Two Counts, One Fire

Read two accounts of the Triangle factory fire

7.P.3.1.A "Paraphrase the main idea and cite evidence from primary and secondary sources; provide an accurate summary of a source distinct from prior knowledge or opinion."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the death count given by each source, and circle each source's name. Number one detail from each source that helps you explain what happened.

Reporting the Triangle Factory Fire

1. On March 25, 1911, fire broke out at the Triangle Waist Company in New York City. The factory made shirtwaists, a type of blouse, and employed many young immigrant women. Flames spread through the upper floors of the building while workers tried to escape. A March 26 report in *The New York Times* gave a death count of 141. The article described workers jumping from the building as firefighters tried to reach the upper floors. Published the next day, the newspaper recorded what was known soon after the fire.

2. The Cornell University ILR School's *Remembering the Triangle Factory Fire* website, created long after 1911, reports that 146 workers died. Its account describes locked exit doors and a fire escape that collapsed under the weight of people trying to flee. It also explains that fire ladders could not reach the upper floors. Unlike a reporter writing the next day, researchers building a history website could use records gathered after the disaster. The later count does not erase the newspaper report. It gives a fuller picture of the loss.

3. The disaster led to public pressure for safer workplaces. In the years that followed, New York passed laws to improve factory fire safety and make exits safer. Neither source can tell us exactly what every worker thought as the fire spread. The early newspaper report records an initial number and scenes from the day; the later history site adds findings drawn from more records. Reading them together shows both what people knew right away and what became clear later, without treating a first report as the final account.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Paraphrase the main idea of the newspaper report as described in the passage. Cite one detail from that report.

2. Paraphrase the main idea of Cornell's account. Cite two details from that source.

3. Write a two-sentence summary of what the two sources reveal about the fire. Include a detail from each source, but no opinion.

4. Why would a summary claiming that every worker felt the same way during the fire be inaccurate? Support your answer with evidence from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A museum visitor says, "The two death counts prove one source is useless." Write a four-sentence reply that cites a detail from each named source, explains why their counts may differ, and summarizes what the sources reveal without presenting your opinion as fact.

ANSWER KEY

Two Counts, One Fire

GRADE 7 · 7.P.3.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the death count given by each source, and circle each source's name. Number one detail from each source that helps you explain what happened. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Paraphrase the main idea of the newspaper report as described in the passage. Cite one detail from that report.	**The newspaper reported a deadly factory fire soon after it happened. Its March 26 report gave a death count of 141.**
2	Paraphrase the main idea of Cornell's account. Cite two details from that source.	**Cornell's account shows the fire's deadly toll and the dangers workers faced while escaping. It reports 146 deaths and describes a fire escape that collapsed.**
3	Write a two-sentence summary of what the two sources reveal about the fire. Include a detail from each source, but no opinion.	**The next day, *The New York Times* reported 141 deaths in the Triangle factory fire. Cornell's later account gives a count of 146 and describes locked exit doors.**
4	Why would a summary claiming that every worker felt the same way during the fire be inaccurate? Support your answer with evidence from the passage.	**Neither source tells us exactly what every worker thought. They report events and findings, such as workers jumping and blocked escape routes, rather than every worker's feelings.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The New York Times reported 141 deaths the day after the Triangle factory fire. Cornell's later account reports 146 deaths and describes a fire escape that collapsed. The counts may differ because the newspaper was published before researchers could gather later records. Together, the sources show that many workers died and that escaping the burning building was difficult.

Accept accurate paraphrases with details attributed to the correct source. For the open task, look for an explanation based on when each account was made, not an unsupported claim that either source lied.