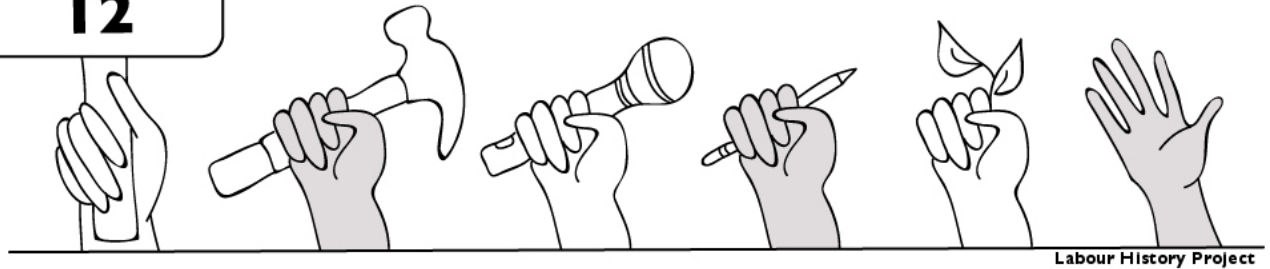


social justice 12

Lesson 12: Globalizing Solidarity



Lesson Summary: Students examine the concept of solidarity, challenges in maintaining solidarity, and some successful/unsuccessful case studies.

Time: 2-3 classes

Essential Question: What are the challenges of maintaining global solidarity among workers and between workers and other groups?

Summary of the Lesson Activities

1.) Discuss the difference between nationalism and internationalism by reviewing the last lesson on relocating work to Mexico under NAFTA. If we focus only on the concerns of Canadian workers and the Canadian economy, we are coming from a national perspective. If we focus on the needs of Mexican and Canadian workers, then we are coming from an international perspective. If we focus only on workers, we may forget the needs of the environment or social services. If we focus on Canadians and Mexican workers and communities working together for the economic and social needs of both, then we are coming from a solidarity perspective.

2.) Ask students what they think solidarity means. Is it possible to work with people in far away places, or with people with different goals?

3.) Provide **Handout 12a: Labour, Solidarity, and Social Justice**. Go over the discussion questions that focus on definitions and possibilities of solidarity and civil society. Students then examine news headlines and photos to determine labour's role in solidarity and social justice.

Optional: **Distribute Handout 12b: Solidarity Quotes**. Students could individually or in small groups read the quotes from labour and social justice leaders to decide which the best definition of solidarity.

Solidarity Assessment:

4.) Distribute Handouts **12c and 12d, readings on Solidarity** movements in the 1980s. Two readings are provided. The first is an overview of the Solidarnosc or Solidarity movement in Poland, led by trade unions. The second is a reading on the Solidarity movement in British Columbia, inspired by events in Poland. Have students read the articles and assess the success and failures of solidarity by answer the questions attached. What went well? What didn't?

Adaptation: If possible, obtain a copy of the film *A Force More Powerful* and watch “Poland-we've caught God by the arm”. This is an excellent documentary about the role of the strike and non violent action in Solidarity at aforcemorepowerful.org.

Solidarity Research

5.) After assessment of two solidarity movements, students might work individually or in pairs on research of an organization for workers rights or social justice and analyze their contribution to people’s solidarity. Distribute **Handout 12e: Labour, Solidarity, and Social Justice Research Questions**. Students will need access to the internet for this task.

Learning Objectives

The purpose of this lesson is for students to examine the challenge of maintaining solidarity among workers and between workers and other groups. Finally, students will research an organization and assess its goals, methods, and achievements.

-Describe the circumstances (e.g., power dynamics, public opinion, individual circumstances) and methods (e.g., legal challenges, coalition building) that have enabled particular individuals and groups to effect positive change in societies

-Demonstrate effective research skills, including accessing information, assessing information, collecting data.

Materials and Resources Needed

Handout 12a: Labour, Solidarity, and Social Justice

Handout 12b: Solidarity Quotes

Handouts 12c and 11d, readings on Solidarity

Handout 12e: Labour, Solidarity, and Social Justice Research

Extension Activities

1.) Have students research civil society groups that work or worked in the area of workers’ rights. Students can assess the group’s goals, philosophy, methods, and success/failures.

2) Students could analyze a movement where solidarity was challenged, such as unions and environmentalist, unions and racism, or unions and women. Why were people divided? How did that prevent achieving social justice?

3) Research and connect with an organization or individual that works on economic social justice matters. Determine how the group does/does not work in solidarity with others as part of civil society. Students can assess the goals, philosophy, methods, and success/failures. In this case, students may wish to volunteer or work with the group in some capacity as part of their Action Plan.

SOLIDARITY GROUPS AND TOPICS

Groups

Maquila Solidarity Network Via Campesina (Farmers, indigenous rights, peasants)	Amnesty International	National Mobilization Against Sweatshops
National Alliance of People's Movements (India)	Human Rights Watch	Solidarity Center
National Movement of street children	Maquila solidarity network	Asia Monitor Resource Center
US Labor Against the War	Stop child labour.org	Chinese Working Women Network
Latin American and Caribbean Solidarity Network	Anti slavery .org	Musicians Against Sweatshops
Canadian Labour Congress	Civicus	Clean Clothes Campaign
National Interfaith Committee For Worker Justice	Council of Canadians	Free the Children

By Cause:

The role of unions fighting apartheid
 Labour and the peace movement
 Labour and Idle No More
 Labour and women's rights
 Labour and Occupy Wall Street
 Labour and faith groups
 Labour and human rights
 Chile under Pinochet

