Cities by Numbers

Compare a census trend with a workplace account.

9-10.RH.7 "Integrate and evaluate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, graphs, and research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a sentence that interprets the table and circle a detail about the factory fire. Label your marks "trend" and "case" to prepare to compare the two kinds of evidence.

Growth and Danger in American Cities

1 In 1911, a fire at New York City's Triangle Shirtwaist factory killed 146 workers. Reports of the disaster drew attention to workplace dangers, including a locked exit door and an inadequate fire escape. Meanwhile, cities offered jobs that drew many newcomers. The fire reveals risks at one workplace, but it cannot show how many Americans lived in cities.

U.S. CENSUS: SHARE OF THE POPULATION CLASSIFIED AS URBAN

Year	Urban share
1900	39.6%
1910	45.6%
1920	51.2%

2 The census table tracks the share of Americans living in places classified as urban. From 1900 to 1920, that share rose by 11.6 percentage points, and by 1920 it exceeded half the population. These figures support a story of growing urban life, but they do not show that every city worker faced conditions like those at Triangle.

3 The table also cannot explain why the urban share changed. People moved to cities, but births, changing boundaries, and census definitions can affect such a percentage. The fire account provides evidence of a specific workplace danger, not a national rate of unsafe factories. Read together, the account and table show urban growth alongside risks faced by some workers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the table add to what the Triangle fire account tells you about American cities?

2. A reader claims that the urban share grew faster from 1910 to 1920 than from 1900 to 1910. Do the figures support that claim? Show the changes.

3. What does the fire account show about urban work that the table cannot show?

4. Could the table alone prove that people moving to cities caused the entire rise in the urban share? Explain using the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence label for a museum display titled “A Growing Urban Nation.” Use two figures from the table and one detail about the Triangle fire to explain what the evidence shows, then state one conclusion it cannot support.

ANSWER KEY

Cities by Numbers

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-10.RH.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a sentence that interprets the table and circle a detail about the factory fire. Label your marks "trend" and "case" to prepare to compare the two kinds of evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the table add to what the Triangle fire account tells you about American cities?	**The fire account shows a danger at one city workplace. The table shows a national rise in the share of people living in urban places.**
2	A reader claims that the urban share grew faster from 1910 to 1920 than from 1900 to 1910. Do the figures support that claim? Show the changes.	**No. The share rose 6.0 percentage points from 1900 to 1910 and 5.6 percentage points from 1910 to 1920.**
3	What does the fire account show about urban work that the table cannot show?	**It shows a specific workplace danger, such as a locked exit door or inadequate fire escape. The table only measures the urban share of the population.**
4	Could the table alone prove that people moving to cities caused the entire rise in the urban share? Explain using the passage.	**No. Births, changing boundaries, and census definitions could also affect the urban share.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In 1900, 39.6% of Americans lived in places classified as urban. By 1920, that share had reached 51.2%, making urban residents a majority. At the Triangle Shirtwaist factory, an inadequate fire escape was one danger workers faced. Neither the census figures nor this single fire can tell us how common unsafe workplaces were across the country.

Accept answers that distinguish the national population trend from evidence about one workplace. For the open task, check for two accurate table figures, a specific fire detail, and a valid limit on what the evidence proves.