

Out of the Flames

The riveting true story of the factory fire that changed America

About the Story

Lexile: 940L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective:

to think critically about the lessons learned from a historical disaster

Key Skills:

figurative language, author's craft, supporting details, text structures, text features, inference, key ideas, critical thinking

Essential Questions:

- What rights and protections should workers have?
- Why is it important to learn about disasters from the past?
- How have immigrants shaped America?

Standards:

This article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards:

R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.7, W.2, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at
scope.scholastic.com.

Video: Behind the Scenes

Audio:

- The article (English and Spanish)
- Vocabulary

Differentiated articles:

- Lower-Lexile version (printable)
- Spanish version (printable)

Literature Connections: ideas for connecting to curricular texts

Activities to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Video Discussion Questions
- Critical Thinking: Prepare Your Speech
- **Core Skills Workout:** Central Ideas & Details*, Summarizing*, Text Features, Text Structures
- **Literary Elements:** Anticipation Guide
- Quiz*
- Nonfiction Elements*
- Contest Entry Form

**Available on two levels*

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Do-Now: Theme Anticipation Guide

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

As a class, complete the **Anticipation Guide** to activate prior knowledge and build curiosity.

Preview vocabulary.

(8 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute the **Vocabulary Words and Definitions**. Review as a class. Highlighted words: *commemorates, galvanize, garment, hawking, persecution, pummeled, scathing, tenement*

Watch the video.

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

- Project or distribute the **Video Discussion Questions** and preview as a class.
- Play the **Behind the Scenes video**, in which the author talks about her writing process.
- Respond to Part 1 of the questions as a class.

2 Reading and Discussing

Read and discuss the article.

(45 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Have a volunteer read aloud the As You Read box at the top of page 6.
- Play the audio at Scope Online while students follow along in their printed magazines.
- Have students read the article again independently, marking anything they find surprising (exclamation point), anything that moved them emotionally (heart), and anything they have a question about (question mark).
- Invite students to share what they marked.
- Discuss the following questions in groups.

Close-Reading Questions

- ▶ In the first paragraph, what figurative language does author Kristin Lewis use? What effect does it create? (figurative language,

author's craft) *The author uses personification, assigning human action to the fire. She says the flames "clawed" and "curled" and "licked." The effect of this language is to make the fire seem as if it's moving with intention, as if it were alive, which creates drama and suspense.*

- ▶ How does Lewis support her idea on page 6 that life wasn't easy for newcomers?

(supporting details) *Lewis supports her idea by including examples of how life was difficult for immigrants. She writes that working hours were long and pay was low, and many immigrants had to live in small, uncomfortable apartments.*

- ▶ What is the purpose of the section "Fire Hazards"? (text structures) *The purpose of the section "Fire Hazards" is to show how unsafe Triangle was. It lacked basic fire safety features such as well-designed exits for workers. This section also reveals that fire inspectors had noted how dangerous the factory was before the fire and that the owners had done nothing about it. This information shows how little the owners cared for the safety of their employees.*

- ▶ Look at the photo and read the caption on page 10. What does this text feature add to the article? (text features) *The photo depicts a factory building collapse in modern-day Bangladesh. The caption explains that many factories where our clothes are made today are not so different from the Triangle factory. This adds to the article by making a connection between the challenges faced by workers more than 100 years ago with the challenges faced by workers now. It shows how the story of the Triangle fire is relevant to our lives today.*

- ▶ Consider the description of Katie's testimony in court on page 10. What can you infer about Katie from this passage?

(inference) *You can infer that Katie was brave and angry. She was brave because she refused to be intimidated, and she was angry that the door had been locked, which led to many senseless deaths—including that of her own sister. Her anger made her determined to make her point; she went so far as to get up and shake the door of the courtroom.*

▶ **The Triangle factory fire was a horrific event. Did any good come from it? Explain.**

(key ideas) *Yes. Because of the fire, many Americans were motivated to join the labor movement and help secure basic rights and protections for workers. Laws were enacted requiring workplaces to be fire-safe. According to the article, many of the fire rules we have today originated in the aftermath of the Triangle disaster (10). These are a few of the positives that came from an otherwise horrific tragedy.*

- Return to the Video Discussion Questions. As a class, discuss the questions in Part 2, which connect the video and the article.
- Have students go back to their groups to discuss the following critical-thinking questions.

Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **What can be learned from the tragedy of the Triangle factory?** *Answers will vary.*

Students may say that we can learn about the human cost of greed. The owners didn't care about their workers' safety or well-being. All they cared about was making money. And their greed resulted in the deaths of 146 innocent people.

▶ **What can we do to ensure that the clothes we buy are not made in sweatshops?**

Answers will vary. Students may say that they can research clothing companies and buy only from companies whose factories treat workers fairly and ensure their safety.

- Reconvene as a class so each group can share their responses to the questions.

3 Skill Building

Featured Skill: Critical Thinking

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students work in groups to complete the activity **Prepare Your Speech**. This activity will prepare students to respond to the writing prompt on page 10. *For alternate culminating tasks, see the box below.*

Differentiate and Customize

For Struggling Readers

Write down three reasons the Triangle factory fire happened and three ways the tragedy changed the United States.

For Advanced Readers

In a well-organized essay, explain why it's important for people today to learn about the Triangle factory fire of 1911. Use information from "Out of the Flames" plus at least one additional source to support your ideas.

For Artists

Create a memorial for or tribute to the victims of the Triangle factory fire. It can be in the form of a sculpture, video, painting, or song.

For Changemakers

Research modern sweatshops and come up with one idea for what kids could do to help ensure that clothes are made in safe factories that treat workers fairly. Share your idea in the form of a poster, slideshow, or video.