

Hidden Mill Stories

Use precise evidence to uncover what a public story leaves out.

9-10R1 "Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences; develop questions for deeper understanding and for further exploration. (RI&RL)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that reveal a difference between the mill's public image and workers' experiences, circle one detail that shows Mara handling evidence carefully, and number two details that support an inference about the final student's question.

The Archive Label

- ① At 7:15 each morning, Mara unlocked the narrow door of the town archive before school. She had volunteered after discovering that the library's basement held boxes from the old Riverton Textile Mill. Most residents passed the boarded building without looking at it. Inside the archive, Mara wore cotton gloves and copied dates from payroll cards into a spreadsheet. The work was slow, but she photographed each card before returning it to its box. Her history teacher had warned that one missing record could distort the story of the mill's workers.
- ② One afternoon, Mara found a folder labeled "Safety Committee, 1937" beneath a stack of invoices. The meeting notes listed cracked windows, burned fingers, and requests for drinking water near the looms. On the last page, a penciled sentence stated that managers had promised repairs "when business improves." Mara checked the next month's minutes. Instead of repairs, the committee recorded that two workers had been dismissed for leaving their machines to get water. She copied both pages, then placed a bright blue slip in the folder so the librarian would see it. At home, Mara searched newspaper archives, but the local paper mentioned only the mill's record profits that year.
- ③ The next week, the library announced an exhibit about the mill. Its first draft celebrated jobs, growth, and the brick tower that defined Riverton's skyline. Mara asked whether the safety notes could appear beside photographs of picnics. The librarian paused, then gave Mara a blank label card and said, "Write what the documents can prove." Mara chose a photograph of workers entering the gate at dawn. Under it, she wrote about the committee's requests and dismissals, citing dates of both meetings. When her classmates visited, they stood silently before the label. Then one student asked why no adult had told them about this part of the town's history.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What can you infer about the managers' priorities in 1937? Cite two details from the passage that support your inference.

2 How does the contrast between the exhibit's first draft and Mara's label suggest that Riverton's mill story was incomplete? Use two details as evidence.

3 What does the librarian mean by, "Write what the documents can prove"? Explain how Mara follows that direction.

4 What concern does the final student's question reveal? Cite two details that explain why the student might have that concern.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write an 80-110 word curator's note for the exhibit. Make one logical inference about how the town's public story differs from workers' experiences, support it with two specific details, and end with one question for further research.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two details that reveal a difference between the mill's public image and workers' experiences, circle one detail that shows Mara handling evidence carefully, and number two details that support an inference about the final student's question. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What can you infer about the managers' priorities in 1937? Cite two details from the passage that support your inference.	The managers appear to have prioritized production or profit over worker safety. They postponed repairs despite safety complaints, and two workers were dismissed for leaving machines to get water.
2	How does the contrast between the exhibit's first draft and Mara's label suggest that Riverton's mill story was incomplete? Use two details as evidence.	The first draft celebrates jobs, growth, and the tower, while Mara's label adds evidence about safety requests and dismissals. The contrast suggests that the public story emphasized success and left out workers' hardships.
3	What does the librarian mean by, "Write what the documents can prove"? Explain how Mara follows that direction.	The librarian means Mara should make claims supported by records, not guesses. Mara cites the dates of both safety-committee meetings when she writes the label.
4	What concern does the final student's question reveal? Cite two details that explain why the student might have that concern.	The student is concerned that adults or local history have hidden an important part of the town's past. The newspaper reported record profits, and the original exhibit draft celebrated growth, while Mara's documents showed safety problems and dismissals.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The town's public story of the mill was more polished than the workers' experience. The local paper reported record profits, while the safety committee described burned fingers and a need for drinking water. Managers also delayed repairs and dismissed two workers who left machines for water. These details suggest that mill leaders protected production and reputation even when workers raised safety concerns. What other records, such as letters or hospital reports, might show how often workers were hurt or punished?

Accept logical inferences that connect specific evidence to a claim about the mill, the exhibit, or the town's historical narrative. For Part 3, accept a relevant research question that cannot be fully answered by the passage and an 80-110 word response with two accurate details.