

Name: _____
Past, Present, Future

Date: _____
Women's History Month

Norma Rae

1. During the first scene, describe what you hear inside the textile mill.

2. How does the doctor respond to Norma's concern for her mother's hearing?

3. What does Norma's father think of the labor organizer that shows up at the door?

4. What do you notice Mr. Davis doing at the front gate when Ruben is handing out union paperwork?
What does he say about 'guys like Ruben'?

5. How does Norma's boss attempt to stop her "complaining" about the working conditions?

6. Why does everyone ignore Norma in the mill? How does she respond to being ignored?

7. When Ruben is speaking to the mill workers at the union meeting, he says that the owners are exploiting them. What things does he say that the workers are sacrificing?

8. What does the sign on the door say?

9. Why do the bosses at the mill give Ruben a hard time about the placement of his union meeting notices?

10. Why do you think Ruben stops to say good morning to all of the mill workers?

11. What do you think Ruben means when he says, “your average working man is not stupid. He just gets tired”?

12. What sort of things can Norma do to help the unionizing effort without losing her job?

13. Why does the reverend refuse to let Norma use the church for a union meeting? Do you think this attitude will make it hard to unite the workers in the town? Why/Why not?

14. What concerns do some of the workers share at the meeting?

15. How are the workers punished for attending the meeting and discussing unionizing?

16. How is Norma's father treated when he complains of arm pain? What happens as a result?

17. When the union bosses visit Ruben, what are they concerned about?

18. What does the letter from the mill bosses say? What happens as a result of the letter?

19. What must Norma do in order to prove that the letter was posted? What is the consequence for her action?

20. How do the workers respond to Norma's refusal to leave?

21. What do you notice about the sound in the mill at that moment?

22. Why do you think Norma breaks down in the car after Ruben bails her out of jail?

23. Why has a crowd gathered in the mill?

24. What is the result of the vote? What does this mean?

25. What affect does Norma's activism have on her and her family?

Critical Thinking

Pretend that you are one of the characters from the film. From his/her perspective, take a position- do you want a union at your mill? Why or why not? Write it as a brief letter to a fellow worker, or perhaps an op-ed article to be published in the local newspaper. Be sure to describe the current working conditions and how unionizing will help or hurt you in order to support your position.

Women's History Month

Describe what makes Norma Rae a positive role model for women. How was she a champion for women?
