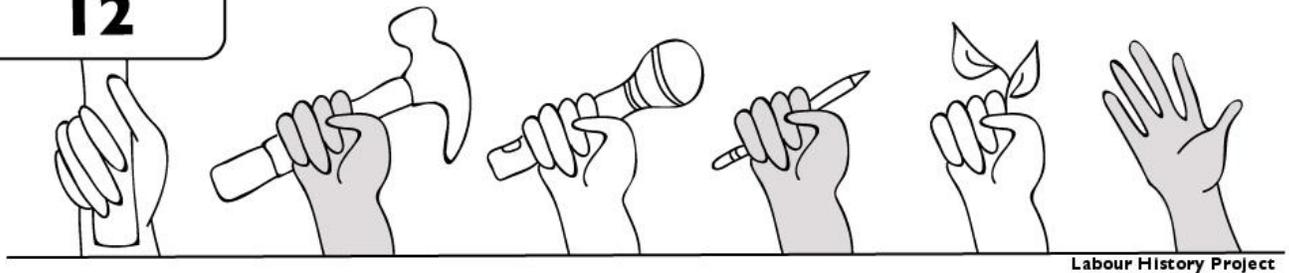




Lesson 1: Good Jobs Needed



Labour History Project

Lesson Summary: A scenario and discussion about what makes a good job with a goal of connecting workplace issues to social justice.

Time: One period

Essential Question: What are the characteristics of a 'good job'? What does this topic have to do with social justice?

Lesson Activities

1. Pose the question to the class: What makes a good job? (Money? Power? Security? Glory? Social Status or Recognition?) What are some examples of 'good jobs'? What is it about them that makes them so good?
2. Explain that for most people, many other things define a 'good job'. Pose the following scenario for discussion:
 - Young couple Maria and Raj are newlyweds. They both work at low paying service sector jobs making \$10.50 an hour. They live in a small one bedroom apartment paying \$800.00 a month rent. Maria is pregnant and is due in four months
3. Discuss: What would make a 'good job' for this family? Students brainstorm in small groups which then report out to the class. Teacher compiles list on board, screen etc.
4. What are the issues this family will need to consider for their economic security? Suggest:
Transportation (bus, car, repairs, etc); Child Care (affordable? quality?); Flexible family hours; Maternity leave (affordable?); Housing (affordable?); Medical/dental benefits; Job security; Monthly Income; Food costs for three people; Future inflation; Right to return to work after leave without loss of job security or loss of other benefits or status
5. After discussion, have students individually or in small groups decide: *what are the five most important characteristics of a good job?* Discuss as a class. The teacher may also wish to suggest non-economic characteristics such as respect, dignity, a democratic workplace, health and safety, and a sense of social contribution.

6. Following discussion about good jobs, pose the question: *How do you get this good job?*
- Education and training? (knowledge, skills and ability)
 - Climb to the top? (effort)
 - 'Correct' career choice?
 - Connections?

If these are not options, what else can working people do to improve lives for their families and communities? (answers may vary from lobbying government, immigration, or organizing into unions)

7. Discuss: what does this topic have to do with social justice? (Refer to terms list, discuss)

8. If possible, show “Meet Fergus” at the Canadian Labour Congress on youtube. This one minute short was an entry in the CLC's 'One Minute Message' contest in 2013. The Canadian Labour Congress full list of videos can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/user/canadianlabour>.

Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate attributes and behaviors that promote social justice including recognizing injustice
2. Identify the systemic or structural characteristics of society that can cause or perpetuate social injustice (eg., how particular skills and jobs are valued).

Materials and Resources Needed

- Digital projector
- Wi-fi access for the showing of “Meet Fergus”

Backgrounders and Other Materials

- None

1. Extension: have students pose this question to their families (what is a good job?). What further

Extension Activities

insights might their parents, siblings, or grandparents have on what is a ‘good job’. Discuss at the next class.

2. Extension: Teaching Tolerance has an excellent resource that can help students assess why we value certain jobs and not others. <http://www.tolerance.org/lesson/looking-labor>