

Name _____

The Dangers of Working in a Factory: The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire

This assignment uses information from Cornell University's "Remembering the 1911 Triangle Factory Fire" website: <http://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/index.html> .

Part 1 – The New York Times Article about the Fire, March 26, 1911

Directions: Under "Learn About the Fire," click "Review original text documents." Under "Fire! Newspaper and Magazine Articles," click the first article from the *New York Times*, "141 Men and Girls Died in Waist Factory Fire." Read the introduction and the section entitled "All Over in Half an Hour."

Questions:

1. How many people died in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire?
2. How did many of the victims die?
3. Why couldn't the workers get out of the building when it caught on fire?
4. Why wasn't the building better equipped to allow the workers to escape?

Part 2 – Victims of the Fire

Return to the site's homepage and click "Learn About The Fire," and then "Read the Story of the Fire."

After reading the introduction, click "Victims List" to the right.

5. In looking at the list and clicking on a few of the names, what generalizations can you make about the victims?
 - Gender?
 - Age?

- Home Country?
- Religion?

Click Back. Under related resources, click “9th Floor Model.”

6. After looking at the model, what items made the inside of this so-called fireproof building so flammable?

7. What obstacles prevented the workers on the 9th floor from being able to get out of the building?

8. What problems prevented the fire department from being able to help people and put the fire out?

Part 3 – Photos from the Factory and the Fire

Click back. From the main page underneath “Learn about the Fire,” click “View Photographs and Illustrations.”

Start with the photos labeled “Workers and Working Conditions.” Pay close attention to photos 7, 11, 12, 14, 16, 24.

9. What kinds of conditions are these people working in?

10. What made this work dangerous or harmful to one’s health?

Click Back. On the right, click “Triangle Fire.”

Pay close attention to photos 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18.

11. Describe the scene outside the building during and after the fire.

12. In looking at the pictures of the inside of the building, what made it more difficult for the workers to get out?

Part 4 – Trial

Return to the Main Page. Under “Learn About the Fire,” click “Read the Story of the Fire.” On the top of the page, there are two rows of options. On the second row that begins with “Introduction,” click the last option- “Investigation and Trial.” Read the article and answer the question.

13. Why do you think there was never any real punishment for the owners of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory?

Part 5 – Reform

On the top of the last page, click “Legacy” and read about the legacy of the fire to answer the next questions.

14. How did the fire impact future workers in New York?