Routes to Safety

Read an argument about a historical factory fire and the evidence behind it

7.P.4.1 "Summarize and paraphrase, integrate evidence, and cite sources to create written products, research projects, and presentations for multiple purposes related to social studies content..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's claim and circle one cited detail from each source. Number the opposing viewpoint 1 and the writer's response 2 to see how the argument is built.

Could Exit Inspections Have Helped?

(1) On March 25, 1911, a fire swept through the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City. The factory made women's blouses, and many workers were young immigrant women. According to the National Park Service's account of the fire, 146 people died. The agency also reports that the factory's fire escape collapsed while workers tried to flee. The disaster raises a question for city leaders: what safety rule might have saved lives? I argue that city officials should have required regular inspections of factory exits.

(2) Evidence from another source strengthens that claim. Cornell University's Triangle Fire archive includes accounts of workers who found a locked door during the fire. A locked exit could stop workers from reaching a stairway, even if they knew where to go. The collapsed fire escape reported by the National Park Service posed a different danger: a route that looked available failed under pressure. Together, these sources point to two problems that inspectors could have checked, whether exits opened and whether escape structures were safe.

(3) Some factory owners might have argued that frequent inspections would interrupt work and cost money. That concern matters, but it does not outweigh the risk shown by the sources. Checking a door and examining a fire escape would not guarantee that every worker survived. Still, the locked door described in Cornell's archive and the collapsed escape reported by the National Park Service show why waiting for a disaster was dangerous. Regular exit inspections would have made safety problems harder to ignore before workers needed those routes.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Paraphrase the detail from Cornell University's archive about the door. How does it support the writer's claim?

2. Which detail does the writer cite from the National Park Service, and how does the writer connect it to inspections?

3. What opposing viewpoint does the writer recognize? How does the writer respond using evidence from a named source?

4. In two sentences, summarize the writer's claim and explain how evidence from both named sources works together to support it.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one specific factory safety rule other than regular exit inspections that city leaders could have required before the fire. In one paragraph, state your claim, cite evidence from both named sources in the passage, explain how it supports your rule, and recognize one opposing viewpoint.

ANSWER KEY

Routes to Safety

GRADE 7 · 7.P.4.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's claim and circle one cited detail from each source. Number the opposing viewpoint 1 and the writer's response 2 to see how the argument is built. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Paraphrase the detail from Cornell University's archive about the door. How does it support the writer's claim?	**Workers came to a door they could not open. Inspectors could have checked whether exit doors opened before an emergency.**
2	Which detail does the writer cite from the National Park Service, and how does the writer connect it to inspections?	**The fire escape collapsed as workers tried to flee. The writer reasons that an inspection could have checked whether the escape structure was safe.**
3	What opposing viewpoint does the writer recognize? How does the writer respond using evidence from a named source?	**Some owners might have argued that inspections cost money and interrupt work. The writer responds that the danger was more important, citing Cornell's account of a locked door or the National Park Service's report of a collapsed fire escape.**
4	In two sentences, summarize the writer's claim and explain how evidence from both named sources works together to support it.	**The writer argues that city officials should have required regular factory exit inspections. Cornell University's archive describes a locked door, while the National Park Service reports a collapsed fire escape, showing two hazards inspectors could have checked.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

City leaders should have required factory owners to keep stairway exit doors unlocked during work hours. Cornell University's Triangle Fire archive describes workers finding a locked door during the fire, which shows why this rule could have helped people reach a stairway. The National Park Service reports that the fire escape collapsed; when one route failed, access to a stairway became even more important. Some owners might have worried that unlocked exits would make it harder to control who entered the factory, but workers needed a way out in an emergency.

Accept accurate paraphrases that distinguish a source's reported detail from the writer's reasoning. For Part 3, accept any one specific rule other than regular exit inspections if the student cites both sources, connects their evidence to that rule, and recognizes an opposing view.