

# LESSON 6: THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FIRE

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## Student Handout 2

Middle-class reformers in New York City want to do something about the city's factories to prevent this kind of tragedy (described on Handout 1) from occurring again. Which of these options do you favor?

1. Form an investigative committee to study the tragedy and make recommendations for reform to the state legislature. The committee would include lawyers, professors, and educated reformers—the “finest people” in the state.
2. Lobby the state legislature to form an investigative committee to be assisted by reformers and experts.
3. Do nothing. The factory owners are being prosecuted in court. When they are found guilty of manslaughter for not maintaining safe working conditions, the message will spread to other owners that conditions must be improved.
4. Pressure the city government to enforce its laws regarding factory safety.
5. Publish a list and boycott businesses that do not maintain safe working conditions.
6. Organize to overthrow the capitalist system that brought about this tragedy.
7. Strengthen the labor movement so workers can defend themselves against poor working conditions.

### QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Write down the options you favor and explain your decision.
2. Which options do you think the reformers actually chose?