

THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FACTORY FIRE

Lesson Plan

Overview

Students watch a video segment chronicling the tragic fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Using a story elements graphic organizer, students determine the various elements of the story and arrange them in the correct order on the organizer.

Suggested Time

- (1) 50-minute period for Part I
- (1) 50-minute period for Part II
- (3) 50-minute period for Part III
- (3) 50-minute period for Part IV

Stimuli

- The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Disaster Video (Use in Part I)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYouiwyABS8

- *Letter to Michael and Hugh from Pauline Newman* (printed copy) (Use in Part II)
- *Triangle Fire: A Half-Hour of Horror* (printed copy) (Use in Part II)

Materials

- The Triangle Shirtwaist Story handout (Use in Part II)
- The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory rubric (Use in Part II)
- Text Dependent Questions handout (printed copy)
- Explanatory Writing Rubric (Use in Part IV)

The Lesson

Part I: Learning Activity – Listening and Speaking

1. Provide the purpose for the activity:
 - To identify the various story elements and arrange them correctly on the graphic organizer.
 - To understand that non-fictional narratives can have story elements.
2. Ask the students to list the major elements of a plot. What does each element contain? Elements to be discussed:
 - a. Characters
 - b. Setting
 - c. Exposition
 - d. Rising Action
 - e. Climax
 - f. Falling Action

- g. Resolution
- h. Point of View

- i. Theme

3. Teacher guides this discussion during a brief question and answer session.
4. Explain to the students that they will be watching a video that depicts the events that occurred in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory disaster. As they watch The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Disaster video, ask students to determine the specific story elements of this narrative. Who are the main characters? What is the setting? What are the most important events that lead up to the tragedy? Have them take notes regarding these items on a sheet of binder paper or their notebook.
5. After watching the video, conduct a teacher-guided question and answer session in which you ask the students to share the story elements' notes they created while watching the video the first time. What people, items or places did they include in their answers and why? Also ask what items they did not include and what made them decide these things were not relevant.

Part II: Assessment

1. Distribute The Triangle Shirtwaist Story handout. Ask students to watch the video a second time and complete the graphic organizer.
2. After watching the video a second time, ask students to compare their graphic organizers to the lists they created while watching the video the first time. Did they add information or take away information? Ask them what was added and/or deleted and why.
3. Once students' graphic organizers are discussed, ask them if there is a resolution in the narrative. Are resolutions always present or important in stories? Why or why not? Ask them to give reasons to support their opinions.
4. Finally, ask students to state the overall theme of the story. Discuss possible themes during a teacher-guided question and answer session.
5. Collect graphic organizers, and use The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory rubric to assess students' understanding of story elements.

Part III: Critical Reading and Writing

Mini Lesson on Primary and Secondary resources

The teacher will review the definition of Primary and Secondary resources. The students and the teacher will brainstorm their differences and examples. Teacher will further introduce the two resources that we will read are:

Letter to Michael and Hugh from Pauline Newman - a primary source

The New York Times article *Triangle Fire: A Half-Hour of Horror* – a secondary source

1. Pass out printed copies of *Letter to Michael and Hugh from Pauline Newman* to students
2. Teacher asks the students to browse through the letter looking at the titles and sub titles. Next the teacher reads out the letter to the students.
3. At this point the students will acquaint themselves with the letter by doing SOAPStone strategy. Followed with a discussion about their findings under the SOAPStone strategy led by the teacher.
4. After this the students will read the letter on their own doing annotations (taught in class already) as they read.
5. Students will then be given the text dependent questions handout to answer the questions on a binder paper. Teacher will remind the students to use textual evidence to support their answers.
6. The next day the students will be given *The New York Times* article *Triangle Fire: A Half-Hour of Horror*.
7. Teacher and Students will follow the same process as in steps 3 to 5.

Assessment: The teacher will assess the student's understanding and comprehending from the answers given to the text dependent answers.

[Note: Teacher at her discretion can assign some of the above for homework]

Part IV: Explanatory Writing

Teacher can assign any of the following writing activities.

1. Using the information gathered from the two stimuli, letter and article in Part III, the students will can do the following:
 - a. Create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the information gathered. (This will be the students Outline/Prewrite/Brainstorm)

- b. Next students will write a Rough Draft comparing and contrasting the two written texts.
- c. Students will Peer Edit each others work before publishing their work
- d. Followed by The Final Draft, which will be assessed by the teacher using the Explanatory Writing Rubric.

Prompt: Write a three paragraph Compare and Contrast essay on the information gathered from the two resources read.

2. The students will use the following stimuli to gather information about the 'Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire':
 - The video notes and graphic organizer - Part I and Part II
 - *Letter to Michael and Hugh from Pauline Newman* – Part III
 - *Triangle Fire: A Half-Hour of Horror* - Part III
- a. The students will organize the gathered information in preparation of writing an explanatory account of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire in New York, March 1911.
- b. Next the students will write their Rough Draft explaining the Five 'Ws' of 'Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire'
 - How the fire started
 - Where it started
 - When it started
 - Why it started
 - Who were affected by it
- c. The students will Peer Edit each others work
- e. Followed by The Final Draft, which will be assessed by the teacher using the Explanatory Writing Rubric.

Prompt: In a five-paragraph essay explain in your words how the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire occurred? What were the its causes of its effects? Support your ideas with textual evidence taken from the above resources.

Extended Activity:

The teacher can make the students research on the Triangle Shirtwaist case.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire Trial

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/triangle/trianglefire.html>

The teacher can assign roles and hold a mock trial using the student research done on the case.

This is a great way of introducing Argumentative Writing.

Standards Covered