After the Fire

Analyze how dates and origins shape evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 "Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail about each source's date or origin. Circle one detail each source can support, then number the sources 1, 2, and 3 in the order they were created.

Sources on the Triangle Fire

(1) On March 25, 1911, fire swept through the Triangle Waist Company factory on the eighth, ninth, and tenth floors of the Asch Building in Manhattan. A report in The New York Times, dated March 26, described crowds below the building and workers at windows. The article appeared one day after the fire and was produced in New York City, where the disaster occurred. Early newspaper reporting did not include the final death total. Later records established that 146 people died, including many young immigrant garment workers.

(2) In hearings held after the fire, the New York State Factory Investigating Commission collected sworn testimony from workers, relatives, and factory officials. One hearing transcript records workers' claims that a Washington Place exit door was locked during the workday. The commission was a state body created in 1911 after the fire. Its hearing records preserve statements from people connected to the factory, including claims that officials could question alongside other evidence. The transcript focuses on working conditions, exits, elevators, and fire escapes, issues the commission examined while investigating causes and proposing workplace-safety changes.

(3) Nearly a century later, journalist David Von Drehle published Triangle: The Fire That Changed America in 2003. This secondary source draws on newspaper reports, testimony, and later research. Writing from a later period, Von Drehle could compare many records and trace how the fire influenced New York labor and safety laws. He did not witness the event, unlike people quoted in the 1911 sources. His book offers a broader interpretation than a single hearing transcript, while the earlier sources preserve observations and claims made close to the disaster.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What can the March 26 date of The New York Times report support about the fire? Cite one detail from the passage, then explain one limit of this source.

2. Which source in the passage is primary evidence? Use its origin and date to explain why it is primary.

3. How should a reader qualify the claim that an exit door was locked? Cite evidence about the origin of that claim.

4. Which source is best for analyzing the fire's influence on later labor and safety laws? Cite evidence about the source's date and origin.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences that make a claim about the Triangle fire using at least two sources from the passage. Identify each source's date and origin, cite a specific detail, and explain how the sources' different features strengthen or limit your claim.

ANSWER KEY

After the Fire

HIGH SCHOOL · RH.9-10.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail about each source's date or origin. Circle one detail each source can support, then number the sources 1, 2, and 3 in the order they were created. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What can the March 26 date of The New York Times report support about the fire? Cite one detail from the passage, then explain one limit of this source.	**It supports that reporters recorded immediate scenes, such as "crowds below the building" and "workers at windows." Because it was published one day after the fire, it did not include the final death total.**
2	Which source in the passage is primary evidence? Use its origin and date to explain why it is primary.	**The Factory Investigating Commission hearing transcript is primary evidence. It preserved statements from people connected to the factory, and the state commission created it in 1911 after the fire.**
3	How should a reader qualify the claim that an exit door was locked? Cite evidence about the origin of that claim.	**A reader should describe it as a workers' claim, not as certain proof. The claim appears in testimony collected by the state commission from people connected to the factory.**
4	Which source is best for analyzing the fire's influence on later labor and safety laws? Cite evidence about the source's date and origin.	**Von Drehle's 2003 book is best because it is a later secondary source that compares many records and traces how the fire influenced New York labor and safety laws.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The March 26, 1911, New York Times report, produced in New York City one day after the fire, supports the claim that trapped workers were visible at windows, but it could not yet give the final death total. A 1911 state commission hearing transcript records workers' claims that an exit door was locked, although a claim is not automatic proof. Journalist David Von Drehle's 2003 history strengthens an analysis of the fire's later effects because it compares records and traces changes in New York labor and safety laws.

Accept equivalent claims when students cite accurate passage details and connect a source's date and origin to what it can support or limit. For the open task, require exactly three sentences, at least two sources, and specific evidence rather than unsupported opinion.