

### Student Worksheet 3-Acting on the Evidence

**Group Directions:** Your teacher has assigned you to a group that will serve as members of the Pennsylvania State Legislature. Your group task is to write a Workman's Compensation Law for Pennsylvania. You should consider the information you gathered from the "gallery tour" of the factories, as well as the information from the student handouts in your packet (Handouts 6 through 9).

Your group should consider the following questions when deciding on what your law will address:

1. Are the factory owners responsible for the condition of the equipment in their plants? Should there be required plant inspections by government officials?
2. Does the length of the workday have a negative effect on the ability of the workers to focus on their jobs?
3. Should workers who are temporarily injured because of faulty equipment or safety issues receive compensation from the factory owners?
4. Should the factory owners be required to provide death benefits to the families of workers who died on the job?
5. Should workers who are permanently disabled because of work-related injuries receive compensation from the factory owners?

Use the following format for your proposed bill:

**Title: Pennsylvania Workman's Compensation Act**

**Rationale for Act:** *(Here your group will provide a short summary of the working conditions that existed in Pennsylvania at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Use the data on Student Worksheets 1 and 2 to help with this section.)*

**Section 1:** Address the responsibility of factory owners for the condition of their equipment.

**Section 2:** Address worker hours and length of shift/workday.

**Section 3:** Address temporary injuries in the workplace.

**Section 4:** Address death benefits to families.

**Section 5:** Address disability compensation.

**Individual Requirements:** In a one-page response, write a letter to your constituents that explains the need for worker safety legislation during the Progressive Era. In your letter, consider the laws written in the small groups and the excerpt of the actual 1915 Pennsylvania Workman's Compensation Act. Include the information that you learned from the gallery tour placards and the document packet. Inform the citizens in your legislative district that you believe that the 1915 law made an improvement in the lives of Pennsylvania workers.