

Watch the movie "Erin Brokovich." and fill out the worksheet.

#### Questions

1. How did Ms. Brokovich meet her future employer?
2. Why did PG & E (Pacific Gas and Electric) pay for the Jensen's medical bills?
3. What heavy metal was PG & E releasing into the water?
4. Which form of this heavy metal is benign?
5. Which form of this heavy metal is toxic?
6. What town was adversely affected by this pollutant?
7. Why didn't Ms. Brokovich tell the water board employee about the information she was seeking?
8. Why did Mr. Jensen's physician claim that the pollutant in his water supply was unrelated to his cancer?
9. Why PG & E tell residents they were releasing this heavy metal into the water? Why didn't they keep this completely quiet?

10. What is the meaning of the term “statute of limitations”?
11. Why was the plaintiff lawyer concerned about the statute of limitations?
12. What was PG & E doing in order to “run out the clock”?
13. Why didn’t the lawyer representing PG & E drink the water provided by Ms. Brokovich?
14. Why did some residents from the affected town accuse Ms. Brokovich of lying?
15. Why did the law firm representing the plaintiffs prefer arbitration over a jury trial?
16. What was the employment of the stranger that approached Ms. Brokovich at the bar?
17. What information was provided by the stranger who approached Ms. Brokovich?
18. Why did this stranger feel obligated to provide this information to Ms. Brokovich?

For online discussion review the following items on “Operation Large Area Coverage” and post twice:

*During some of the 1950’s and 1960’s, the US military sprayed zinc cadmium sulfide over the Pruitt–Igoe housing project in St. Louis to allegedly study what might happen during a “biological weapons attack.” Some former residents are demanding compensation for illnesses and premature deaths they attribute to these chemicals:*

<https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/midwest/2023/09/28/742168.htm>

Optional: *This short video presents the Pruitt–Igoe incident from a more provocative perspective:*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=cN9MQmxktGg&embeds\\_referring\\_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fbb-montgomerycollege.blackboard.com%2F&source\\_ve\\_path=MjM4NTE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=cN9MQmxktGg&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fbb-montgomerycollege.blackboard.com%2F&source_ve_path=MjM4NTE)

Optional: *This article provides a more detailed account of the Pruitt–Igoe incident:*

<https://www.livescience.com/23795-large-area-coverage-dangers.html>

The first post is worth 3 points. For the first posting you need to address one of the items below:

1. Reports that the US army also sprayed radioactive materials in St. Louis are disputed because they are based mostly on eyewitnesses claiming that they saw federal agents spraying chemicals while wearing radioactive gear. Can you think of a way these claims could be corroborated?
2. Do you think the illnesses and premature deaths of residents in the Pruitt–Igoe housing project merit further investigation? Explain why or why not.
3. The Pruitt–Igoe housing project was demolished in the 1970’s reportedly due to urban decay, but as of 2022 the land formerly occupied by Pruitt–Igoe remains largely fallow. Do you think urban decay is the sole reason developers are still reluctant to develop this area?
4. Details about the testing that took place in the Pruitt–Igoe housing project were not declassified until 1988. Was it justified for the government to conceal this information for over 20 years? Why do you think they waited so long?
5. As result of Brokovich’s investigation, PG & E was forced to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to residents of Hinkley and other affected towns in California. In sharp contrast, residents of the St. Louis Pruitt–Igoe housing project were never compensated for their exposure to the chemicals sprayed by the military. Do you think this difference can be attributed to lack of harm to Pruitt–Igoe residents or double standards of justice?
6. Do you think there are parallels between the behavior of the government and PG & E?

For the second posting you need to respond to one post by another fellow student (2 points). For the second post I recommend the following format:

- 1) I like how ..... because .....  
or
- 2) I agree/disagree with ..... because .....  
or
- 3) This relates to .....because .....