

INVESTIGATION TRAIL

- Focus: Identifying the main idea and supporting details in informational text
- Objective: The learner will read and annotate an informational text article and participate in an Investigation Trail to review the information in the article.
- Follow the directions on your Answer Tracker handout. Remember to highlight and label (Q#) the information in the article that corresponds with each question.

Standards Addressed:

RI.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.7.4 Determine the meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Question #1

What is the main idea of the nonfiction article, "Fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory"?

- a. The fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory was devastating but brought about change in factory workers' rights. (#5)
- b. Politicians and factory owners in the 1900s were corrupt. (#2)
- c. The fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory showed how dangerous factories really were. (#1)
- d. Factories in the 1900s were incredibly dangerous and the fires were tragic. (#10)

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Question #2

Which of the following is the best alternative title for "Fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory"?

- a. Factories Weren't Safe and Many Died (#7)
- b. Corruption is Everywhere (#8)
- c. Safety Comes First (#9)
- d. Tragedy Spurs Change in Industrial Factories (#12)

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Question #3

Reread paragraphs six and seven. Based on the article, which of the following details best supports the fact that factory owners Blanck and Harris engaged in unethical behavior?

- a. "Well, these men had already been under suspicion for factory fires *before* the horrific fire at the Triangle Factory!" (#3)
- b. "... the two owners had refused to install sprinkler systems in addition to other safety measures in the event that they needed to burn down their factories again." (#11)
- c. "In 1911, the factory contained a few options for entry and exit, but none were without obstacles." (#12)
- d. "In 1909, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, in an effort to increase pay and shorten work hours, led a strike." (#4)

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Question #4

Which of the following sentences from the article best demonstrates the lasting significance of the fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory?

- a. "Even though there was substantial evidence that Blanck and Harris, as well as their factory managers, were terribly negligent in the fire, a jury never found them guilty of manslaughter charges." (#1)
- b. "Making matters worse, the fire-fighters' ladders reached just short of the fire! The fire was over in 18 minutes, and in total, 145 people were killed." (#4)
- c. "Instead of supporting their efforts, Blanck and Harris' company ensured that their workers were imprisoned and paid off corrupt politicians to pretend they didn't see what was happening." (#5)
- d. "The fire at the Triangle Factory pushed labor and reform-minded politicians into action." (#8)

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Question #5

Reread the following sentence from the article: "In the early 1900s, though many people knew about the dangers of factory fires, corruption in both the garment industry and New York City's government typically ensured that no safeguards were taken to prevent fires. "

Based on the text, you can infer that:

- a. The government and factory owners were unaware that changes needed to be made to prevent fires. (#3)
- b. Government officials and garment factory owners cared about money more than human lives. (#9)
- c. Government officials and garment industry managers did not work together. (#2)
- d. Fires occurred often in garment factories, and it was a major concern. (#12)

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Question #6

Which of the following was the *biggest* reason that so many died in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire?

- a. A fire hose was rusted shut. (#6)
- b. There were not safe or accessible fire escapes in the building. (#7)
- c. The factory owners did not care about the workers. (#8)
- d. A fire began in a rag bin. (#13)

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Question #7

Reread the following sentences from the article: "Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, owners of the Triangle Factory in Manhattan, employed young immigrant women, mostly teenaged girls who didn't speak English. These young women were forced to work 12 hours a day, slouched over row after row of sewing machines in a confined space."

What can you infer is *most* problematic about employing this particular group of people?

- a. The women worked every day and probably didn't get many breaks. (#9)
- b. The employees were not easily able to advocate for their rights. (#10)
- c. The employees were predominantly women. (#2)
- d. These women were likely very unhappy and overtired in the factory. (#13)

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Question #8

Reread paragraphs one and two. Based on context clues in the following sentence, what does the word, "garnered" mean?

"This tragedy *garnered* widespread attention as the public got a first-hand look at the perilous sweatshop conditions of factories."

- a. affected (#4)
- b. allowed (#6)
- c. escaped (#10)
- d. gained (#13)

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Question #9

Reread the following sentences: "Out of sheer desperation to escape the approaching flames, many girls who were stranded waiting for the elevator that wouldn't return, jumped down the elevator shaft to their deaths. The young girls who attempted to exit the building using the stairways, also met horrific fates when they discovered that the door at the bottom of the stairs was locked, and there was no other escape."

Which of the following words *best* contribute to the tone of peril and distress?

- a. attempted, fates (#5)
- b. locked, escape (#12)
- c. jumped, desperation (#6)
- d. desperation, horrific (#3)

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Question #10

Reread the following sentence: "In fact, there had been four different fires at two of their companies in the last nine years, causing many to believe that Blanck and Harris had intentionally scorched their factories (before business had begun for the day) in order to cash in on the *extensive* fire insurance policies they had purchased."

Based on context clues, what does the word "extensive" mean?

- a. sizeable (#4)
- b. extended (#1)
- c. difficult (#12)
- d. expensive (#2)

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Question #11

What is the article mostly about?

- a. How the fire started in the factory. (#3)
- b. Factory owners Blanck and Harris. (#7)
- c. Dangerous and unfair working conditions in the factory. (#2)
- d. Factory conditions reform that occurred in the 1900s. (#12)

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Question #12

Reread paragraph seven. Based on the paragraph, which of the following is true?

- a. Blanck and Harris tried to support unions, but corrupt politicians interfered. (#10)
- b. Unions were illegal at the time of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire. (#4)
- c. Blanck and Harris went to great lengths to maintain inexpensive and unsafe working conditions in their factory. (#6)
- d. Blanck and Harris wanted their workers to be miserable. (#7)

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Question #13

Reread the following sentence: "Even though there was substantial evidence that Blanck and Harris, as well as their factory managers, were terribly negligent in the fire, a jury never found them guilty of manslaughter charges."

Based on context clues, what does the word "negligent" mean?

- a. calm (#7)
- b. absent (#10)
- c. criminal (#12)
- d. irresponsible(#1)