19,900,809	\$ 7.37		
		SUBTOTAL	\$ [redacted]		Sweden	\$ 4,524,549	\$ 17.59	
					Switzerland	\$ 32,110,382	\$ 19.93	
					Turkey	\$ 578,504,385	\$ 1.49	
					Ukraine	\$ 60,934,516	\$ ---	
					United Kingdom	\$ 104,429,053	\$ 9.37	
					SUBTOTAL	\$ [redacted]		
					Total 1996 Apparel Import	\$ 36,390,000,000		
					Average Apparel Hourly Wage in the United States:	\$ 9.56		

Adapted from <http://www.americanhistory.si.edu/westship/fchain/sources.htm>

DATA SET No. 1



This is the inside of a garment (clothing) factory about 1910.
The layout is similar to the Triangle Factory.
What do you notice about the workers?

<http://www.worklore.net/gallery-bettlife-04.html>
Collection of Brooklyn Public Library – Brooklyn Collection.

DATA SET No. 2

ORIGINS OF THE FIRE

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/frivals/triangle/triangleaccount.html>

Within two days after the fire, city officials began announcing preliminary conclusions concerning the tragic fire. Fire Marshal William Beers stated that the fire probably began when a lighted match was thrown into either waste near oil cans or into clippings under cutting table No. 2 on the Greene Street side of the eighth floor. Despite an announced policy of no smoking in the factory, Beers reported that fire investigators picked up many cigarette cases near the spot of the fire's origin, and that many employees reported that smoking on the premises was commonplace. Fire Chief Edward Croker told the press that doors leading into the factory workplace appeared to be locked and that his men had to chop their way through doors to get at the fire.

DATA SET No. 3

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/triangle/triangleaccount.html>

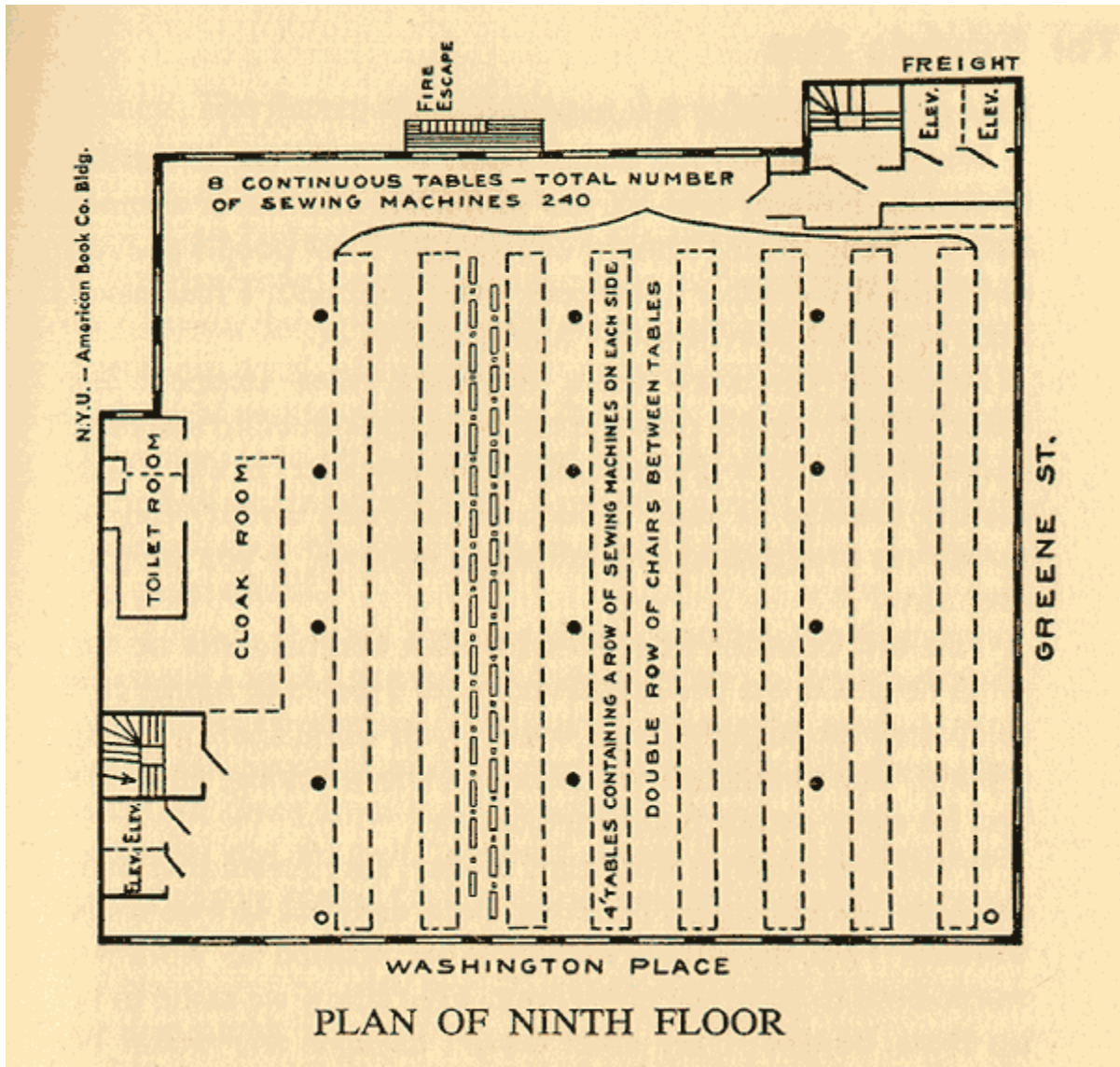
Many pointed fingers at New York City's Building Department, blaming it for an inadequate inspection of the Triangle Shirtwaist factory. District Attorney Charles Whitman called for "an immediate and rigid" investigation to determine whether the Building Department "had complied with the law." Coroner Holtzhauser, sobbing after his inspection of the Asch Building, declared: "Only one little fire escape! I shall proceed against the Building Department along with the others. They are as guilty as any." Defending the Department against charges he called "outrageously unfair," Borough President (Mayor) George McAneny said the building met standards when plans were filed for it eleven years earlier, and that the Department was seriously understaffed and underfunded and rarely had time to look at buildings except those being constructed.

DATA SET No. 4

Floor Plan for the 9th Floor Loft Factory of the Triangle Waist Company

There are two exits.

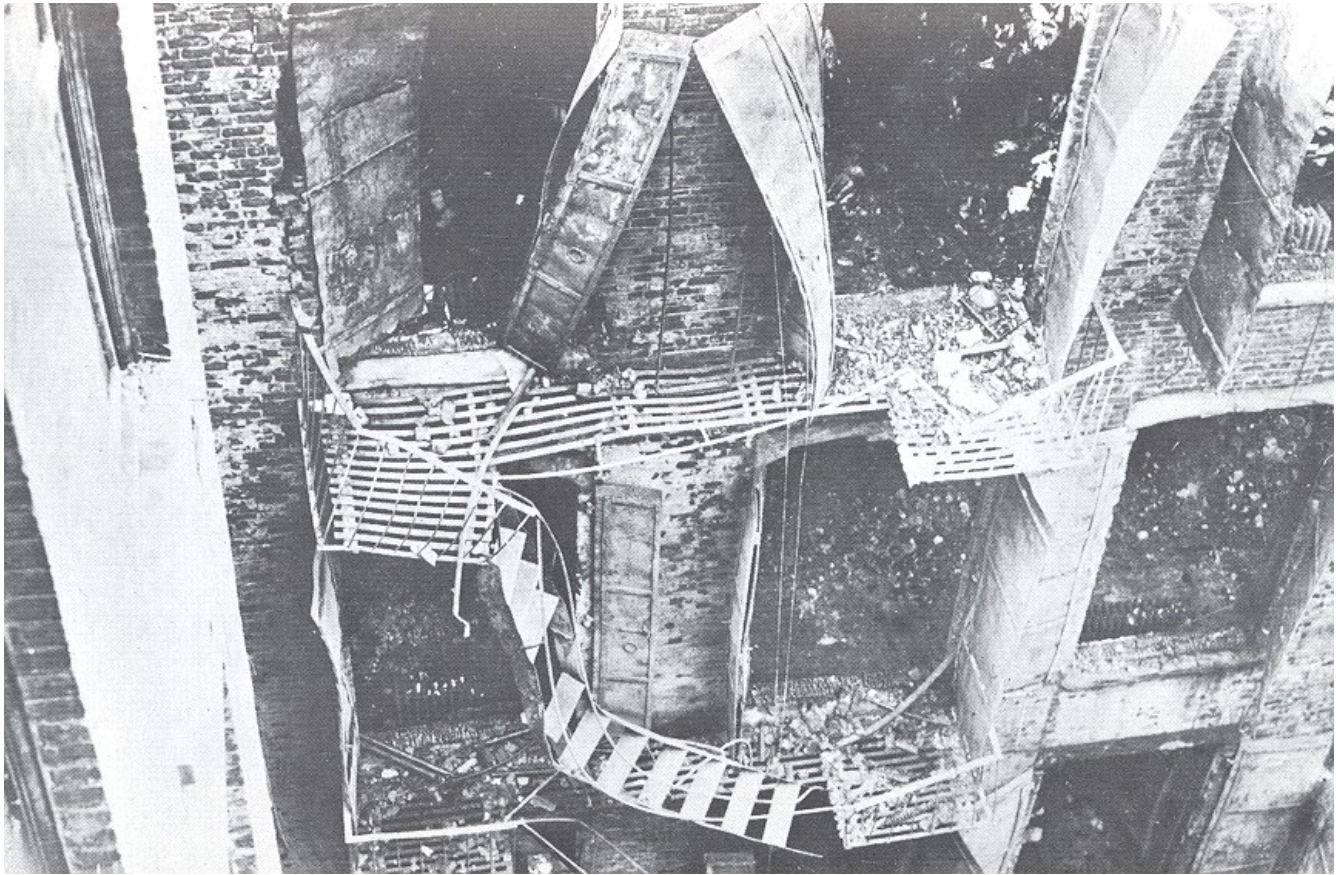
If one of them were locked, where would you have to go to get out?



http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/photos/photo_enlargements.html?image_id=32&sec_id=4

DATA SET No. 5

THE FIRE ESCAPES AFTER THE FIRE



www.louisville.edu/.../meyer/escape.htm

141 Men and Girls Die in Waist Factory Fire; Trapped High Up in Washington Place Building; Street Strewn with Bodies; Piles of Dead Inside

Three stories of a ten-floor building at the corner of Greene Street and Washington Place were burned yesterday, and while the fire was going on 141 young men and women at least 125 of them mere girls were burned to death or killed by jumping to the pavement below.

The building was fireproof. It shows now hardly any signs of the disaster that overtook it. The walls are as good as ever so are the floors, nothing is the worse for the fire except the furniture and 141 of the 600 men and girls that were employed in its upper three stories.

Most of the victims were suffocated or burned to death within the building, but some who fought their way to the windows and leaped met death as surely, but perhaps more quickly, on the pavements below. <SNIP>

The building was fireproof and the owners had put their trust in that. In fact, after the flames had done their worst last night, the building hardly showed a sign. Only the stock within it and the girl employees were burned.

A heap of corpses lay on the sidewalk for more than an hour. The firemen were too busy dealing with the fire to pay any attention to people whom they supposed beyond their aid. When the excitement had subsided to such an extent that some of the firemen and policemen could pay attention to this mass of the supposedly dead they found about half way down in the pack a girl who was still breathing. She died two minutes after she was found. <SNIP>

Back in Greene Street there was another crowd. At midnight it had not decreased in the least. The police were holding it back to the fire lines, and discussing the tragedy in a tone which those seasoned witnesses of death seldom use.

"It's the worst thing I ever saw," said one old policeman.

Chief Croker said it was an outrage. He spoke bitterly of the way in which the Manufacturers' Association had called a meeting in Wall Street to take measures against his proposal for enforcing better methods of protection for employees in cases of fire. <SNIP>

Girls Jump To Sure Death.

Fire Nets Prove Useless Firemen Helpless to Save Life.

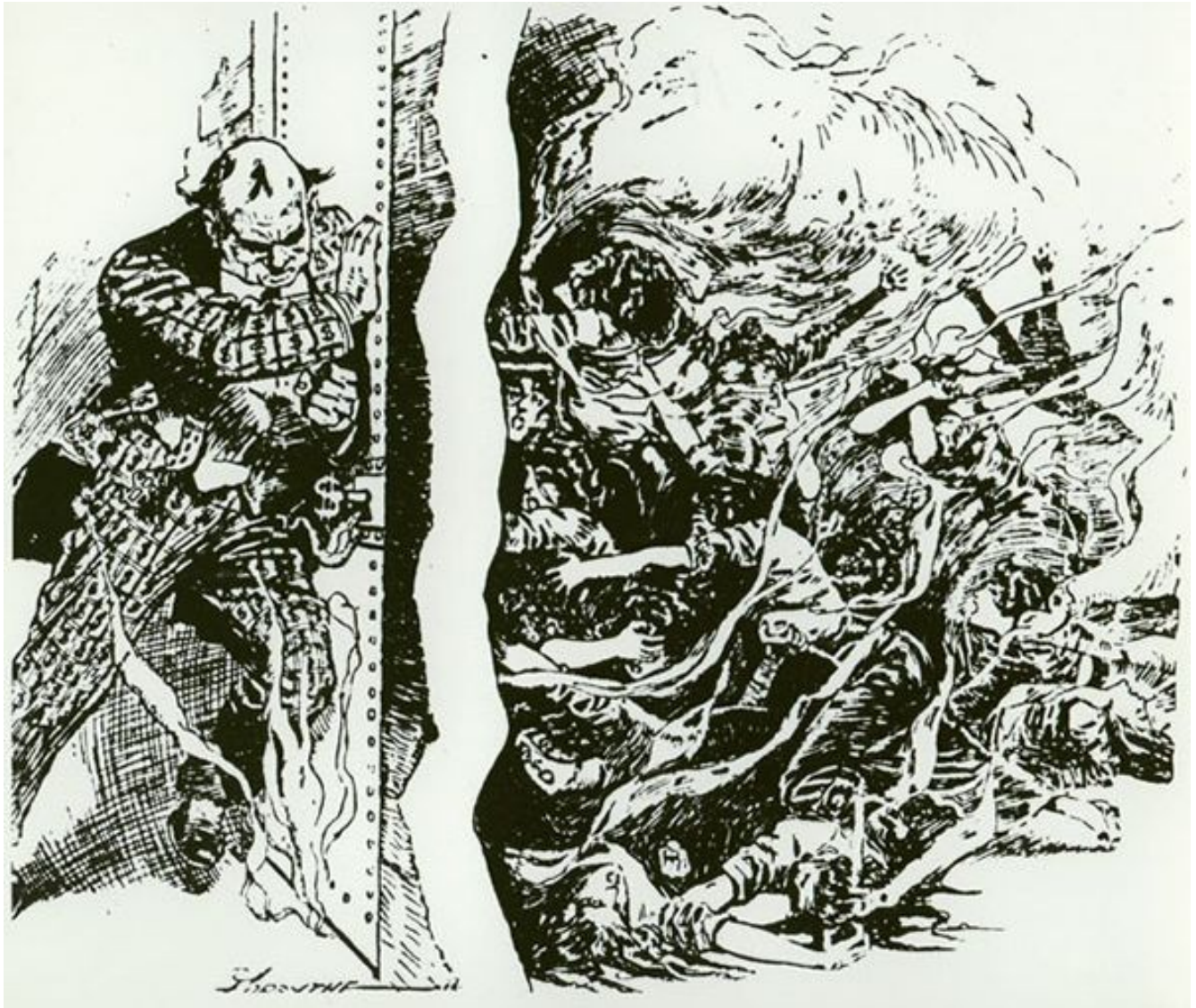
The fire which was first discovered at 4:40 o'clock on the eighth floor of the ten-story building at the corner of Washington Place and Greene Street, leaped through the three upper stories occupied by the Triangle Waist Company with a sudden rush that left the Fire Department helpless.

How the fire started no one knows. On the three upper floors of the building were 600 employees of the waist company, 500 of whom were girls. The victims mostly Italians, Russians, Hungarians, and Germans were girls and men who had been employed by the firm of Harris & Blanck, owners of the Triangle Waist Company, after the strike in which the Jewish girls, formerly employed, had been become unionized and had demanded better working conditions. The building had experienced four recent fires and had been reported by the Fire Department to the Building Department as unsafe in account of the insufficiency of its exits.

The building itself was of the most modern construction and classed as fireproof. What burned so quickly and disastrously for the victims were shirtwaists, hanging on lines above tiers of workers, sewing machines placed so closely together that there was hardly aisle room for the girls between them, and shirtwaist trimmings and cuttings which littered the floors above the eighth and ninth stories.

DATA SET No. 7

EDITORIAL CARTOON



Identify the symbols in the cartoon.

Who or what does the man represent?

What message is the artist trying provide?

DATA SET No. 8



Seamstresses on a picket line, New York City, 1910

New York cloak makers founded the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) in 1900. When the city's female shirtwaist makers staged their massive and ultimately victorious 1909 strike, known as the "Uprising of 20,000," the ILGWU was established in the industry.

Courtesy Library of Congress

DATA SET No. 9

New York (State) Factory Investigating Commission, Preliminary Report of the Factory Investigating Commission, 1912, 3 vols. (Albany, New York: The Argus Company, printers, 1912), 2:242-249 (PAGE 5)

MINUTES OF THE HEARING OF THE NEW YORK STATE FACTORY INVESTIGATING COMMISSION, HELD IN THE CITY HALL AT 10:30 A.M.

FIRST PUBLIC HEARING

(Continuation of the October 10, 1911 hearing)

(PAGE 242)

G. I. HARMON, called as a witness, and being duly sworn, testified as follows:

Q. What were you doing the rest of the year 1910 and 1911? A. When I finished that block I was put into another section, simply transferred to another section. I had from 19th Street and Broadway and 14th street and Sixth Avenue.

Q. That was the next section? A. I think that was the next section.

Q. Well, now, we will say that it took you two months to examine those eight blocks. Was that the first time you had ever examined those eight blocks? A. That was the first time. I had worked a part of the lower section before.

Q. Now, when was it that you examined the Triangle building prior to the fire? A. The 27th of February.

Q. 1911? A. 1911.

Q. Now, when did the fire take place? A. Some time in March; I don't recall the date.

Q. Then you examined the building within two weeks of the fire or so? A. Well, I don't know whether it was two months or two weeks, but it was a very short time.

Q. Within a month we will say? A. Yes.

Q. What examination did you make of that building? A. I made a regular inspection of each factory in the building.

Q. What did that consist of? What did you do? A. I first go to the office and introduce myself. I get the data that I have to have - the number of people employed, men and women. If they have children there, I want to get their certificates, see their register, ascertain all the information in the office, then get someone to go with me and go through the factory. If they

(PAGE 244)

have machinery, look at the machinery. In the Triangle building underneath the table I found cuttings there, and then I looked into the sanitary conditions, examined the toilets, to see that there are enough of them, and that they are clean, and the number employed there, to see if there are enough of them. I see that they have a dressing room if they have girls employed. If they have a fire-escape, I see that the windows to the fire-escape are open and free, raise them and try them. If there are doors to the halls I open the doors and see that they are unlocked. I look into the general sanitary condition of the entire building, the care of sinks and water, and see that their drinking water is all right.

Q. How long did it take you, for instance, to examine the Triangle Waist building. They have three lofts? A. Yes.

Q. How long did it take you? A. Possibly an hour and a half to two hours.

Q. And were any of aisles which led to the fire-escapes blocked by material? A. No. The aisles that lead to the fire-escape, you mean? Between the machines, you mean?

Q. Yes. A. Not that I recall. If there was, I made a note of it. I may have made a note of it in my book, and I may have not. The only way I could tell is by referring to my book.

Q. Were any of the doors locked which led to the stairs? A. They were not.

Q. Did they have locks on them? A. Yes.

Q. Before you went around to examine this factory, you went to the office and asked for someone in authority and told them your business and what you were there for? A. Yes.

Q. So that they had plenty (sic) of time to remedy any defects that existed temporarily while you were there? A. Yes.

Q. So, as far as the locking of the doors was concerned, for even material in the aisles, that might have been hastily cleaned up or remedied for the moment? A. That might have been.

Q. Well, don't you think it would have been better and a fairer examination if you didn't tell them who you were, and just walked through? A. Well, in the first place, it is sometimes difficult to get into a place of that kind without telling them who you are.

DATA SET No. 10

The Ladies' Garment Worker, April 1911.

When ready to go to press we learn of the awful calamity at the Triangle Waist Company. While most of the garment manufacturing establishments in New York City are not any better as far as fire protection is concerned, it is significant that the worst calamity happened at the Triangle, known among the workpeople in the trade as the "prison." The name is probably due the extraordinary discipline with poor earning for which the firm is famous.

It is not strange that in this most democratic of all countries in the world the employers can so easily use the arm of the law to protect themselves against any inconveniences which their workpeople may cause them, but the law is nowhere when the life and limb of the worker is to be protected.

The writer of these lines, when approaching the factory some two years ago in an attempt to organize the workpeople of that firm, was pounced upon by two plainclothed policemen and taken to the police cell. No one, however, knows whom to blame for this calamity.

It is evident that the worker can expect next to nothing in the way of protection from the legal authorities. Whether it is the Supreme Court or the good people who are interested in the architectural beauties of the city, nothing will be done until the workers will begin in earnest to attend to their own business. They must declare a strike at all such fire traps until adequate protection is provided.

Pickets should be posted at the entrance of such places with sign boards bearing the following inscription: *Please do not go to work in this place until proper fire protection is provided for the workpeople.*

Let the authorities find our action contrary to the Sherman Anti-Trust Laws or any other of the innumerable laws provide to safeguard the interest of the capitalists, and which the authorities are ever ready to guard jealousy. We will cheerfully go to prison but there will be no more fire traps. Such a strike will put an end to such a state of things within 48 hours.

There are in the same building a number of cloak shops, who before the general strike, worked until 6 o'clock on Saturdays. Thanks to the change in hours all these left at 1 o'clock, otherwise the victims would have been more numerous.

http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/texts/newspaper/lgw_0411.html

DATA SET No. 11

While the city mourned and searched for causes of the tragedy, garment workers buried their dead. First published in *Life and Labor*, May 1911.

What Is To Be Done?

by Martha Bensley Bruere

Well, the fire is over, the girls are dead, and as I write, the procession in honor of the unidentified dead is moving by under my windows. Now what is going to be done about it?

Harris and Blanck, the Triangle Company, have offered to pay one week's wages to the families of the dead girls—as though it were summer and they are giving them a vacation! Three days after the fire they inserted in the trade papers this notice:

NOTICE, THE TRIANGLE WAIST CO. beg to notify their customers that they are in good working order. HEADQUARTERS now at 9-11 University Place

The day after they were installed in their new quarters, the Building Department of New York City discovered that 9-11 University Place was not even fireproof, and that the firm had already blocked the exit to the one fire escape by two rows of sewing machines.

And still as I write the mourning procession moves past in the rain. For two hours they have been going steadily by and the end is not yet in sight. There have been no carriages, no imposing marshals on horseback; just thousands and thousands of working men and women carrying the banners of their trades through the long three-mile tramp in the rain. Never have I seen a military pageant or triumphant ovation so impressive; for it is not because 146 workers were killed in the Triangle shop—not altogether. It is because every year there are 50,000 working men and women killed in the United States—136 a day; almost as many as happened to be killed together on the 25th of March; and because slowly, very slowly, it is dawning on these thousands on thousands that such things do not have to be!

It is four hours later and the last of the procession has just passed.

Leon Stein, ed., *Out of the Sweatshop: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy* (New York: Quadrangle/New Times Book Company, 1977), pp. 194-195.

http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/texts/stein_ootss/ootss_mbb.html?location=Mourning+and+Protest

DATA SET No. 12 (Optional)

Time Table of the Lowell Mills (Merrimack Valley Textile Museum)

- 1) Using this simple artifact, what can you learn about the everyday lives of mill workers?
- 2) What does the bell schedule tell you? Why did the bell schedule change seasonally?
- 3) What is the effective date of the schedule? Why might this be significant?
- 4) Compare this to the work schedule of non-mill workers. Would it have been similar or different? What would explain these differences or similarities?

TIME TABLE OF THE LOWELL MILLS,		
Arranged to make the working time throughout the year average 11 hours per day. TO TAKE EFFECT SEPTEMBER 21st, 1853. The Standard time being that of the meridian of Lowell, as shown by the Regulator Clock of ANOS SANBORN, Post Office Corner, Central Street.		
From March 20th to September 19th, inclusive.		
COMMENCE WORK, at 6.30 A. M. LEAVE OFF WORK, at 6.30 P. M., except on Saturday Evenings. BREAKFAST at 6 A. M. DINNER, at 12 M. Commence Work, after dinner, 12.45 P. M.		
From September 20th to March 19th, inclusive.		
COMMENCE WORK at 7.00 A. M. LEAVE OFF WORK, at 7.00 P. M., except on Saturday Evenings. BREAKFAST at 6.30 A. M. DINNER, at 12.30 P. M. Commence Work, after dinner, 1.15 P. M.		
BELLS.		
From March 20th to September 19th, inclusive.		
<i>Morning Bells.</i>	<i>Dinner Bells.</i>	<i>Evening Bells.</i>
First bell, 4.30 A. M.	Ring out, 12.00 M.	Ring out, 6.30 P. M.
Second, 5.30 A. M.; Third, 6.20.	Ring in, 12.35 P. M.	Except on Saturday Evenings.
From September 20th to March 19th, inclusive.		
<i>Morning Bells.</i>	<i>Dinner Bells.</i>	<i>Evening Bells.</i>
First bell, 5.00 A. M.	Ring out, 12.30 P. M.	Ring out at, 7.00 P. M.
Second, 6.00 A. M.; Third, 6.50.	Ring in, 1.05 P. M.	Except on Saturday Evenings.
SATURDAY EVENING BELLS.		
During APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY, and AUGUST, Ring Out, at 6.00 P. M. The remaining Saturday Evenings in the year, ring out as follows:		
SEPTEMBER.	NOVEMBER.	JANUARY.
First Saturday, ring out 6.00 P. M.	Third Saturday ring out 4.00 P. M.	Third Saturday, ring out 4.25 P. M.
Second " " 5.45 "	Fourth " " 3.55 "	Fourth " " 4.35 "
Third " " 5.30 "		
Fourth " " 5.20 "	DECEMBER.	FEBRUARY.
OCTOBER.	First Saturday, ring out 3.50 P. M.	First Saturday, ring out 4.45 P. M.
First Saturday, ring out 5.05 P. M.	Second " " 3.55 "	Second " " 4.55 "
Second " " 4.55 "	Third " " 3.55 "	Third " " 5.00 "
Third " " 4.45 "	Fourth " " 4.00 "	Fourth " " 5.10 "
Fourth " " 4.35 "	Fifth " " 4.00 "	
Fifth " " 4.25 "	JANUARY.	MARCH.
NOVEMBER.	First Saturday, ring out 4.10 P. M.	First Saturday, ring out 5.25 P. M.
First Saturday, ring out 4.15 P. M.	Second " " 4.15 "	Second " " 5.30 "
Second " " 4.05 "		Third " " 5.35 "
		Fourth " " 5.45 "
YARD GATES will be opened at the first stroke of the bells for entering or leaving the Mills.		
* * * <i>SPEED GATES commence hoisting three minutes before commencing work.</i>		

A Tale of Two Worksites - social Darwinism as applied to human history

[Natural History](#), [Oct, 1997](#) by [Stephen Jay Gould](#)

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1134/is_n9_v106/ai_20135595/pg_13

When the Asch Building was completed in 1900, an inspector for the Building Department informed the architect that a third staircase should be provided. But the architect sought and received a variance, arguing that the single fire escape effectively served as the missing staircase required by law for structures with more than 10,000 square feet per floor. Moreover, the single fire escape -- which buckled and fell during the fire, as a result of poor maintenance and too great a weight of workers trying to escape -- led only to a glass skylight in a closed courtyard. The building inspector had also complained about this arrangement, and the architect had promised to make the necessary alterations. But no changes were ever made, and the falling fire escape plunged right through the skylight, greatly increasing the death toll.

Two final quotations highlight the case for inadequate legal protection as a primary cause of the unconscionable death toll in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire (Leon Stein's excellent book, *The Triangle Fire*, [J. B. Lippincott Company, 1962] served as my chief source for information about this event).

Rose Safran, a survivor of the fire and supporter of the 1909 strike, said, "If the union had won we would have been safe. Two of our demands were for adequate fire escapes and for open doors from the factories to the street. But the bosses defeated us and we didn't get the open doors or the better fire escapes. So our friends are dead."

A budding inspector who had actually written to the Triangle management just a few months before, asking for an appointment to discuss the initiation of fire drills, commented after the blaze: "There are only two or three factories in the city where fire drills are in use. In some of them where I have installed the system myself, the owners have discontinued it. The neglect of factory owners in the matter of safety of their employees is absolutely criminal. One man whom I advised to install a fire drill replied to me: 'Let 'em burn. They're a lot of cattle, anyway.'"

DATA SET 14 (Optional)

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Building Today

urbandreams.ousd.k12.ca.us/.../s_file08-09.htm

The Asch Building-known as the Brown Building today--was the site of the Triangle Factory fire and the first large strike of women workers in this country.

Today the building is a National Historic Landmark. It is located at 23-29 Washington Place in New York City, New York. The building is now used as classrooms and offices by New York University and is not open to the public.

Excerpted from <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/pwwmh/ny30.htm>



Global Sources



Clothing production today is a complex global system of manufacturing and retailing. Garments can be cut in one country, assembled in another, finished in a third, and sold around the world. Clothing production is also a major portion of many nations' economies. In 1996, global production of apparel exceeded \$200 billion in retail value. About \$125 billion is exported between countries, and \$75 billion is consumed in the country of origin. In 1996, the United States produced \$49.3 billion (nearly 25 percent of the world total) and imported about \$36.4 billion worth of clothing.

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/sweatshops/ffchain/source.htm>

Assessments

Preliminary Hypothesis and Conclusion Worksheet [formative] (WMAS SS B.12.2)

Analysis of cartoon [formative] (WMAS SS B.12.9)

Globalization activity [formative] (WMAS SS D.12.6)

Journal entries [formative]

Letter to the Editor [summative] (WMAS SS B.12.1)

Lesson Plan Evaluation and Reflection

PASS STANDARDS

Standard 1 Higher Order Thinking - 5

I think this lesson has multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking, especially evaluation and integration of information from multiple points of view, during the Data Set analysis activity. Students also have the opportunity to synthesize this information and create a reasoned argument in light of competing evidence as documented in the letter to the editor. I would rate this lesson a 5 in the area of Higher Order Thinking because of the time spent and level of discussion during the evaluation of the data sets.

Standard 2 Deep Knowledge – 4

This lesson offers students an opportunity to delve into the issues of the effects of immigration, union organization, and government responsibility to ensure the safety of the general public. In this lesson, the teacher is providing the information and students are not finding information on their own, however, students do manipulate that information to support a reasoned argument regarding their conclusion. With the variety of small group and full class discussion, most students will have focused on a single topic for a period of time and arrived at a reasoned, supported conclusion which they explain to others. I would give this lesson a 4 in Deep Knowledge.

Standard 3 Substantive Conversation – 5

There are a number of opportunities during this lesson for sustained, substantive conversations between students and with the teacher. Students discuss historical and economic issues, form generalizations, and share and explain their conclusions with others. The scaffolding of the inquiry allows students to build coherently on the discussion of previous evidence and hypotheses. Assuming that almost all students participate in the discussions, this lesson would earn a 5 in Substantive Conversation.

Standard 4 Connection to the World Beyond the Classroom – 4

Depending on the students in the class, this topic may or may not relate to their personal experience, however, labor relations and sweatshops are still an issue of public concern 85 years after the Triangle Fire. Students are provided the opportunity to follow up with a personal project at the end of the lesson and in that project they would most likely communicate with others beyond the classroom. Because of the optional nature of the follow up, this lesson earns a 4 in the area Connection to the World Beyond the Classroom.

Standard 5 Ethical Valuing – 4

This lesson addresses issues of the common good, justice, and diversity but they are not always explicitly stated. Students do however consider competing viewpoints during the Letter to the Editor assessment. Because the democratic values are only implied and not stated, this lesson would earn a 4 as long as many students participate in the discussion.

Standard 6 Integration – 3

This lesson meets the criteria of discussing two social science disciplines (history and economics) but not connecting two separate subject areas (such as math or science). Connections are definitely made between the past and present with the evaluation of modern sweatshop issues compared to past issues. Since this lesson only incorporates two types of integration and does not really address civic efficacy, this lesson would earn a 3 in the area of Integration.

GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS AND CHANGES

I would like to find a more meaningful way to end the lesson. It seems as though the lesson stops abruptly without a logical next step. I would like the students to have another opportunity to make this lesson meaningful in their lives.

If I were to use this lesson with ELL students, a lot of the text would have to be adapted or scaffolded for students to reap the benefit of evaluating primary documents. I would also incorporate more language acquisition activities in the lesson if I were to revise it.

I would also try to find more sources that would provide information or perspectives on the factory owners' point of view. The vast majority of the available information is biased towards the workers and does not explore the owners' perspective in depth.

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