

WORKMATTERS

a key stage 4 teacher resource exploring
the employment strand of citizenship



INSTITUTE FOR
CITIZENSHIP

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Foreword

Work plays a large part in all of our lives. Choosing the job we do; finding our way into the workforce and then managing the lifelong balancing act of work and home life – these are among the most important decisions we will ever make.

And how we organise and regulate work has always been one of the most important political debates. The nature of work has changed dramatically over the past few hundred years, as have working conditions. But many of the issues surrounding work remain the same – pay, health and safety, discrimination, training, stress and job security, for example.

The more our young workers know about the world of work and the issues it will throw up for them, the better equipped they are to navigate through their working lives. Teachers, perhaps more than most, know the importance of such issues and we are pleased that the new subject of citizenship will allow schools to focus on such topics in greater depth. To this end, we are delighted to have helped the Institute for Citizenship produce this resource and hope that it will be useful for teachers and students.

Dave Prentis
General secretary
UNISON

The Institute for Citizenship

The Institute for Citizenship is an independent charitable trust. It was established in 1992 to promote informed active participation in democracy and society. The Institute works directly with teachers and students to develop and pilot effective models of citizenship education and accessible materials for lessons. We also provide in service training for teachers and schools on a range of issues related to citizenship and teaching. We work closely with a range of partner organisations to enable us to continue our work in helping schools deliver good quality citizenship education.

UNISON

UNISON is Britain's biggest trade union with over 1.3 million members – two thirds of whom are women. Our members are people working in the public and voluntary services, for private contractors providing public services and the essential utilities.

They include frontline staff and managers working full or part time in local authorities, the NHS, the police service, colleges and schools, the electricity, gas and water industries, transport and the voluntary sector. In addition to providing all the services of a union, UNISON campaigns and lobbies on key issues affecting our members and the public at large.

We are proud to give our members a voice in calling for well-funded, democratic public services. We believe that people working in our public services are best equipped to be part of the debate around modernisation and improvement. We want to see world class services provided by properly paid, well-trained and highly-motivated staff.

We're campaigning for equal pay and employment rights for everyone, to improve safety in the workplace and to end discrimination and harassment at work. We also support global campaigns on issues such as fuel poverty and fair trade. To find out more about UNISON, why not visit our website at www.unison.org.uk

Introduction

The knowledge and understanding element of the citizenship curriculum at key stage 4 contains the following strand:

1. Pupils should be taught about...

h. the rights and responsibilities of consumers, employers and employees

This resource is aimed at helping **non-specialist teachers** deliver some of the key concepts in the area of employment rights and responsibilities to key stage 4 students.

Work is a highly political issue, raising important questions of equality, justice, conflict resolution, rights and responsibilities. Work plays a large part in all our lives, and its inclusion in the citizenship programme of study reflects this. Schools, of course, are no strangers to teaching about employment issues, with many having a strong programme of careers education. The flexibility of citizenship means that in many contexts, elements of citizenship and careers education can be combined to the benefit of all. Both areas, at root, have a similar goal – the preparation of students for adult life – so overlapping the two areas can add value to both. Citizenship, for example, can act as interesting focus for some of the learning around work experience. Students could explore some of the political elements of work in the run up to placement, looking at issues such as discrimination, the huge differences in pay, or employment rights. During placement students could also carry out a citizenship focused enquiry. Suggested examples: looking at democracy in the work place – *how much representation do the workers have? How strong is the union representation? Are workers consulted?* Or, exploring the work/life balance – *how many hours do employees work? Do they socialise with their colleagues? Would workers like to work less? Do people feel stressed?*

More broadly, a careers programme can be used as a focus for citizenship learning. Work touches on important topics such as conflict and resolution, equality, rights and responsibilities. A carefully constructed scheme of work for careers can cover several of the knowledge and understanding elements of the citizenship curriculum.

This resource could be used to enhance either of these approaches, or could stand alone as a unit in itself. In keeping with the ethos of citizenship, this resource has a stronger focus on some of the more political elements of work than is perhaps found in some of support materials for careers education.

● **USING THE RESOURCES**

Citizenship will be delivered differently in every school. Resources need to be flexible to reflect this diversity. These resources have been designed to be used either as a stand-alone unit or to be dipped into for individual lessons. Most of the lessons contain more activities than could be fitted into a 45-60 minute lesson. This allows teachers to split the materials over two or more lessons or to cherry-pick the elements of the lesson that would be most suitable for their group.

Each section follows a standard format/structure. Because employment law is a specialist and sometimes complex subject, each section also contains detailed background notes for the teacher. These are found at the end of the lesson outlines.



Work in the future

1. Work in the future

● **OVERVIEW**

Two worksheets focusing on the changing nature of work. The first explores employment trends, the second asks students to construct an advert for a future job.

● **AIMS**

- To explore how the nature of work changes over time.
- To make students think of the skills they may need in the future employment market.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- identify some of the recent trends in employment
- discuss some of the skills that will be needed for work in the future
- create an advert for a fictional job.

● **SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES**

It may be useful to bring in a range of job adverts from a newspaper (ideally, a local paper, or maybe *The Guardian* on a Saturday).

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

A quick thought experiment (could be a written exercise).

What would happen if no one worked?

Ask students to think about what would happen:

- A) Immediately.
- B) Over the next week.
- C) Over the next year.

Answers can be fed back with discussion.

Additional questions

What would happen if everyone worked 7 days a week?

Is working now easier or harder than 200 years ago?

What will jobs in the future be like?

Do you think that schools prepare people for jobs?

What should they teach to better prepare students for work?

What jobs would students like to do?

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY ONE: Employment Trends factsheet

Students explore the statistics on employment trends. Activities could include discussing each table as a class, turning the tables into graphs, or asking each group to look at one table and explain its significance to the rest of the class.

Discussion points

Why are manufacturing and textile jobs disappearing in the UK?

(Possible answers.) *Other countries have lower labour costs so British companies cannot compete.*

Why are more females economically active now than in the 1970s?

Possible factors could include; a change in culture; less women want to stay at home; the increase in women going to universities; more single women; the creation of more part-time jobs.

What is meant by manual jobs? Can students list some examples?

ACTIVITY 2: The future of work

Students, in groups, complete the *The Future of Work* worksheet, drawing on the information from the *Employment Trends* factsheet. Students have to decide how likely various statements are, rating the likelihood as a percentage. The exercise could also work if the statements were cut out or projected, with students ranking them from most to least likely.

Discussion points

Did students agree with their answers?

How could students prepare themselves for work in the future?

Extension activity

Students have to think of other skills that will be useful for work in the future. They could also identify what skills they already have and which ones they would like to have.

ACTIVITY 3 – Job adverts

Uses the *Job Advert sheet* and *Job Advert worksheet*. Talk students through the formula for a job advert. (The first advert highlights some of the appalling working conditions in the industrial revolution – see section 3 for a personal account.) Using the formula, students have to write a job advert for the future. The advert for a school pupil could be skipped if inappropriate! Answers could be fed back to the class and students vote on their favourite or on the one most likely to exist in the future.

If students are having difficulty thinking up jobs, the following are possibilities: robot engineers, space tourism workers, virtual office worker.

Extension activity

Students could role play an interview for one of the made-up jobs.

● HOMEWORK OR ASSIGNMENT

Students could look for job adverts during the week. They should look for ones they think they could apply for if they were older. Their favourite job advert could then be presented to the class.

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Work has always been about doing something that needs to get done. At its most basic level, work was about hunting and gathering enough food and finding safe shelter. A couple of hundred years ago it may have meant working the land to produce food, or working in a textile mill. Now it can mean anything from working at a computer to being a chemist; being a solicitor or even a chef. You could be a nurse or an assembly line worker making cars. What all these things have in common is that they require a degree of skill in order to be done successfully.

We often split jobs into categories so that we can differentiate between, and even justify, different levels of pay, working conditions, and attitudes. Whether we say jobs are white or blue collar, service sector or manufacturing, what lies behind the classification is often an assumption regarding the levels of skill required by a job. People often see manual work as low or unskilled, and ‘professional’ work as highly skilled.

Some historians have argued that history shows workers in developed countries becoming increasingly skilled. Some suggest that the agricultural and industrial revolutions of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries enabled us to experience a technological and communications revolution in the twenty-first. To substantiate their argument they point to the use of technology that has led to ‘labour-saving’ devices.

Indeed, new inventions through the ages have made it possible for mankind to produce more food and more goods from the labour of ever fewer workers. It is a fact, for example, that although there are now 2.5 million fewer British workers in the iron, steel, and textile industries, as compared to 1980, output has remained nearly the same. Similar figures could be quoted for agriculture, the car industry, and other manufacturing and heavy industries.

One result of the decline in Britain's primary and secondary industrial workforce is the priority set by the government to move away from low-skill, low-pay jobs and create a highly skilled workforce. The intention is to place Britain at the forefront of new growth sectors and have a labour force to take advantage of new opportunities that arise in the increasingly global economy. However, this does raise the question as to what extent the state can influence what skills we learn and ultimately what jobs we are qualified to do. It also raises the issue of how well we can predict future trends.

Even as late as the 1970s and 1980s many economists, historians and social commentators believed that technology would mean that in the future a highly skilled workforce would compete for fewer jobs. It was believed that we would all have much more leisure time and that unskilled or low skilled jobs would slowly become extinct. However, as we enter a new century Britain has a record level of people in work.

More work has been fuelled by the growth of the service sector, which includes industries such as banking, insurance, transport, tourism and catering. In many instances, the introduction of new technology into these industries has increased, not decreased, the need for workers (e.g. the use of photocopiers and email has greatly increased the amount of paperwork and correspondence now undertaken by solicitors).

Whereas technology may enhance our lives and make certain tasks easier, the lesson of the last two decades for the future of work is that, in the service sector, it rarely leads to 'labour saving'. In fact, it often leads to the opposite, opening up new areas and needs in related and complimentary industries (e.g. cheaper home computers found in more and more homes has enabled the rapid growth of the Internet).

Many of these new industries and jobs require new skills that have to be taught either by the employer or in an educational institution (i.e. college, school, or university). In Britain, although the government tries to co-ordinate and regulate the skills training available (e.g. through Learning and Skills Councils), the decision over what skills are taught, how, to whom and by whom, is largely left to the market place. This frequently leads to concerns that in the future Britain could be left with too many hairdressers and not enough engineers. Nevertheless, both groups, to some extent, are skilled and have received some form of training.

Therefore, decisions arise over what skills are dependent upon the specific needs of particular jobs. For the government, some planning must be made regarding the future skill needs of the country (what jobs will we need in the future), and incentives or provision made to ensure those needs are met (e.g. through providing enough university places for medical students, or grants for those on an engineering apprenticeship). In the case of the individual, he or she must identify their strengths and weaknesses and, therefore, the applicability of certain jobs and the skills, training and/or qualifications needs to undertake that job.

Employment trends factsheet

Who worked in what sector?

Great Britain Percentages to nearest whole number for employment in some of the main sectors.

Year	Office	Agriculture	Textiles	Manufacturing
1901	18	12	9	15
1911	20	12	9	16
1921	23	10	6	18
1931	27	9	6	16
1951	27	7	4	20
1961	33	6	4	25
1971	36	4	3	25
1981	40	3	2	24
1991	40	2	1	18

Extra fact: in 1811 35% worked in agriculture

Source: Census, Office for National Statistics

Percentage of people in employment doing manual work.

1911	76
1931	70
1951	64
1971	55
1991	38

Source: Gallie from Census

Percentage of population economically active. (Economically active means either in work or looking for work.)

	Males	Females	All
1971	91	56	74
1975	90	60	76
1980	90	64	78
1985	88	67	78
1990	88	71	80
1995	85	71	78
1998	84	72	78

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Millions of people employed in banking, insurance and financial services.

1978	2.7
1980	2.9
1982	3.0
1984	3.2
1986	3.5
1988	4.0
1990	4.4
1992	4.3
1994	4.4
1996	4.7
1998	5.1
2000	5.4

Source: Office for National Statistics

The future of work

Hundreds of years ago, most people worked on the land, either for themselves or for the landowners. Over time, other jobs such as trading and building started increasing in numbers. In the industrial revolution, people started to work in large factories. With new inventions and discoveries, such as cars, computers and phones came new jobs. During the last century, the wealthier countries started to move away slightly from manufacturing and new jobs were created in services such as tourism, banking, communications, media and software. Who knows where jobs will move in the next 50 years?

How likely do you think each of the following is in the next 50 years? Use the *Employment trends factsheet* to help you. Express your opinions as a percentage. 0% is no chance at all. 100% is an absolute certainty

More people will work indoors	%
Special "frog people" will be artificially created to carry out work underwater	%
More people will work using computers	%
People will work longer hours	%
As oil runs out, millions of people will have to produce electricity using exercise bikes	%
More women will have jobs than men	%
People will spend more of their lives at work	%
People will change job more often	%
More people will work in banking and finance	%
The Internet will make getting the right job easier	%
More people will work at home using computers	%
Over half the population will work in offices	%
There will always be jobs for people on farms	%
In the next fifty years there will be no jobs in manufacturing in the UK	%
There will always be manual jobs available	%

As jobs change, so the skills needed for the jobs change. Imagine going to school in the 1960s. It would have been impossible to learn IT skills, yet these are now vital in today's workplace. Acquiring new skills is something that will continue throughout your life and cannot just be achieved at school.

When would the following skills be of use in the world of work? Tick as many boxes as you think apply

	1303	1803	2003	2053
Good presentation skills, being able to speak well etc.				
Good qualifications				
Good with ferrets				
Hard working				
Being able to drive a cart				
Being able to drive a car				
Computer skills				
Good phone manner				
Chimney climbing				
Quick to learn new skills				
Stone carving				
Good personal skills (being likeable)				
Horse handling				
Being able to come up with new ideas (creative)				
Good spelling				
Archery				

Job adverts

What a job advert may have looked like 200 years ago, during the Industrial Revolution

Header → **Spin yourself a top career!**

Job title → *COTTON-GATHERING OPERATIVE, MINIMUM 10 YR CONTRACT.*

Overview → *An exciting opportunity for a hard worker to make their way in the fast-moving textile industry.*

Who it would suit → *Would suit a first-time worker under the age of ten.*

Your duties → *The successful applicant will help to pick up cotton dust from under the looms for 14 hours a day with occasional breaks. No sitting allowed.*

Your benefits (pay etc) → *In return for this you will receive an annual salary of six pence. Additional benefits include: free accommodation in a shared bed, free daily meals, one annual supervised trip out of the premises to a fairground.*

How to apply → *Get your parents to bring you down, sign the papers and you can start immediately.*

Skills and qualifications required → *Must be hard working, obedient, able to pick things up and quiet.*

What a job advert may look like today

Header → **Get Into TV!**

Job title → **Media sales assistant**

Who it would suit → *Suit a young worker with some sales experience. Ideal for a second jobber.*

Your duties → *The successful applicant will be selling advertising space on the highly successful DIY Garden Cookery channel. A 35-hour week based in our Manchester office.*

Your benefits (pay etc) → *£14,000 with up to £10,000 in commission, 5 weeks annual holiday.*

Skills and qualifications required → *Must have an excellent telephone manner. Must be ambitious and prepared to work hard. IT skills essential.*

How to apply → *CV and covering letter to Personnel Department.*

Job adverts

Imagine there was an advert in the paper to be a student at your school.
What would it say?

Header

Job title

Overview

Who it would suit

Your duties

Your benefits (pay etc)

Skills and qualifications
required

How to apply

Make up a job that you think will exist in the next 20 years that does not exist today.

Header

Job title

Overview

Who it would suit

Your duties

Your benefits (pay etc)

Skills and qualifications
required

How to apply



Pay day

2. Pay day

Students have to guess the earnings of various jobs. Followed by a discussion as to whether the vast differences in earnings can be justified. A final exercise examines the link between qualifications and earnings.

● **AIMS**

- To introduce the notions of supply and demand.
- To make students aware of differences in earnings.
- To look at some of the reasons why people earn different amounts and to see if the large differences can be justified.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- identify earnings with certain jobs
- explain why differences in earnings exist
- debate whether big differences in earnings can be justified
- identify the link between qualifications and earnings.

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

Imagine if everyone were paid the same amount of money for the jobs they did.

Think of two things that would be good about it, and two problems.

(Possible answers.)

Good – it might end poverty. Seems quite fair.

Bad – would people bother to work hard? Why would you bother to do difficult jobs?

How much does David Beckham earn a week?

Approx. £70,000 in wages (not including any sponsorship deals).

(Written in 2002, so this is liable to change!)

Roughly how much does an average nurse earn a year?

£18,000 or about £360 a week (before tax)

Is this big difference fair?

Why do different people earn different amounts?

How much do think you will earn in your life?

What is the most you think you will earn per year?

Do you think qualifications will make a difference to how much you earn?

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY 1: Earnings

Who's earning what? worksheet.

Students, in groups, estimate the salaries for various jobs. Some of the jobs may need to be explained. The sheet could also be cut up or projected, and students rank the jobs in order of pay, starting with the highest earning. Please bear in mind that the answers on the answer sheet are only approximations.

Discussion points

Which earning was the most surprising?

Do students think that the earnings are fair?

ACTIVITY 2: Can you justify it?

Can you justify it? factsheet. Ask students for their initial reactions about the differences in pay. Can they be justified? The sheet has a small section on the concept of supply and demand which contains a short exercise. This could be talked through in class or answered in groups. Here are the possible answers:

The amount of oil produced in the world is reduced?
Same demand, but lower supply. The price would go up.

Because of a cookery programme suddenly everyone wants the new omelette pan?
High demand and low supply. The price would go up.

No one wants the new Boys'r'Us boy-band album?
Low demand and high supply – the price would go down. Usually to be found in the bargain bucket.

Because of a shortage in cocoa supply, suddenly only $\frac{1}{2}$ of the normal amount of chocolate is made in this country?
Same demand, but lower supply. The price would go up.

The *Can you justify it? Yes and No worksheets* the present arguments attacking and defending the big differences in wages. The lesson could proceed in a variety of ways. Students could write counter arguments or highlight the arguments they agree and disagree with. The sheets could also be used as a basis for a debate. Students, in groups, could decide which side of the debate they agree with and should come up with their own arguments.

The subsequent debate could be informal, but here are some rules for running a formal-style debate.

- Before each debate the students should be reminded of the motion.
- Each debate will consist of two sets of speakers (three per team) – those arguing for the motion and those arguing against.
- The first speaker will speak for the motion, and then another speaker will speak against it. This continues until all six speakers have finished.
- Questions are then invited from the other students (the floor).
- The students then either vote for or against the motion.
- It is also worthwhile asking students to vote for which side they thought argued the best, as this may produce a different result.

Tips

Allow each speaker a maximum time to speak (90 seconds should be long enough for these debates. Being strict with the time keeping can add to the sense of fun.)

Students should write down their main points and not rely on memory. It is best to begin their speech by reminding the students of the motion before going on to say why they support or reject it.

After the first speaker, each subsequent speaker should try to think a little on their feet and quickly respond to the arguments put forward by the previous speaker. If they try to imagine the sort of arguments the other team may put forward before hand, then this should make things easier.

Afterwards the other students could say what was good about the speakers, and what they would improve.

For more details about formal debate contact the English Speaking Union – website: www.esu.org
tel: 020 7529 1550. The ESU organises debating competitions and has useful materials on formal debates.

ACTIVITY 3: Earnings and qualifications

Introductory questions

How much do students think they will be earning a week when they are 30?
What is the highest qualification they want to achieve?

Students then read through the *Earnings and qualifications worksheet* and answer the questions.

Answers to the questions in the worksheet

At what age roughly do earnings peak?
40-41.

Why are earnings so low for all 16-24 year olds?
Perhaps a lack of experience.

Why can education lead to getting a better-paid job?
One answer may be because of supply and demand. Having greater skills and knowledge, you may be going for jobs that fewer people can do. The wage therefore may be higher if there is a high demand for the job but a short supply of qualified workers.

If you have no qualifications or skills at all, you may be going for jobs that most people could do. So although there is a demand for the jobs, there is a large supply of possible workers, so the wage may be lower.

● HOMEWORK OR ASSIGNMENT

Students could choose a profession/job, perhaps one they want to end up doing, and find out how much they would earn. Do they think it is a fair wage for the Job?

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the most basic level we work in order to earn money. We need money in order to purchase the goods and services that we cannot provide for ourselves. This has not always been the case. Many early and non-industrial societies have been based on family units that are self-sufficient – producing all that they need. In these circumstances it could be said that their pay is those items which they produce themselves, or that they can trade with other families who have a good or service that they require.

With the development of currency, and with the greater specialisation of labour, the ideal of self-sufficiency has been substituted by the exchange of a person's labour for a wage.

Historically, there have always been great differences in the wages people have earned. In medieval society the local lord, who owned the farmland, would have been far wealthier than the peasants who farmed his fields. In the nineteenth century the earnings of the textile mill or mine owner were incomparable with that of the loom worker or miner. And today, there are many whose annual income is a mere fraction of a city stockbroker or Premiership footballer's salary.

This, however, is not to say that workers over time have not fought for higher pay. Since the nineteenth century working conditions and pay have improved greatly. By the late nineteenth century a skilled worker would earn a relatively stable £1 per week, whereas many other workers (e.g. dock workers) were only employed on a daily or weekly basis and faced long periods of unemployment, or even lower pay.

With union campaigns and increasing amounts of government legislation and intervention workers pay during the twentieth century rose rapidly- both monetarily and in its buying power. The average wage now stands at around £430 pounds per week. This figure does mask a large variation, and many of the current issues surrounding pay concern reasons why two people doing the same job may not necessarily earn the same amount of money.

One of the most publicised sources of discrimination is gender, although there has been legislation since

1970 (Equal Pay Act 1970) that gives women the legal right to be paid the same as men. At the time the legislation was passed the gap between average hourly earnings for men and women working full-time was 31%. This has narrowed to 18%. Of course this difference is in part due to formal, and part informal pay discrimination. Thanks to legislation there are few (yet still some) cases where a woman, doing the same job as a man, is paid less. Far more prevalent is the practice of placing women in lower paid jobs that have little or no prospect of developing into higher paid jobs in the future. Gender pay discrimination, therefore remains an issue that needs to be addressed. (See section 5 for more on this issue.)

Another reason for different pay rates is geography. The most obvious example of regional pay differences is the additional 'London weighting' payment given to many workers in the capital. This payment, often made to public service workers- is in recognition that living costs in London are notably higher than in other parts of the UK. Again, this is a formal example of what, in many cases, is an informal outcome to regional differences in house prices, travel arrangements, unemployment rates, and so on. Earnings in the South East of England, where house prices and other living costs are relatively high, are higher (119% of the national average) than that of a region such as the North East (83% of the national average income), where there is a combination of lower living costs and less difficulty in filling vacant jobs.

Another major area of pay and/or income discrimination surrounds age. Those who are at either end of the working age are most likely to have lower than average earnings. For example, the government's latest figures show that in 1998/9, 27% of pensioners lived on incomes below the poverty line (below 50% of average earnings). For those of working age the figure is 14%. Similarly those aged between 18 and 24 are also more likely to earn below average incomes. This is, in part, the result of the National Minimum Wage (NMW), which has a lower youth rate.

Finally, the National Minimum Wage highlights another aspect of pay- the belief that in return for our labour people should be paid enough to buy, at the very least, the necessities of life. In order to ensure that people do not work for exploitatively low pay the government sets a minimum hourly floor below which employers must not drop their income. The introduction of a NMW was controversial. Employers argued that it would lead to many people being laid off work, as companies could no longer afford to pay staff the higher rate. This fear has not been realised, though many anti-poverty groups would argue that the government set the NMW low enough so that it has not really affected many workers.

The debate surrounding pay rates remains an ongoing issue, as do those factors that contribute to wage discrimination between different groups. Whilst the government have attempted to regulate and ensure a degree of 'fairness' into what people are paid, our salaries and wages remain largely the result of market forces. In the end much of our pay depends on how well trained we are, how sought after these skills may be, how many others can do the same job, and where we live.

Who's earning what? (with answers)

The average weekly full-time wage in the UK is £21,842. This works out at £411 a week (New earnings survey 2001).

1. **Vicar** £.....

2. **Taxi driver** £.....

3. **GP** £.....

4. **MP** £.....

5. **Estate agent** £.....

6. **Plumber** £.....

7. **Nurse** £.....

8. **Solicitor** £.....

9. **Hairdresser** £.....

10. **Receptionist** £.....

11. **Air hostess** £.....

12. **Chef** £.....

13. **Computer programmer** £.....

Can you justify it? Factsheet

● SOME FACTS

- David Beckham gets paid about £70,000 a week (2002).
(This is just his wage and does not include any sponsorship deals.)
- A nurse earns about £360 a week.
- Tiger Woods gets paid over £14,000,000 for wearing the Nike swoosh (2001).
- In 1999, the 9 directors of Adidas were paid a total of nearly £7,000,000. Also in the same year workers in Vietnam were paid around £1.10 a day (£400 a year) for making sports shoes. It takes them 1.5 hours to earn enough for a can of Coke.

Figures from "Exposed" Labour behind the label. NEAD.

These are extremes, but even in this country wages can vary enormously. But can these big differences in wages be justified? Yes or No?

● SOME THEORY

Many of the arguments in this area make use of the theory of supply and demand. Here is a quick outline:

Imagine a new toy, Wrestle-Bears, are released to the shops, and it's up to the shops to sell them at whatever price they want. Every child wants a Wrestle-Bear for Christmas, but there are only a few of them available. What would happen to the price?

The price would go up, possibly sky-high. That is what happens when there is high demand (everyone wants one) but short supply (there are not many available). Imagine the reverse. Another toy manufacturer releases Jig-Soaks, foam jigsaws that can be enjoyed in the bath. Again shops can sell them for whatever they want, but this time, understandably, no one wants to buy them. What would happen to the price?

This time the price would fall. There is a large supply and low demand. There is a basic principle at work here. When demand starts to match or overtake the supply, the price usually goes up. When there is more supply than demand the price tends to go down. The way prices of goods are allowed to fluctuate like this is part of what is meant by the 'free market'. Some countries don't have free market systems. In these countries the government controls the price of some goods.

● EXERCISE

What might happen to the price in each of these examples? Why?

The amount of oil produced in the world is reduced?

Because of a cookery programme suddenly everyone wants the new omelette pan?

After a public scandal no one wants the new Boys'r'Us boy band album?

Because of a shortage in cocoa suddenly only $\frac{1}{2}$ the normal amount of chocolate bars are made?

Can you justify it? Yes

● THE ARGUMENTS

Please remember that both of these arguments for and against are written from a biased perspective. These are not facts but opinions you are reading.

Yes, the vast differences in wages can be justified.

There are big differences in wages because wages are open to market forces. The laws of supply and demand dictate what people earn.

There is a great demand for brain surgeons, but very few people can do this – there is only a short supply so naturally, they will be paid more. Again, with computing there is a big demand for computer programmers and a short supply – so people who can programme tend to earn good money. There is no conspiracy here: either we have brain surgeons or we don't, and if we want them we will have to pay a lot for them. It's simple supply and demand stuff.

The same is true for low wages. There is a demand for people to work in shops, but as it is not highly skilled lots of people can do it. In other words, there is a huge supply of workers. The supply of workers is greater than the number of jobs, so the wages will be low.

If some people are very good at a particular job they will be in demand and will get more money. The same thing happens in football: the very best players are in short supply, but the demand is huge so their wages go through the roof.

So we can justify the vast difference in wages because it is all down to the simple principle of supply and demand. But there are other reasons.

Firstly, there isn't a huge problem with wages in this country. The standard of living is high and is getting better all the time. Most people can afford TVs, fridges, cookers, and many people have cars and mobile phones. Thirty years ago this would have been unthinkable.

If you start tinkering with the system what would happen? If you paid people more, British companies would not be able to compete, as other countries would pay workers less. Companies would go bust, people would lose their jobs and we'd all be worse off. On the other hand, if you tried to stop people working hard and earning big salaries they would simply move to another country where they could earn big money. And again this country would suffer.

Leave it up to companies to pay what they want and for workers to accept jobs or not. If you start messing with the system, then either way we all lose out. And why tinker when there's no problem in the first place?

We've got a giant cake that we are all eating from. Sure, some people have got bigger slices than others, but no one is going hungry! We could, however, have a much smaller cake and all have a small slice the same size. Surely it is more important to make the cake bigger than to make the slices more even? In other words, it is better to have uneven wages and a rich country than have even wages and a poor country.

Can you justify it? No

● THE ARGUMENTS

Please remember that both of these arguments for and against are written from a biased perspective. These are not facts but opinions you are reading.

No, the vast differences in wages cannot be justified

Here are some facts

In 1998:

The wealthiest 1% owned 26% of the total wealth in the UK – this is more than a quarter.

The wealthiest 5% owned 50% – half.

The wealthiest 50% – that is the wealthiest half – owned 95% of the wealth.

(Source: Inland Revenue)

When someone like Beckham earns the same amount in a week as a nurse would earn in 4 years there is something wrong. Bill Gates has more money than he could ever spend in his lifetime. The situation has got out of control: the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer and this cannot be justified.

There are problems with using the idea of supply and demand to justify the different wages that people earn. For a start, many people who do difficult jobs, such as nurses, are paid by the government. There is a short supply of nurses at the moment and a huge demand. So in a free market their wages should be sky high, but they're not. Why? Because the government pays them and so market forces don't apply. The same is true of teachers and doctors. It is all well and good saying that the differences in wages are down to supply and demand, but for many people they are not. We cannot justify people earning vast sums of money and at the same time pay our nurses so little. It is morally wrong: and supply and demand has nothing to do with it.

Also, the people at the top of companies, earning the big money, are often the people who decide what they themselves should earn. Their own wages may be decided by themselves, or by close friends, so is it any wonder that people at the top of companies earn so much? They claim they are earning the market rate, but the market rate is set by themselves and others who are constantly giving themselves huge pay rises.

Even if the differences in wages are just down to supply and demand, which they are not, that doesn't mean they are right. Surely, as humans, we don't just have to accept that "that's the way the world works". It's our system, we created it, and we can change it if we want to. So we don't have to accept that the vast differences in wages are just down to supply and demand.

When anyone works, they give up their free time in order to do a job. In human terms everyone's time is equally valuable to themselves. It can therefore be argued that all jobs should receive roughly equal pay as they all involve roughly the same sacrifice of time.

So the vast difference in wages simply cannot be justified: we should try and change things. Taxing the rich more and raising the minimum wage are practical ways of making things fairer for all.

Earnings and qualifications

The average weekly full-time wage in the UK is £21,842. This works out at £411 a week (New earnings survey 2001), although this this will vary a lot around the country.

Usual weekly earnings of employees (before any deductions, like tax) Spring 2000

Type of qualification	16 – 24	25 – 35	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 –59/64	All ages
Degree or higher	£280	£470	£600	£610	£560	£520
Higher education below degree level	£230	£370	£410	£400	£460	£390
GCE A level or equivalent	£180	£340	£390	£360	£330	£320
GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	£140	£270	£270	£300	£270	£240
Other (including GCSE below grade C)	£180	£260	£280	£260	£290	£260
No qualifications	£100	£220	£200	£210	£210	£200
All for each age group	£170	£340	£370	£360	£320	£320

(Source: Labour Force Survey. Office for National Statistics)

● EXERCISE

At what age, roughly, do earnings peak?

Why are earnings so low for all 16–24 year olds?

Why can education lead to getting a better-paid job?



Young people and work

3. Young people and work

● **OVERVIEW**

Students examine an account of child labour in Victorian times. They invent their own laws affecting young people and work; these are then compared to the actual laws.

● **AIMS**

- To make students aware of the law regarding young people and work.
- To raise awareness of previous generations of young workers.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- compare the working conditions for children in Victorian times with working conditions today
- discuss some of the main issues relating to young people and work
- explain some of the current laws affecting young people and work
- create a short manifesto on work.

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

Does anyone have a job?

How many hours a week do you work?

What is minimum hourly rate you would work for?

Should children be allowed to leave school and work if they want to?

What would happen if there were no laws regulating young people and work?

(Possible answers) Young people might be exploited. Some parents might expect their children to earn money.

Should there be laws regulating how young people can work?

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY 1: Work in Victorian times

Using the *You've never had it so good sheet*, read the account of Matthew Crabtree.

(www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/IRchild.htm has lots of accounts of the working conditions in Victorian times and before. The case of Robert Blincoe is particularly harrowing, but may be worth the students reading.)

Discussion points

What do you think the worst aspect of work was for Mr Crabtree?

Why are children not treated like that today?

(Possible answers) Not morally acceptable. Government legislation.

Do you think children in other countries have similar working conditions?

Exploitation of child labour is still common in some parts of the world; students could explore this issue using the Internet.

Save the Children produces excellent education materials in this area (www.savethechildren.org.uk). Their website contains lots of useful information and some online lesson plans for citizenship, including one on the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child which would follow on well from this lesson. An account of a young worker in India is included for comparison at the end of the section.

ACTIVITY 2: Making the law

Using the *Making the law worksheet* students, in groups, make their own laws relating to young people and work. They then apply their laws to see if various working scenarios are legal or not under their system.

The various answers could be read through and discussed with the class, followed by voting on each of the questions until an overall class manifesto emerges.

Discussion points

Would the account of Matthew Crabtree be legal under your suggestions?

What about the account of the worker in India?

ACTIVITY 3: Young workers and the law

Using the Young Workers and the Law sheet, students can compare the actual law to their own laws from *Activity 2*.

Discussion points

How close were your laws to the actual ones?

Do you think the actual regulations are better or worse than your laws? Why?

Using the scenarios on the previous sheet, are they legal or not?

Which of the regulations would have been broken by Matthew Crabtree?

Which regulations would have been broken by the worker in India?

Answers

1. Ali, 14, works for 2 hours, from 6-8pm in his parents' shop after school.
(Answer) If you're under 15 you cannot work after 7pm on a school night.
2. Susie, 15, in the summer holiday worked 8 hours everyday, except Sundays, selling ice creams in a shop.
No, this would make 48 hours a week, and 35 is the most you can work at 15 during holidays. Also 15 year olds can only work for up to 5 hours on a Saturday.
3. Tina, 15, works 5 hours in a clothes shop on Saturdays earning £2.50 an hour.
Perfectly legal.
4. Francis, 16, works from 8-10pm after school stacking shelves in a supermarket.
Perfectly legal.
5. John, 13, has 2 paper rounds. This takes him from 6.30-8.00am
Can't work before 7am on a school day.

● ASSIGNMENT OR HOMEWORK

Students could research labour conditions for young people in other countries and share accounts.

Students could conduct a survey to estimate how many students in the school have jobs.

● FURTHER INFORMATION

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/IRchild.htm> has lots of accounts of the working conditions in Victorian times and before. The case of Robert Blincoe is particularly harrowing, but may be worth the students reading. A good site discussing the minimum wage is <http://bized.ac.uk/stafsup/options/work/minim.htm> also www.savethechildren.org.uk has more information on child labour in other countries.

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Young people in the workplace

There are a variety of distinct issues that confront young people in the workplace. The main ones are:

- Minimum Wage
- Health and Safety
- Job Insecurity
- Negative Stereotyping
- The Burden of Debt

Minimum Wage age differentials

The introduction of the Minimum Wage was a great achievement in the campaign to end poverty pay. However, the decision to exempt those under the age of 18 and the establishment of a lower rate for 18-21 year olds discriminates against younger workers. Unscrupulous employers can use the exemption and the differential rate to pay younger workers a lower rate than they would usually pay an employee of 22 years and over. A key example of this would be a 18 year old working behind a bar doing exactly the same job as his/her 22 year old work colleague, but being paid a lower rate. The argument used to justify the introduction of the exemption and the differential rate was that the lower rate would be linked to training. However, evidence suggests that those employers who use the Minimum Wage to pay their young workers a lower rate rarely provide professional training.

Health and safety

With the deregulation of the labour market young workers have increasingly been forced to take up jobs in industries where they work long unsociable hours in sometimes dangerous working conditions. Many young workers are unaware of their right to work a maximum working week and take regular rest breaks, so they can end up being exploited. A tragic example of this was the death of the student Simon Jones who was killed in an industrial accident in April 1998 whilst working part time unloading cargo ships at Shoreham docks. During the investigation it transpired that Simon had received no formal training prior to starting the job. As a response, trade unions such as UNISON are campaigning to ensure that young people are made aware of their rights in the workplace.

Job insecurity

Linked into the deregulation of the labour market and the increase in the service sector side of the economy have been the extension of the use of short-term temporary contracts. For young workers, who increasingly find employment in the service sector, the result of the use of this type of contract is that they face daily job insecurity and stress. Young workers on temporary contracts are also prevented from being able to plan ahead financially in their personal life.

Negative stereotyping

Young people in the workplace can also face negative stereotyping with some employers wrongly believing that they do not have the maturity to hold down positions of responsibility. Coupled with this, young workers can be subjected to an additional layer of discrimination due to their gender, race, sexuality, religion or disability, although such discrimination is often illegal.

The burden of debt

Increasingly, young workers face the problem of taking on large debt levels with the rise in house prices far outstripping the average inflation in wage levels. Regional variations complicate this picture, with young workers located in London being in an even worse position. This situation is compounded even further for graduates, with the average student debt after a three-year degree now standing at £12,000-£15,000 (source: National Union of Students Hardship Survey 2001.)

You've never had it so good

In the 1800s children did not have an easy life. The following is an account of one worker that was given before a committee in parliament in 1832. Because of this account and others like it, a law was passed limiting the number of hours women and children could work in textile factories. Although this did not make a huge impact, many more laws have been passed over the years to protect children.

Mr Matthew Crabtree, called in and examined.

Q. What age are you?

A. *Twenty-two.*

Q. What is your occupation?

A. *Blanket manufacturer.*

Q. Have you ever been employed in a factory?

A. *Yes.*

Q. At what age did you first go to work in one?

A. *Eight.*

Q. How long did you continue in that occupation?

A. *Four years.*

Q. Will you state the hours of labour at the period when you first went to the factory, in ordinary times?

A. *From 6 in the morning to 8 at night.*

Q. Fourteen hours?

A. *Yes.*

Q. With what intervals for refreshment and rest?

A. *An hour at noon.*

Q. When trade was brisk what were your hours?

A. *From 5 in the morning to 9 in the evening.*

Q. Sixteen hours?

A. *Yes.*

Q. With what intervals at dinner?

A. *An hour.*

Q. How far did you live from the mill?

A. *About two miles.*

Q. Was there any time allowed for you to get your breakfast in the mill?

A. *No.*

Q. Did you take it before you left your home?

A. *Generally.*

Q. During those long hours of labour could you be punctual; how did you awake?

A. *I seldom did awake spontaneously; I was most generally awake or lifted out of bed, sometimes asleep, by my parents.*

Q. Were you always in time?

A. *No.*

Q. What was the consequence if you had been too late?

A. *I was most commonly beaten.*

Q. Severely?

A. *Very severely, I thought.*

Q. In those mills is chastisement towards the latter part of the day going on perpetually?

A. *Perpetually.*

Q. So that you can hardly be in a mill without hearing constant crying?

A. *Never an hour, I believe...*

Q. At the time when you were beaten for not keeping up with your work, were you anxious to have done it if you possibly could?

A. *Yes; the dread of being beaten if we could not keep up with our work was a sufficient impulse to keep us to it if we could.*

Q. When you got home at night after this labour, did you feel much fatigued?

A. *Very much so.*

Q. Had you any time to be with your parents, and to receive instruction from them?

A. *No.*

Q. What did you do?

A. *All that we did when we got home was to get the little bit of supper that was provided for us and go to bed immediately. If the supper had not been ready directly, we should have gone to sleep while it was preparing.*

Q. Did you not, as a child, feel it a very grievous hardship to be roused so soon in the morning?

A. *I did.*

Q. Were the rest of the children similarly circumstanced?

A. *Yes, all of them; but they were not all of them so far from their work as I was.*

Q. And if you had been too late you were under the apprehension of being cruelly beaten?

A. *I generally was beaten when I happened to be too late; and when I got up in the morning the apprehension of that was so great, that I used to run, and cry all the way as I went to the mill.*

This child was lucky in as much as he lived at home. Many other children were sent to work in Cotton Mills and in many cases never saw their parents again. They were expected to work 12-15 hours a day, and had to sleep two to a small bed.

At the time, the government was reluctant to pass any laws about children and work. The owners of the mills had convinced politicians that if they changed the laws at all, they would not be able to compete with companies overseas and would go out of business.

The material above was reprinted in an old history textbook, *Readings in European History Since 1814*, edited by Jonathan F. Scott and Alexander Baitzly, and was published by Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. in 1930.
<http://landow.stg.brown.edu/victorian/history/workers1.html>
<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/IRcrabtree.htm>

Making the law

The government has asked YOU, the youth of today, to advise on the laws that affect young people and work.

Please give your opinion on the following 9 questions:

- 1 What is the earliest age you should be able to have any sort of job?
- 2 What is the earliest age you should be able to have a full-time job during your holidays?
- 3 What types of work should an under 18 year old not be able to do? For example, should they be allowed to work in pubs? What other exceptions, if any, should there be?
- 4 What are the maximum hours someone under 16 should be able to work in a week during term time?
- 5 What is the most you should be able to work during your holiday?
- 6 During a school week, what is the earliest someone should be allowed to start working?
- 7 What's the latest they should be allowed to work until?

Minimum wage

At the moment there is no minimum wage for under 18's.

For 18-21 year olds the minimum they can be paid is £3.60; and for over 21s?

Should there be a minimum wage for under 18 year olds?

Some would say YES. Sometimes younger people are taken advantage of; employers know they are willing to work for very little, so don't pay much. If there was a minimum wage this would stop young people being taken advantage of. All young people would get a fair wage for the work they did.

Other people say there should be NO minimum wage. They might argue that if the minimum wage applied to younger people then they would never be able to get any work. After all, why would a company employ you if they had to pay you the same as an 18 year old? How much an hour does a paper round work out at? And would there still be paper rounds if newsagents had to pay the minimum wage?

Minimum wage

- 8 Should there be a minimum wage for under 18 year olds? If yes what would it be?
- 9 Would there be a separate one for under 16 year olds? And what should it be?

Now you have decided your policy, consider whether the following situations would be legal under your laws:

- 1 Ali, 14, works for 2 hours, from 6-8pm in his parents' shop in the evenings after school.
- 2 Susie, 15, in the summer holiday worked 8 hours everyday except Sundays, selling ice creams in a shop.
- 3 Tina, 15, works in a clothes shop on Saturdays earning £2.50 an hour.
- 4 Francis, 16, after school, works from 8pm-10pm stacking shelves in a supermarket .
- 5 John, 13, has 2 paper rounds. This takes him from 6.30-8.00 am.

Young workers and the law

These are the actual laws affecting young people and work

If you're under 18

You are not allowed to work in places where there is alcohol or gambling, where you will have to carry heavy loads, clean machinery or work with dangerous substances.

If you're aged 16-17 these further restrictions apply

You're entitled to 12 hours' uninterrupted rest in each 24-hour work period.

You're entitled to 2 days off every week.

If you work more than 4.5 hours at a stretch you have a right to 30 minutes' rest.

If you're under 16, all the above and below apply

You can't work without an employment card issued by your local authority.

You can't work for more than 1 hour before school, at all during school hours, before 7am or after 7pm.

You can work up to 17 hours a week during term time, and up to 25 hours a week in the holidays (35 hours if you are 15 or over).

You can work up to 5 hours on Saturdays and up to 2 hours on Sundays.

You have the legal right to a break of at least 1 hour after every four hours' work.

Throughout the whole year you must take at least 2 consecutive weeks' school holiday without working.

If you're under 15 all the above and the following apply

It's illegal for you to have a full-time job at any time.

If you're under 14

It's illegal for you to work at all except in certain circumstances as set out by your local authority.

Minimum wage

Main rate for workers aged 22 and over

£4.20 per hour (October 2002)

Development rate for workers aged 18-21 inclusive

£3.60 per hour (October 2002)

These apply to everyone except:

- workers who are genuinely self-employed
- workers under the age of 18 who live in their employer's home, such as au pairs
- apprentices under the age of 19, or apprentices under the age of 26 in their first year of apprenticeship
- voluntary workers who are paid only expenses
- members of the employer's family
- workers on work experience who are not trainees with a contract of employment, trainees on government-funded training schemes, unless they are employees, students on sandwich courses and teacher trainees, homeless people on schemes where they do some work in exchange for shelter, members of the armed services, people who normally work outside the UK, prisoners, those in the fishing industry paid only by a share in profits of the fishing vessel.

Nancy's story

Fourteen-year-old Nancy lives near Lake Dal in Srinagar, the regional capital of Kashmir, in north-west India. She has worked as an embroiderer since the age of six, stitching designs onto fabrics for curtains and wall hangings – many of which are eventually sold in home furnishing and department stores in Europe and North America. Her work accounts for about a quarter of her family's income.

Nancy works from home nine hours a day. She also helps her mother with domestic chores, and attends informal literacy and numeracy lessons in the evenings. The lessons are organised by Save the Children, which set up a group for female embroiderers in her village. Staff help the girls to buy raw materials, such as cotton yarn, and to market their embroideries. Profits made by the group are shared by its members, and they have opened a bank account to help them manage their income. By joining the group, the embroiderers have dispensed with middlemen in the sales process, and can get better prices for their work.

"My parents are in a very tight position. My father is a boatman. He doesn't earn much, and his expenses are very high. My mother also has to pay regular visits to the doctor. She's had an operation for gall bladder problems, and has high blood pressure. So I have to work and share my money with my father. But I want to help him. I don't want to see him so tense.

"In the beginning I enjoyed the work. But now I feel that I just have to do it. I get headaches, and sometimes my arm aches. Sometimes I also prick my fingers and bleed. In summer it's so dry, that I have to put oil on my hands so I work quicker.

"Going to school is a dream for me. I was always very eager to go, but my father was never in a position to send me. Now my parents are more aware of the importance of education, and that's why my brother and younger sister go to school. But I have to work for my family. If I stopped working we wouldn't be able to pay the school fees. I want to work just to make sure that they can study

"I used to think it was a good idea to ban products made by children. But I live in the practical world, and I'm very concerned about my family. I know that their finances would be badly affected if I didn't work. For large families, it's very important for at least one or two children to work. If we don't work, our families won't survive."

Taken from www.savethechildren.org.uk/summitup/story1.html



Stress

4. Stress

● **OVERVIEW**

Two short exercises exploring stress followed by a longer task involving students setting goals as a strategy to overcome stress.

● **AIMS**

- To increase students' awareness of what stress is and how it affects people.
- To introduce a strategy for coping with stress.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- explain what stress is
- identify some of the symptoms of stress
- set goals as a strategy for overcoming stress.

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

What is stress?

Can anyone think of a situation in which they have been stressed?

Has anyone found work/work experience stressful?

Do students find exams stressful?

What does it feel like when you are stressed?

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY 1: What is stress?

Using the *Stress factsheet* students, in groups, read through the sheet and come up with a definition of stress.

Discussion points

Each group's definition of stress could be fed back and the best one voted on.

Can any of the students relate to any of the causes or symptoms of stress?

Based on the list of symptoms, does anyone think they are often stressed?

ACTIVITY 2: Stress cadets

Stress cadet worksheet. Students individually or in groups rate various situations on a "stressometer". Alternatively, the sheet could be cut up or projected and students rank the scenarios in order of stress inducement.

The results could be fed back, discussed and the average score of the class discovered.

ACTIVITY 3: Stress busting

Stress busting and Goal setting worksheets. These sheets introduce a strategy for coping with stress centered around goal setting. Students are asked to make a long-term plan for their lives, but they could be asked to make a revision timetable if more appropriate. Students should attempt to goal plan individually, but could then ask members of the group to discuss their targets and see if they are realistic.

Discussion points

Do students often think negatively?

Did they find goal setting useful?

Can students think of any situations where goal setting may be useful?

(Interesting aside: the philosopher, Aristotle, suggested that reasoning itself is the ability to work backwards from a goal to a course of action. He claimed that we are the only animal to reason this way. Other animals act because they are driven forward by instinct, they do not work towards conscious, pre-established goals. People who reason well, he argues, are able to see clearly how to get from A to a goal B, and then act on this.)

● ASSIGNMENT OR HOMEWORK

Students could keep a stress diary. At regular intervals, perhaps every few hours, or on the hour, students should quickly write down:

- 1 How stressed you feel on a scale of one to ten?
- 2 What you are doing? and
- 3 How much you are enjoying what you are doing?
- 4 How well you are working?

Also when anything stressful occurs, write down what it was and what the key features were that made it stressful.

After a week, it would be interesting to look back and hopefully see what makes you stressed. This might be a useful activity for teachers as well!

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Stress is one of the biggest health issues at work today. Over half a million people will have their physical or mental health damaged as a result of stress at work. The real extent of stress-related problems has been hidden because very few people are prepared to admit to be suffering from stress, or to seek help for it. Few people who have not experienced the depression, anxiety and despair, which often accompanies stress, can fully appreciate the effect it can have on people's lives.

Even today, there are employers that claim stress is good for you. This is nonsense! Stress can have serious consequences upon your health. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) accepts that there is no such thing as a pressure free job. Challenge, stimulation, and deadlines are necessary, but stress is not, and, if a job is to be done well should be avoided.

The levels of stress experienced will vary between people, as will their reactions. Stress is also difficult to measure. Employers often portray stress as an individual problem rather than one affecting the whole workplace and often claim that it is caused by problems outside of work. While much stress can be caused by outside factors such as relationships, health and noisy neighbours, work is still one of the main causes of stress. Also stress at work can compound problems which result from stress caused by personal problems.

The HSE recognises that stress is a major contributor to work related illness and sickness absence. The CBI – representing employers – has put the total cost of mental health and stress problems to employers at £5 billion. The Institute of Management has estimated that 270,000 people take time off work every day due to work related stress. A cost to the UK economy of £7 billion per annum, in terms of sick pay, lost production, and NHS costs, etc. There is evidence that employers' insurers are seeking more information from employers on what preventative measures they are taking with regard to stress. It is therefore likely that employers failing to act will face higher policy charges.

If employers successfully tackle workplace stress the HSE has noted that they enjoy: a healthier workforce, lower sickness absence, better performance and improved service, less frequent and less severe accidents, better relationships between colleagues and with clients, and a lower staff turnover. Clearly action on stress can be very cost effective.

● **FURTHER INFORMATION .**

Stress – National Stress Day is 7 November – www.stressbusting.co.uk has more information.

Stress factsheet

Stress results in more sick days being taken than the common cold. It is now a political issue. What should the government do? Have more bank holidays? Make the working week shorter? Encourage more job sharing?

But what is stress? Here are some definitions of stress, which is the best?

- stress is... any stimulus or change in the internal or external environment, which disturbs our inner harmony.
- stress is... the physical and mental changes that a person experiences when they perceive a situation as threatening, harmful or demanding.
- stress is... anything that stimulates you and increases your level of alertness.

Insert your own definition of stress:

Without some stress everything would be boring, but too much stress can damage your health and can stop you performing well. Consider taking an exam: if you really are bored by it and just can't be bothered then the chances are you will not do very well. However, if you are so worried about it that your mind is racing and you cannot concentrate, your breathing is getting short and quick and you can only think negative thoughts, then you will not do very well. Generally, we need to be somewhere in the middle.

Common causes of stress

Too much or too little to do, having to do things that are beyond your present abilities, time pressures and deadlines, when it is unclear what is expected from you, responsibility for people budgets or equipment, feeling you should be promoted, lack of job security, pressure from your boss or others; interference in your work from others, financial worries, relationship problems, ill-health.

Physical symptoms of stress

Short term symptoms (often caused by physical threat or having to perform a task in front of others.)

Faster heart beat, increased sweating, cool skin, cold hands, feeling sick, rapid breathing, tense muscles, dry mouth, needing to go to the toilet.

Long term physical symptoms include change in appetite, lots of colds, various illness, aches and pains, unable to sleep.

Mental symptoms of stress

Hard to think clearly, reduced enjoyment of world, negative thinking, easily distracted, feeling tired, worry, confusion, feeling ill, feeling out of control, mood changes, constant irritability, loss of SOH, wanting to cry at the slightest thing, suppressed anger, feeling unable to cope.

Behavioural indicators of stress

Yawning, fiddling and twitching, nail biting, grinding teeth, drumming fingers, pacing up and down, bad moods, irritability, defensiveness, being critical, aggressiveness, forgetfulness, being accident prone, being negative, increased absence from work/school.

Stress cadets

How stressful would you find each of the following.

Mark the stressometer – 1 is no stress and 10 is total stress.

You have one evening to finish off loads of homework and at the same time you have to tidy your room.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You have waited 30 minutes and the bus hasn't arrived. You have to get to school for nine o'clock as the coach will leave for a school trip. It's now 8:50am. The bus usually takes 15 minutes to get there.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You are walking home and realise suddenly you've left your bag with your money, keys and phone by the side of a machine in the arcade.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You have a GCSE exam tomorrow.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You are going out on a date. On the way to meet the person you spill cola on your trousers in such a way as to raise questions about your bladder control.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

It's 8:30 in the morning, you've just arrived at school. At 9:15 you have to speak to the whole school in assembly.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You are watching a Buffy video round a friend's house.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You have a Saturday job; your boss says that if you don't work harder you will be sacked.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You are looking after your friend's dog for the week. You notice it has got out of the house and you can't find it.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You are eating an ice cream in a park and two wasps are continually trying to get near the maple syrup topping.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Stress busting

Often at work, as in school, stress can build up if you have more work than you feel you can cope with. It can also occur when you have a large project to do and are worried about finishing it before the deadline.

The more stressed you get, the less you feel like tackling the project, and that in turn makes it worse. Before you know it you are stressed out of your head and can't sleep at night. You sweat more and your heart rate has increased; you're bad tempered most of the time and simply don't seem to be enjoying life.

When you start to feel stressed this can, in turn, create many negative thoughts. Without realising it, you may start to thinking negatively about the future, and this will make you feel depressed. You may start to feel that you are not good enough to do the job. This can make your general attitude to life quite negative.

Many people who are stressed spend more time worrying about what they have to do than actually getting on with the task at hand.

HOW TO BEAT STRESS

First you must change your attitude. If you are stressed you need to:

1. Start thinking positive thoughts. You are good, many people like you for who you are. Even if this situation does not turn out well, you can learn from it and bounce back.

- Write down three negative thoughts that you often have.
- Write down three positive thoughts.
- Try to notice when negative thoughts pop into your head and replace them with a positive thought.

2. Start tackling the problem

- The best way of doing this is to manage your time better. One way is to set yourself goals to work towards. Break down a task into smaller stages, then make a plan that sets out when you will tackle each stage. Breaking down a large task has the effect of making it seem more manageable and less difficult.
- There is also evidence to suggest that people who set themselves goals in life tend to perform better and achieve more.

3. Goal Setting

Goal setting is most useful when you have a particular project or task to complete. However, for this exercise we will focus on a very long-term goal. Imagine the sort of life you would like to lead when you are 25. Think about a specific area, perhaps one of the following:

- What would you like to achieve in terms of education. Would you like to take A levels, a degree?
- What sort of job would you like when you are 25?
- What sort of person would you like to be – happy, generous, liked by others, would you like to have lots of friends?
- What sort of possessions would you like? A house, a car?

Now write down a realistic goal for when you are 25. Try to be realistic as unrealistic goals mean that you will not work towards them.

Stress busting

FILL OUT THE GOAL SETTER.

My goal: By age 25 I want to be/have:

To achieve this... by 21 I will have to be doing these sorts of things

... by 16 I will have to be doing these sorts of things

... by the end of this year I will have to be doing these sorts of things

... by the end of the month I will have to be doing these things

... by the end of this week I should be doing these sorts of things

Tips

This is planning on a grand scale. On a more everyday scale, planning is really useful if you have lots of homework to get done or when you are coming up to exams. In the workplace if you are stressed, planning can help you achieve more in your job. If you fall behind with reaching your targets, then it is important to not get stressed about it; instead, simply draw up a new set of targets.



Discrimination and the gender pay gap

5. Discrimination and the gender pay gap

● OVERVIEW

A quick questionnaire revealing our tendency to stereotype. Then a short exercise on discrimination law followed by a larger task asking students to look at ways of reducing the gender pay gap.

● AIMS

- To make students aware of discrimination, particularly in reference to the work place.
- To analyse some of the factors behind the gender pay gap.

● LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

- recognise some forms of stereotyping
- identify some of the forms of employment discrimination
- apply the law on discrimination to a range of cases
- explain what the gender pay gap is
- discuss different ways to reduce the gender pay gap.

● INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

(It may be better to complete **Activity 1** before introducing the topic, as this activity works best with an element of surprise.)

What does discrimination mean?

Can anyone think of a definition?

Has anyone been discriminated against?

Do all the girls in the class intend to pursue a career? Would they want to go back to work after having children? How soon?

Would any of the boys consider giving up a job to raise their family while their partner worked?

● STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1 – Reasoning test (stereotyping)

Reasoning test worksheet

This exercise will work best if you tell the students this is a short exercise on reasoning, thus not revealing its true purpose. Read the text out twice. Then, ask students to respond to the statements with true, false or don't know (T, F, DK).

In the extract the sexes of the characters are never revealed, but students may automatically begin to assume that the nurse is a female, the builder and doctor male etc. In fact, this is never actually stated: the answer to all the questions should be "Don't Know".

This exercise is designed to tease out stereotyping that many students may practice or that is inherent in language. We tend to stereotype certain jobs with certain sexes. Such stereotyping can become self-fulfilling, with men perhaps not wanting to become nurses and females avoiding working in the building trade. We tend to make a lot of assumptions all the time; often these are because we stereotype people. Stereotyping is a form of prejudice.

(It is also a useful exercise when thinking about listening skills. The exercise shows how we often think we understand what a speaker is talking about and may start to fill in missing bits of information ourselves, based on our own experiences; good listeners try not to do this.)

Discussion points

How did students feel about the test?

Can students think of other ways in which we stereotype people?

ACTIVITY 2 – Discrimination law

Discrimination and work: the law worksheet. This lays out the law on discrimination and could be talked through with students. The questions at the end ask students to judge whether various scenarios count as discrimination or not. These questions could be tackled in groups or discussed as a whole class.

Answers

Tony and the baker's job

Although this is discrimination in the ordinary sense of the word, this does not count legally as discrimination when it comes to work, as there are no laws against age discrimination.

David and the computer job

No, this would not count as discrimination as the company had less than 15 employees. In a larger company this may well count as discrimination. (Although from October 2004 this would count as discrimination as it is planned to remove the small firm exemption.)

Gabby and harassment.

Yes, constant harassment counts as discrimination. If she finds it offensive, she should complain to her employers, and it is up to them to ensure that it does not happen again. If they fail to do this she could consider going to an employment tribunal.

Jan and the promotion.

Yes, this would count as discrimination. The company have treated her differently because of her sex. However, such discrimination can be hard to prove.

Extension activity

The *Discrimination case studies sheet* could also be used to reinforce the learning.

ACTIVITY 3 – The gender pay gap

Use the *Gender pay gap worksheet* to make students aware of what the gender pay gap is. The sheet also contains a short exercise asking students to guess the gender breakdown of employment in certain jobs. Here are the answers:

Answers	% women	% men
<i>Lorry and van drivers</i>	2	98
<i>Chefs and cooks</i>	50	50
<i>Computer analysts/programmers</i>	21	79
<i>Secondary school teachers</i>	53	47
<i>Primary school teachers</i>	86	14
<i>Marketing and sales managers</i>	29	71
<i>Checkout workers</i>	81	19
<i>Nurses</i>	90	10
<i>Book-keepers and financial clerks</i>	74	26

(Source: EOC analysis of the labour force survey spring 2000. Office for National Statistics.)

Discussion points

Were students surprised by these figures?

If students had to choose one of these jobs, which would they prefer?

Does the class follow a similar gender pattern?

Why do certain jobs fall along these gender lines?

ACTIVITY 4 – Reducing the gender pay gap

Using the *Reducing the Gender pay gap sheet* students have to choose a policy that they feel would be the most helpful in reducing the gender pay gap. The answers could then be fed back, discussed, and an overall class policy discussed, then voted on.

● ASSIGNMENT OR HOMEWORK

Students could ask their mothers/guardians how they feel about gender and work.

Did they feel they were encouraged to work?

Did they consider different professions?

What career advice did they receive at school?

● FURTHER INFORMATION

Equal Opportunities Commission – www.eoc.org.uk

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Nowadays the corporate ethos of every responsible company or corporation is not to discriminate, but it remains a fact that there are, and always will be, individuals who hold prejudicial attitudes towards ethnic minorities, women and other social groups. In these circumstances there will always be discrimination. Employers have the main responsibility for providing equality of opportunity and for preventing discrimination in the workplace.

It is generally unlawful in the United Kingdom for employers to discriminate against employees on the grounds of their sex, marital status or race at every stage of the employment process. However, there is an exception in that an employer may lawfully discriminate by employing individuals for a job where being a member of a particular racial group or of a particular gender is a genuine occupational qualification for the job.

For example, an employer can decide to employ only female staff as lingerie assistants whose duties included the fitting of lingerie on female customers. Likewise, an employer is entitled to employ only individuals from one particular racial group if the job involved requires a specific cultural participation from members of that group. For example jobs involving a dramatic performance or other entertainment, for reasons of authenticity, may require individuals of a particular race. Likewise an employer is entitled to discriminate by employing only Indian or Chinese waiters for an Indian or Chinese restaurant if their nationality is required for reasons of authenticity.

The Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 prohibits discrimination on racial grounds. Racial grounds includes the colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin of the person. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) is the organisation set up under the RRA, with overall responsibility to work towards the elimination of race discrimination.

The Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status or gender reassignment. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is the organisation set up under the SDA with overall responsibility for the workings of the SDA and the Equal Pay Act.

The Equal Pay Act 1970 allows women to claim equal pay with men.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 prohibits unlawful discrimination against a disabled person in employment. However, the Act does not apply to employers who have fewer than 15 employees at the time of the act of discrimination. This exemption will be abolished by October 2004. The Disability Rights Commission is the organisation equivalent to the CRE and EOC in the disability field.

RRA and the SDA are both very similar. Each prohibits direct discrimination, indirect discrimination and victimisation. Direct discrimination is where an individual is treated differently because of his/her race, sex or marital status. An example of direct discrimination is where a black worker caught sleeping on duty is dismissed, when the previous month a white worker only received a warning for an unauthorised absence from work, which is an equivalent or more serious offence.

This is an example of less favourable treatment of the black employee.

The motives of the discriminator are irrelevant. There is no defence to direct discrimination. Less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status or race, whatever the motive, is inexcusable.

Indirect discrimination is where a person is disadvantaged because of a particular requirement or condition which has been applied by the employers and which also disproportionately disadvantages others of that individual racial, gender or marital group and employers cannot justify applying the requirement or condition. For example a requirement that all job applicants speak fluent English would disproportionately exclude candidates born in non English speaking countries. An employer may be able to justify this requirement if the job is to teach English, but it would probably be unjustifiable for a manual job.

Victimisation occurs where an individual is punished or treated less favourably because he or she has complained about race or sex discrimination. An example of victimisation would be an employer demoting or dismissing an employee that had brought a grievance complaining of sex discrimination in a recent failed promotion attempt.

The DDA prevents unlawful discrimination against a disabled person in employment and protects workers with a range of mental and physical disabilities. To qualify as a disabled person under the DDA an individual has to have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out his/her normal day to day activities.

The definition of discrimination under the DDA is not the same as it is in the RRA and SDA. There are three kinds of unlawful discrimination under the DDA:

- (i) less favourable treatment for a reason which relates to the worker's disability;
- (ii) failure to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the worker's disability; and
- (iii) victimisation.

The DDA is unique in that it places a positive duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments to enable disabled individuals to get a job or continue working where the working conditions or physical features of the premises would put a disabled worker at a disadvantage.

Unlike for direct race and sex discrimination there is a potential defence available to employers in disability discrimination cases. Employers can discriminate against a disabled worker if they can justify doing so. The justification must be relevant to a particular case and substantial, ie. not trivial or minor.

Victimisation is the same concept as that under the RRA and SDA.

Harassment under the RRA, SDA or DDA

There is no express prohibition in the RRA or SDA against harassment or abuse. However, harassment is treated as a form of discrimination within the framework of those statutes. Harassment may take the form of racial insults and/or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which can include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. Whether there is harassment depends on the facts of each individual case.

Other Discrimination

There is currently no law against discriminating against an individual on the grounds of their age or religious belief or sexual orientation. This, however, will be changing as the Equal Treatment Directive 2000 requires all EC member states to prohibit age discrimination by December 2006 and to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religious belief and sexual orientation by December 2003.

Equal Pay

There is still an inequality between the rates of pay for men and women. Men in full time employment earn 18% more on average than women in full time employment. Men in part time employment earn 39% more than women in part time employment. There is a stark contrast between the earnings of professional women which are rising and the growing number of women in part time low paid jobs.

The United Kingdom has the widest gender pay gap of all the European Community states. The three main causes of unequal pay are:-

- (i) sex discrimination in the pay system. This accounts for 25%-50% of the gender pay gap
- (ii) women are concentrated in low paid jobs such as shop assistants, teachers, secretaries and nurses
- (iii) women still take prime responsibility for childcare, so many go into part time jobs which are usually badly paid.

Reasoning test

A builder, leaning out of a van, shouts "nice legs" to a nurse passing by. The same nurse arrives at work, and casually mentions this to a senior doctor. The doctor said, "I'd never say that". The doctor has two grown up children who are 22 and 30. They get on very well. One is a sergeant in the army; the other is training to be a beauty therapist. The doctor divorced last year, and is currently dating someone.

Answer the following based on the information above. Tick the appropriate box	true	false	don't know
1. The builder was driving a van			
2. The van was travelling quicker than the nurse			
3. There was at least one man in the van			
4. Not every man mentioned would shout "nice legs" to a passer-by			
5. The doctor is no longer living with his wife			
6. The doctor has a new girlfriend			
7. The doctor's son is in the army			
8. The youngest child is training to be a beauty therapist			
9. At some point a man spoke to a woman			
10. At least two of the people mentioned are men			
11. A woman was shouted at			

Discrimination and work: the law

Discrimination usually consists of one or more of the following:

- People who are treated differently because of their sex, race, colour, and nationality, ethnic or national origins or marital status. For instance, employees are paid different rates of pay despite doing similar work, because of their sex.
- An employer discriminating against a person on the grounds of their disability. To prevent discrimination, an employer will be expected to make adjustments to the workplace and working conditions so that a disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, at present this Act does not apply to an employer with less than 15 workers, although from October 2004 this exception will no longer apply.
- When members of trade unions are treated less favourably than non-union members. This can also work in reverse, if non-union workers receive less favourable treatment.
- There is no compensation available for people who are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation (for example, gay men or lesbians) because this is not recognised as sex discrimination. Similarly, there are no laws about age discrimination (if you are rejected for a job for which you are qualified simply because you are too young or too old). Other countries have laws against this. However, the laws on these issues is set to change in the near future.
- Harassment is also counted as a form of discrimination. For example, racial abuse or people making persistent sexist remarks.
- Discrimination need not be aimed at an individual. It could also happen if a company makes it difficult for certain types of people to get a job even when it has no bearing on how well they could do the job. For example, a company could require a minimum height to work, even though this has nothing to do with the job. This would tend to discriminate against women, who tend to be smaller.
- Sometimes an employer may argue that some type of discrimination is necessary for the job. For example, a French restaurant may want French staff rather than English staff, in such cases this is acceptable.

● EXERCISE

Are the following discrimination? Explain why or why not?

Tony, 55, applied for a job as a baker. The company didn't give him the job as they wanted someone younger to fit in with the rest of the staff.

David, who uses a wheelchair, failed to get a job as a programmer as the small company (of 10 employees) felt they couldn't afford the money necessary to ensure that their office was accessible to wheelchairs.

Gabby constantly gets whistled at when she walks across the factory floor at work. Sometimes the guys try and guess what colour underwear she is wearing.

Jan failed to get promotion even though she was the best candidate. The board didn't tell her it was because they thought she would probably start a family soon and take a lot of time off.

Discrimination case studies

Direct race discrimination:

An individual is not offered a job, or is not given promotion because of his or her race.

Mr T was an Asian manager who requested five days special leave to care for his sick wife. His line manager only granted him three days despite the certificate from Mr T's doctor confirming that he needed to be at home. Shortly afterwards, Mr T's secretary, who was white, was granted seven days special leave to visit her sick mother in Paris. An Employment Tribunal held that Mr T had been discriminated against on the grounds of his race because he had been treated less favourably than a white comparator.

Direct sex discrimination:

An employer fails to promote a female employee because they are concerned that she may be starting a family and go off on maternity leave.

A female truck driver was made redundant after complaining about a male colleague refusing to work with her because she was a woman. A male driver made derogatory remarks and was exceptionally rude to the female driver. He suggested that she was doing a man out of a job and one of the other male drivers refused to work with her. The female driver complained to two directors of the company, but no action was taken. She went off on a period of sick leave and when she returned she was made redundant. The Employment Tribunal held that she had been discriminated against on the grounds of her sex.

Disability discrimination:

An employer refuses to employ a visually disabled worker to a reception post in case it would "upset customers", or an employer may refuse to employ a wheelchair user because of access difficulties.

An example of disability discrimination is when an employer failed to employ a diabetic as a fitter at a distribution centre because of his medical condition. The Employment Tribunal held that the employer was justified in not offering employment to the diabetic because the risk of injury to a diabetic employee in the low temperature could not be reduced by supplying or modifying equipment.

Another example is where an employer refused to offer a post as a train guard to an applicant who had been treated for depression. An Employment Tribunal held that this was justified because of the risk of side effects from the treatment for depression and the employer's responsibility for the safety of passengers.

Indirect discrimination:

An employer stipulated that it did not want job applicants from the city centre area in Liverpool because they found that such people attracted their unemployed friends who loitered around the shops and put off customers. The complainant lived in the postal district in the city centre and was refused an interview because of her address. An Employment Tribunal decided that the employer's actions amounted to unjustifiable indirect discrimination against the complainant. 50% of the city centre population was non-white, whereas 2% of the population outside that area in Merseyside as a whole was coloured. Thus the requirement excluded a larger number of non-white people in comparison with the proportion of white people likely to be affected.

Another example would be if for no good reason an employer required job applicants for a clerical post to be wine connoisseurs; this requirement may be considered discriminatory against Muslims who are forbidden by their religion to drink alcohol. Such a requirement may not be discriminatory in considering applicants for a job as a wine waiter whose duties included the tasting of wine.

Gender pay gap worksheet

For each job, what percentage of the work force are women and what are men? (Remember that each pair has to add up to 100%)

Job	Men%	Women%
Lorry and van drivers		
Chefs and cooks		
Computer analysts/programmers		
Secondary school teachers		
Primary school teachers		
Marketing and sales managers		
Checkout workers		
Nurses		
Book-keepers and financial clerks		

At the beginning of the 20th century, most women did not work outside of the home. During the First and Second World Wars, women worked in factories in an effort to raise production. After the Second World War, many women stayed on in the work place. Since then the number of women in work has steadily increased. However, women have not yet reached equality in the work place. Men hold many top positions in companies and it can be difficult for women to gain promotion. This is known as the 'glass ceiling'. In theory, it looks as if a women can be promoted all way to the top of the company, but in reality they are prevented from doing this.

In 1999, the average women in full-time work earned 18% less an hour than the average man in full-time work. Men in part time employment earn 39% more than women in part time employment. This is known as the gender pay gap. The gap between women's and men's pay is larger in the UK than in most of the other EU countries. Why is this?

There are many reasons for the gender pay gap. Most women take some time off work when their children are young. This may mean that they miss out on promotion. Some employers may feel that it is better to promote a man rather than a woman, particularly if they think the women may want to start a family (discrimination like this is illegal). Also, women tend to work in jobs that receive lower pay.

Some key facts

- 69% percent of working age women are in employment.
- 79% of working age men are in employment.
- Only 18% of MPs are women.
- Girls are now outperforming boys in GCSE and A-level results.
- More women are studying at university than men.
- Yet women on average are paid less than men.

Reducing the gender pay gap

As the Minister responsible for work, the Prime Minister has asked you to reduce the gender pay gap as your number one priority. Your advisors have produced the following report to help you. Because Parliament has a busy schedule, only one policy can be turned into law. You have to decide which one.

Options for reducing the gender pay gap. Special report for the Minister. Highly confidential.

Various areas of work are examined and different policy initiatives suggested. We await the minister's decision with interest, and would strongly suggest an official launch event to announce the initiative to the public.

Minimum wage

Many women do part-time work, particularly those with young children; and a lot of part-time jobs are very poorly paid. Although we do have a minimum wage in this country, it is low compared to other countries in Europe.

Policy A

Raise the minimum wage

Pro

This would mean that many women who are part-time workers and on the minimum wage would be paid more.

Con

If the wage is too high then many companies may not be able to employ as many staff and some may go out of business. This would affect a lot of women who may then be out of work.

Childcare

For many women it is impossible to return to work after having children because the cost of childcare is too high. In other countries – notably France – the government helps towards the cost of childcare, which enables more women to go back to work. This means they can continue with their careers and gain promotion and better wages.

Again, the high cost of childcare means that if women with children do return to work it is more likely to be in part-time work which is not very well paid.

Policy B

Free childcare

Pro

This would make it worthwhile for mothers to return to work. Many women would have no wages left at the end of the week if they had to pay for childcare whilst working.

Con

This would cost a lot of money. Taxes would have to be raised and voters generally do not like more taxes.

Policy C

Force large companies to offer childcare facilities

Pro

This would allow women to carry on working. It would create a healthy atmosphere at work.

Con

This would be very expensive. British companies would have to raise their prices, and may not be able to compete with other companies in the world that did not have to provide crèche facilities.

Maternity leave

Most women in employment are entitled to time off running up to and after the birth of the baby. Women receive money from the government for some of the time off work during maternity leave.

Policy D

Increase the amount of paid and unpaid leave a mother can take

Pro

This means that the mother could return to the job, rather than having to apply for another one.

Con

This would cost a lot and therefore may cause firms to discriminate against women when taking on new employees. Although this is illegal many firms might think twice about employing women.

Policy E

Allow equal paternity leave

Pro

If men had the option of looking after the child when it was young this would mean that women could return to their careers earlier and would be more likely to gain promotion etc. It would also stop employers from being prejudiced against taking on or promoting women employees, as men may also halt their careers to raise the family.

Con

How could this be carried out? It is obvious when a woman is pregnant and so is entitled to maternity leave. But how could an employer check that a man is entitled to paternity leave? The system may be open to abuse. Also how many men would take this option? The women would also still need some time off work in order to give birth to the baby. So the paternity leave could end up costing more money overall.

Concentration of women in certain industries

In 1999, 60% of women work in just 10 types of job (out of 77 different job classifications). In other words, women are heavily concentrated within certain jobs and these jobs are often not well paid. Many of these jobs are in health care or in education, and they are jobs paid for by the government (these are called public-sector jobs). While pay in general has risen a lot in recent years, public sector wages have not risen as much and the pay is falling behind in relation to other jobs. Because so many women are public sector workers this contributes to the gender pay gap.

Policy F

Encourage women to seek different careers, through education

Pro

Could be a good cheap way of reducing the clustering of women in certain professions and thus could help, in the long term, to reduce the gender pay gap.

Con

How could this be carried out? Students can't be forced to study certain subjects if they don't want to.

Policy G

Raise the pay for public sector workers (teachers and doctors and nurses, and government workers).

Pro

This would boost the relative earning of women to men, as many women work in the public sector.

Con

Taxes would have to be raised in order to do this. This means everyone else taking home less pay, which is never popular with voters.



Making the law

6. Making the law

● **OVERVIEW**

A short exercise on productivity and competition followed by a task requiring students to write their own manifesto on employment issues.

● **AIMS**

- To make students aware of the concept of productivity.
- To make students aware of how work is a political issue and to look at some laws that affect working conditions.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- explain the concepts of productivity and competition
- discuss some of the main issues in employment legislation
- create a short manifesto on employment issues.

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

What would happen if there were no laws about work?

Would people end up working longer hours?

Do you think that people should be able to work as many hours as they like?

Do you feel there are enough bank holidays?

How many hours do you work in school a week, not including breaks? How many hours in actual lessons?

Imagine what it would be like to 'work' 48 hours in school?

If you could change the law about work what would you change?

(Quick quote for the overworked teacher:

"British men work the longest hours in Europe – and professional women are catching up. One in four men clear the 48 hour mark. Half of working women say their relationships are suffering because of a lack of time – two-thirds say they are too tired for sex." writes Richard Reeves in the Observer May 27, 2001)

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY 1 - Productivity and competition

Students, in groups, read through the information on the *Productivity and competition sheet*, answering the questions. If necessary, the sheet could be talked through with students.

Discussion points

Do students think they are productive in school?

What would help to increase their productivity?

What did they propose the head teacher should do to make students work harder?

How could the company increase its productivity?

(Possible answer) Companies could increase productivity by investing in new equipment. Or by offering bonuses for workers to increase production.

How else could the cost price be lowered?

By sourcing cheaper raw materials, by reducing wages.

ACTIVITY 2 - Manifesto on work

Using the information and ideas from the *Work issues cards*, groups of students have to produce a manifesto on working issues. Groups should think up party name and write their manifesto down on the sheet provided (if appropriate). The results could be fed back informally, or more formally, through a short speech. The favourite manifesto could be voted for.

Extension activity

Students could make a poster to support their manifesto on work.

● HOMEWORK OR ASSIGNMENT

Students could research an aspect of the employment law in other countries e.g. how many public holidays do they have in France?

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EMPLOYMENT LAW

The law on work historically was based on the old common law – law made by judges. "Servants" had contracts with their "masters" and either party could end the contract without restriction. Each was in theory equal but, in reality, employers had much more power and could do what they wanted.

After the industrial revolution, workers became more geographically concentrated. They realised that if they could combine together they were stronger – for example, by threatening to go on strike. However, the courts decided that what these "combinations" of workers (or trade unions as they are called) did was unlawful until Parliament allowed trade unions to operate freely. The law ever since on trade unions has been made by Parliament against the common law background as decided by the courts. For most of the last century, Parliament was generally sympathetic to the rights of trade unions. But after Mrs Thatcher came to power in 1979, the power of the unions diminished, partly through legislation but also because of the decline of industries in which they were strong.

Parliament gradually came to the view that relying on trade union power alone to protect workers was not enough. Many workers worked in parts of the economy with no unions. Also, some people saw it as undesirable to leave it all up to unions because it left them with too much power.

Therefore, laws were introduced by Parliament to protect the individual worker. Laws came in protecting health and safety. Then from the sixties, workers had the right to get paid redundancy money. From the seventies, they had the right not to be unfairly dismissed and to receive maternity leave and pay. They also had the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of race or sex and men and women had to be paid equally. More recently, there is the right not to be discriminated against because of disability and the right to receive a minimum wage. But the courts were still important – each of these new laws had to be interpreted by courts and new tribunals. Employment law became a huge body of law with specialist lawyers.

Shortly we will have laws against discrimination on the grounds of age, religion and sexuality. These new rights come from the European Union, which has also made other employment laws. Examples are laws on limiting the amount of time you can be forced to work; what happens when the business you work in gets taken over; rights to parental leave; rights to be consulted and others.

Some people say that there is too much regulation – it is a burden on business, especially small businesses, and it increases costs to industry – which, in turn, holds back the economy. Others say that big business has become very powerful and trade unions are historically quite weak, so the law has to step in more to protect the individual. They say that it is good that laws are coming from the EU: it ensures that all EU economies are subject to the same rules and one country cannot get an "advantage" over the others by having a lower amount of regulation.

Productivity and competition

PRODUCTIVITY

Imagine two similar factories with similar equipment, both making similar hot-air balloons. Both factories employ one hundred people. Factory A produces a thousand balloons a year, factory B eight hundred balloons. So factory A is producing ten balloons per worker, whilst factory B is producing eight. This means that the workers in factory A are more productive.

In the long term, factory B may have to close down. The company will have to charge the public more for its balloons in order to pay staff wages. And the public will simply buy the cheaper balloons from factory A.

What could make one factory more productive than the other?

Many factors can help to increase production:

- Better equipment.
- Newer technology.
- Better trained staff.
- Incentives: If the staff received a bonus for producing a certain amount of balloons they may work harder.
- Fear can also be used to increase production. In some parts of the world people will lose their jobs unless they meet tough targets. This can also help to increase production, but in a questionable way.

Exercise 1

Imagine your school was a factory. Think about your own productivity. How much work do you actually produce in a week? Estimate the number of words you write.

Do you think you could improve your productivity? What could the school change to increase your productivity? Longer working hours? Earlier starts and earlier finishes? Longer breaks? Stricter discipline in classes? Incentives? Better grounds? Better equipment, e.g. more computers? Write a list of things that you think would improve your own productivity.

Now imagine you are the head teacher and your mission is to make students work harder. How would you do this?

COMPETITION

Your factory is producing hot-air balloons at £2000 a balloon: this is your cost price. This covers the pay for your workers, your rent for the factory, all your bills, your raw materials etc. However, your rival company in Belgium has invested in new technology and can now produce balloons for £1700 each, and is selling them for £1900. This puts you in a difficult situation. Your customers are already starting to switch to the Belgian Company. In the short term, you can cut your price to £1900, but this will mean you are losing £100 a balloon, but at least the company is keeping going. However, you cannot keep this going forever; somehow you will have to find a way of lowering your cost price and becoming more competitive. How can you do this?

Exercise 2

One way to lower your cost price would be to increase your productivity. How could you do this? Can you think of any other ways of lowering your cost price?

A: Public holidays:

Facts:

These are special holidays, usually Mondays, where most workers have the day off. Schools also do not open on these days, although most of the public holidays occur during school holidays anyway. In the UK, public holidays are not statutory (part of law) so employers do not have to allow workers the holiday if they do not wish to. In England we have 8 public holidays a year (sometimes called bank holidays). These are New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, early May bank holiday, Spring bank holiday, Summer bank holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Public holidays a year:

Australia	10
Austria	16
Germany	11
USA	12

Most countries in the world have more than us. In the EU only the Netherlands has less with 7 days. The average in the EU is 11. Should we have more?

"Yes,
of course we should, people work too hard and are too stressed. More holidays would make people more relaxed. Loads of days are lost through stress and illness, and a few more holidays here and there would mean that people were happier and healthier. They would need less time off sick and might well work harder. Companies would actually produce more! In Europe, the countries where people work the most hours generally have the lowest rates of production per person. In countries where working hours are less they often produce more! And besides, life isn't all about work."

"No.
Companies still pay workers whilst they're relaxing on their holidays. More holidays mean that less work is done, fewer goods and services are produced, but the companies still have the same wage bill. That means they will have to charge more for their goods, to cover the wages, so prices will go up. Companies in other countries will be able to produce cheaper goods, and the English companies will not be able to compete. Leave these things up to the companies. The government shouldn't be involved. Besides, people already get about four weeks holiday (20 days), plus 52 weekends (104 days), then 8 more public holidays, plus probably about 10 days off sick. That's 142 days, or nearly 5 months spent not working. How much more do people want?!"

B: The working week. Should we reduce the length of the working week?

Facts:

48 hours a week is the maximum that most people can work under EU law. Yet in reality many people work longer than that. The amount of hours people spend at work has been steadily rising since the 1970's.

Average hours usually worked by full time employees

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
UK	45.2	40.7
Germany	40.5	39.4
Italy	39.7	39.3
EU average	41.2	39.0

Should we reduce the number of hours that people work?

“Yes.

People are working far too hard, especially in this country. People should work in order to live, not just live in order to work. If the government does not set laws, companies will just expect longer and longer hours from their workers. And if people work too hard their home lives often suffer. Children do not receive enough attention, and couples may find the pressure too much and split up. This, in the long run, ends up costing society much more. If hours were reduced then people would still do the same amount of work because they will be more relaxed and refreshed and thus be able to work harder.

Work generally expands to fill the time available. If you have 5 hours to complete a task then it will take 5 hours, if you have 3 hours for the same task then you do it in 3 hours. Spending more time at work does not mean that more is done; it just results in tired, unhappy workers. Generally in countries where people work fewer hours the workers are more productive per hour than in countries where they work longer hours.”

“No.

In the modern world British companies are competing to sell goods on a global market. They are competing for customers along with companies from China, Eastern Europe and throughout the world. Many of these other countries will not have the same limits on the hours in the working week, this may give companies in those countries a big advantage over companies in Britain. Reducing the hours in the working week will simply make this worse.

The government should leave companies to run themselves. Many employees work hard, but they also get paid well too. If they do not want to work that hard they should say so, or move on to a job with less hours. Government interference would just mean that companies would be less competitive and lose business.”

C: Tax the rich more?

Facts:

A certain amount of the money you earn will go to the government in taxes. Taxes pay for schools, hospitals etc. If you earned £10,000 a year you would pay nearly £1,700 in tax (2000/2001). If you earned £50,000 you would pay about £15,000, if you earned £500,000 (half a million) you would pay around £200,000.

“Yes.

Rich people often earn silly money. It's madness. Workers in Indonesia earn about 80 pence a day. Tiger Woods gets paid around £14,000,000 for wearing the Nike swoosh. This can't be right. Imagine if there were no laws, or no police: what would happen? Who would lose the most, the rich or the poor? We live in an ordered civilised society with laws and rules; rich people gain the most by this system, so they should pay the most to keep it going.

Bosses of big companies [also known as 'fat cats'] get paid millions while nurses get paid around £18,000. In what sense is what fat cats do worth more than what nurses do? Are they worth the same as 30 nurses? The people who earn that sort of money are usually the ones who decide what salaries are anyway. They don't earn it, they just give themselves huge pay awards. The wealthiest 1% of the country own 26% of the wealth, the wealthiest 50% own 95% of the wealth. Something has gone wrong. It's the governments job to even these things up, and they can do this by increasing the taxes of those who can easily afford to pay. Tax the rich! ”

“No.

Look, people who earn more already pay more in tax. They tend to do difficult jobs and work very hard, so they should be rewarded. If you keep raising the tax where's the incentive to work hard and take on tough jobs?

The more you tax the very rich the more they will just find new ways of avoiding paying tax, by getting accountants to organise their money cleverly. Raising tax for the rich may actually result in bringing in less money for the government!

At the same time, if you raise taxes for the rich, they will just choose to live and work in other countries, like America, where income tax is much lower. It is the rich that often own the companies that provide the jobs for lots of other people. They could just as easily start companies up in other countries where the tax is lower. And that way we would all suffer. It is more important to make sure we all get wealthier rather than trying to share out the existing wealth more evenly.”

D: minimum wage: higher or lower

Facts:

The minimum wage for most jobs has been set at the following rates :

Main (adult) rate for workers aged 22 and over: £4.20 per hour (from 1 October 2002)

Development rate for workers aged 18-21 inclusive: £3.60 per hour (from 1 October 2002)

Should it be raised?

“Yes,

raise it. Most companies will try to pay their workers as little as possible. We need the minimum wage to protect workers. Raising the minimum wage will help to reduce poverty. It will help to ensure that the poorest in society receive a fair wage for their work and are not exploited by their bosses. If people feel they are being paid a fair wage they will tend to be happier in their job and therefore more productive. So the minimum wage may not be that expensive because although companies may have to pay more in wages, the workers will ultimately produce more.

Before the minimum wage was introduced opponents said lots of people would end up losing their jobs because companies couldn't afford to pay it. When it was introduced this did not happen. And it will not happen if it is raised again.”

“No,

lower it: raising the minimum wage will result in lots of jobs being lost. If anything, the minimum wage should be abolished. Companies should be left to decide how much to pay their workers. If workers don't want to take the job then they shouldn't. If companies want to attract good workers they will obviously have to offer good money. There's no need for the government to interfere in these things.

Also, how can companies in this country try and compete in the global market when wages in other countries are much lower? We used to make lots of clothing in this country. Now we make very little, most is made elsewhere in the world, where labour is cheaper. The same will happen to other industries if the minimum wage is raised.”

E: Other possible proposals

Should there be a four-day week for everyone?

Just imagine a three-day weekend! But would British companies be able to compete in the global market?

Should there be a maximum it is possible to earn?

It does seem unfair that Beckham earns in one week what nurse earns in 6 years. But if you introduced a maximum earning limit, wouldn't high earners like Beckham simply move abroad?

Should you be paid benefits if you choose not to work?

Shouldn't we be able to choose not to work if we don't want to? But why should hard working tax payers support someone who simply doesn't want to work?

Should you be able to leave school to work if you choose to?

Think of all the money you could earn, but in the long run won't you earn more by getting qualifications?

Should every one start work 2 hours later on a Monday morning?

What a great way to start the week, but would it end up costing jobs?

Manifesto on work

People spend a lot of their lives working. So it is important to make sure that the laws governing work are fair. In Victorian times there were few laws to protect workers and life was tough. Thankfully, now we have laws to protect workers, but getting the laws right is difficult. Your group represents a political party. Your party must produce a manifesto outlining your policies on work. Use the briefing sheets for ideas, but feel free to come up with any yourselves.

Friends, classmates, fellow citizens, we stand upon the threshold of change. For too long we have ignored one of the biggest issues in all our lives - the world of work. We spend a large part of life in work - the quality of this time is vital for the quality of our lives. The millions of workers in offices, in hospitals, the honest men and women toiling in the fields, all look to government for a fair deal. It is up to us get it right. Yet at the same time business also needs our support. We need to create the right environment where companies can create jobs, sell their goods throughout the world and compete in the global market. We in the _____ Party believe we have got the balance right. We have put together a fair and comprehensive programme for government. If elected this is what we would do...

The most important concern is _____. This Party believes that:
[insert policy 1]

_____ This is important because [insert reasons]

So to recap we would [insert policy 1] _____.

But _____ is also vital, we propose that [insert policy 2]
_____.

This country needs this because (insert reasons)

We also propose...(mention any other policies one by one)

So you can see that we have presented an agenda for change - an agenda that will improve the lives of all people in this country. You, as voters, have this unique opportunity to change the world we live in. Seize this opportunity, seize the day, and vote for the _____ Party.



Problems at work

7. Problems at work

● **OVERVIEW**

Students read or act out three short plays, each of which raises a work problem. Using an information sheet, the students have to advise the characters about what to do next.

● **AIMS**

- To make students aware of how work problems can be redressed.
- To make students aware of the concept of unfair dismissal.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- identify some of the main problems that could occur in employment
- explain some of the grounds for fair dismissal
- apply the concepts of unfair dismissal to three scenarios.

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

Has anyone had any difficulties with other people at work?

Why might someone lose their job? Think of as many reasons as possible.

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY 1 - Problems at work I

Read through the *Problems at work sheet* with students. Stress that these problems are not common but only occur occasionally.

Discussion points

Do students think the list of bad conduct is fair reason to be dismissed?

If you forgot to tell your boss that you were taking the day off and were instantly dismissed, would this be fair or unfair dismissal?

Answer: Dismissal would be too strong, a verbal or written warning would be more appropriate.

Do students think this is fair?

Have any students ever had any problems at work?

ACTIVITY 2 - Problems at Work II

Introductory questions

What would you do if a colleague at work was bullying you?

How would you deal with a colleague that kept asking you to cover for them?

Read through the *Dealing with problems at work* sheet with the class, and discuss any issues that arise. Then introduce the three short plays to the students. Each of the plays highlights a work related issue. These could be given to the students to read. Perhaps different groups could receive different plays and could swap them around to reduce photocopying. Alternatively they could be acted out, each group dramatising a different play. (There are only three plays so some groups would have to act out the same play).

Students then have to answer the questions on the Student Worksheet and help to advise each of the employees.

Answers to the scenarios

Dylan and the supermarket

Dylan should consider either asking for his job back, or look at going to an employment tribunal. His manager should probably have issued Dylan with a written warning first so dismissal was unfair. Could the company legitimately ask him to cut his hair? Yes, for certain types of employment, particularly for those involving food, the employer can ask for the appearance of the hair to be changed or covered.

Callum and the record shop

Callum should start turning up on time. His manager is a bit tough issuing a written warning before a verbal one. But if Callum continues to be late after the warning, he could fairly be dismissed.

Ali in the office

Ali should consider going to a tribunal. Many of the remarks she receives may count as discrimination. Certainly, if such comments are persistent, taken as a whole, they would definitely count as discrimination. Her manager is not taking her complaint seriously enough.

Discussion points

How should the workers have reacted in each scenario?

How would you have reacted?

● FURTHER INFORMATION

The ACAS website www.acas.org.uk contains good information on employment law and how to deal with problems at work.

UNISON's website also offers good advice www.unison.org.uk. They also manage a dedicated website for young people in work www.troubleatwork.org.uk

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Unfair dismissal

1. Who can claim unfair dismissal?

To claim unfair dismissal, in most cases, you must satisfy the following conditions:

- You must have worked under a contract of employment or apprenticeship, for your employer, continuously for at least 12 months;
and
- Your employment was terminated in one of the following ways:
 - with or without notice, or
 - if you had a fixed-term contract, it expired without being renewed; or
 - you resigned (and had the right to resign) because of a serious breach of contract by your employer (which you did not waive), or because you were forced to resign;*and*
- On the effective date of termination (as defined), you were not over the normal retirement age and in any event not over 65;
and
- You are not an excluded employee (eg on occasions members of the armed forces).

2. What makes a dismissal unfair?

There are five potentially fair reasons for dismissing someone.

They are:

Capability

You are dismissed for lack of capability if you cannot do your job properly. You are dismissed for lack of qualification if you no longer (or never did) possess the technical, professional or academic qualifications necessary for your job. Since dismissal for capability or qualification is a permissible reason, the main issue is whether it was fair.

Your dismissal may be unfair if your employer did not follow a fair procedure and/or it was not reasonable to dismiss you e.g. because you could be moved to another position. A tribunal will look at all the relevant circumstances, including your employer's size and administrative resources. Your employer may have to show that it set out in detail the complaints about you; what you needed to do to improve; the time within which you should improve; and the consequences of failure to improve (including the threat of dismissal). Your employer may, in some circumstances, be expected to offer you training.

If you cannot do your job due to a long-term illness, your employer should consult you and your doctor, to establish your future prognosis. It should consider this notwithstanding business requirements.

Conduct

To be dismissed for misconduct, your conduct must have been extremely serious, or, if not extremely serious, repetitive, e.g. repeatedly being late. The dismissal may be unfair if it is not a reasonable response to your misconduct, having looked at all the circumstances, including your employer's size and its administrative resources. Your employer should investigate your conduct fully and give you an opportunity to explain why you did or did not do something. He should follow the company's own disciplinary procedure and consider options other than dismissing you, e.g. transferring you to another job.

Redundancy

This is quite tricky but you are dismissed for redundancy if the reason or main reason for your dismissal is that your employer has, or intends to, close its business or the place where you work or because your employer needs to have fewer employees to do a particular job. In certain circumstances, your dismissal may be automatically unfair (but this is outside the scope of these notes). Generally, your employer will be expected to warn and consult you (or your representatives such as your trade union), adopt and follow a fair basis for selection of redundant employees, consider your response, and offer you alternative employment (even at a lower status/pay).

Some other substantial reason

Your dismissal is for some other substantial reason if it is not for one of the other four permissible reasons, but is nevertheless for a reason justifying the dismissal of an employee in your position. This may include dismissal following the expiry of a fixed-term contract, or if you get sent to prison, or an "economic technical or organisational reason entailing changes in the workforce" following the sale of a business (again this is outside the scope of this note). Your dismissal has to be fair in all the circumstances, looking at your employer's size and administrative resources. It has to be one of a range of reasonable responses to the situation.

Statutory ban

If your employer cannot continue to employ you without either it or you breaking the law, there is a permissible reason to dismiss you, e.g. if you do not have the right to work in the UK. Your dismissal may be unfair, however, if your employer does not inform you of the situation, seek your comments and, where appropriate, look for a suitable alternative position for you.

Remedies

The most common form of remedy is compensation. This is divided into a basic award and a compensatory award. The basic award depends on your age, length of employment and earnings. It cannot exceed £7,500 if you are dismissed on or after 1 February 2002. The compensatory award depends on your actual losses suffered and is currently capped at £52,600 again if you are dismissed on or after 1 February 2001. You must take steps to minimise your losses e.g. by looking for another job. If you fail to do so, your award may be reduced. Earnings from your new job may reduce your damages. A

tribunal can also make orders that you be reinstated in the same job or re-engaged by your employer but in a different job. However a tribunal cannot force your employer to take you back if it does not want to and the sanction for refusing to do so is extra compensation.

Who decides the claim?

You should make your complaint at the employment tribunal which is local to where you worked. Your complaint must arrive at the tribunal within three months, beginning with the effective date of termination. Only in truly exceptional circumstances the tribunal may allow you to make a later complaint, if it considers that it was not reasonably practicable for you to make the complaint on time.

Problems at work

Most people have no major problems at work. Many people even enjoy working. However, problems may occasionally occur. Usually they can be dealt with by having a word with your supervisor or line manager (the person immediately in charge). Most managers are used to hearing staff problems so will only be too happy to help. Very occasionally, larger issues may arise, you might get dismissed and feel you were treated badly, or you may get picked on. Here are some of the problems that might occur.

Discrimination

This is when people are treated differently because of their sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins. You may have been passed over for promotion even though you were the most suitable candidate and feel you have been discriminated against.

Harassment

You may be subject to racist or sexist abuse. This usually counts as a form of discrimination.

Bullying

You may feel your boss or someone else at work is picking on you unfairly. Perhaps they are asking you to work too hard. Or making it very difficult to refuse extra work.

Your statutory rights have been infringed

You have certain rights laid down in law (statutory). These concern such things as holidays, minimum pay, maternity leave and sickness pay etc. If you feel your rights are not being respected then you should take the matter up.

Unfair dismissal

Sometimes when people lose their jobs they may think they were hard done by. A company has to have a good reason for dismissing an employee. Below are some of the most common reasons why they are allowed to dismiss someone. In other words, these are the grounds for fair dismissal.

Fair reasons for dismissal

1. A breach of contract.

When you start a job, you may have to sign a contract. This states what will be expected of you in terms of hours worked, dress code etc. The company may change this from time to time. The contract, however, can never force a worker to lose their statutory rights. If you breach your contract then you could be dismissed. For a minor breach you should be warned first. A major breach is fair ground for instant dismissal.

2. Capability

You are not capable of doing the job. A company should give you a fair chance to prove yourself or offer training if you are having problems dealing with new equipment or technology. But not being able to do the job is fair grounds for dismissal.

3. Your conduct is not good enough

Here are some of the possible situations where an employee's conduct may have given the employer good reason to dismiss them:

- Theft
- Corruption, including taking bribes
- Being drunk or taking drugs at work
- Abusive behaviour
- Leaking confidential documents or information
- Hacking into computer files
- Frequently absent from work
- Constantly late for work
- Unsuitable work clothes or appearance
- Taking holidays without informing your employer
- Unsuitable conduct with other members of staff during office hours.

If you only make a minor misconduct then your should receive a warning. If you carry on after the warning then that would be fair grounds for dismissal. However, if you are involved in a serious incident then you can be dismissed immediately without any warning. There are no easy rules of thumb to say what is serious enough for an instant dismissal. If you think an incident was not serious enough then you may want to claim for unfair dismissal.

4. Redundancy

There is no more work for you to do. The company has to be fair when deciding who loses their jobs and stick to a rule when doing this. In many cases this is last in, first out.

If you have lost your job and none of these apply, then it may be a case of unfair dismissal and you may be able to do something about it, perhaps take your employer to a tribunal. (If you have been with the same employer for less than a year then the rules may well be different and you should seek advice.)

Dealing with problems at work

If you ignore a problem at work it can make your life very stressful. It is usually worth tackling the problem. It is always best to deal with a problem informally if you can, so the first stage is:

1. Have an informal word with your manager and see what they say.
2. If this fails, or is not possible (maybe the manager is the problem!); then have a word with your manager's manager (if there is one).
3. If this also fails the next stage is to make an official complaint. Write down your problem and give it to the relevant person. Most companies will have a procedure to go through and this will be in the company handbook. This should hopefully solve the problem.
4. However, if this fails, and you still feel unfairly treated, or perhaps you have been dismissed so you can no longer make complaints or speak to your manager, then you could ring the ACAS helpline (see below) to get information on what the law says. If you think you have a case then you may want to consider going to an employment tribunal.
5. Go to a Citizens' Advice Bureau first. They will tell you whether they think you have a good case. If you are a member of a union, contact them and they will give you all the advice you need, and may well take the case up on your behalf.

Employment tribunals are there to hear complaints to do with employment issues. They deal with such things as unfair dismissal, redundancy payments, sex, race and disability discrimination. Over 100,000 cases a year are taken to employment tribunals.

The Employment Tribunal is made up of three members. The Chairman is legally qualified, the other two do not have to be legally qualified but they must have lots of experience in dealing with work-related problems. The government appoints them.

There is also the option of settling outside of court. ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) will be informed of the tribunal and will speak to both parties to see if it can settle the matter before the formal hearing. 75% of cases never reach the tribunal stage - either ACAS settles the case or the employee drops the case. ACAS gives guidance to over 750,000 callers a year via its helpline.

To apply for an employment tribunal you must complete an IT1 form, which is available from Jobcentres, Law Centres, Citizens' Advice Bureaux and Employment Tribunal offices. It can cost money to take a case to tribunal. Your union would pay if they took your case. Some solicitors will help you on a "no win no fee" basis. But you may still have to pay some money. If the tribunal feel you have been unfairly treated, they may award you compensation.

CASE STUDY: Fighting in the workplace

Mr X was involved in an argument with his supervisor. During the argument the supervisor questioned how faithful Mr X's wife had been, and Mr X punched the supervisor. He was sacked. The employer argued that this was an inevitable consequence of striking a superior. But Mr X claimed unfair dismissal, and won.

The tribunal did not agree with the employers that dismissal was the inevitable consequence of Mr X's action. The degree of provocation should be looked at, and Mr X had acted under severe provocation.

However this should not be taken as a green light to hit your boss! There are very few cases where anyone has won an unfair dismissal case after striking a manager.

Student worksheet

In each of the three short cases studies you have to advise the person what to do next. Using the other two worksheets, try to answer the following questions:

A) Dylan and the supermarket

1. Do you think Dylan reacted well to the situation?
2. How should he have reacted?
3. Was Dylan unfairly dismissed? (*Justify your answer.*)
4. What should he do next? (*Tick one*)
 - Just move on and get another job.
 - Get his haircut and go and ask for his job back.
 - Write a letter to the company explaining the situation.
 - Go for an employment tribunal.

B) Callum in the record shop

1. Do you think Callum reacted well to the situation?
2. How should he have reacted?
3. Did his sales manager behave correctly? (*Justify your answer.*)
4. What should he do next? (*Tick one.*)
 - Seek a harassment claim.
 - Get another job.
 - Start work at the proper time.
 - Just ignore the letter.

C) Ali in the office

1. Do you think Ali presented her case well?
2. How should she have behaved?
3. Do you think she has been fairly treated by her manager? (*Justify your answer*)
4. What should she do next? (*Tick one.*)
 - Get another job.
 - Change her attitude and become like Lizzy.
 - Ignore the problem.
 - Consider taking the case to an employment tribunal.

Trolley Rage

Dylan, 21, works in a supermarket and is busy stacking shelves. He looks a bit scruffy with his shirt untucked. John, 25, is his supervisor.

Dylan (Putting beans on a shelf two cans at a time) .. one hundred and twenty-two cans of beans....one hundred and twenty-four cans of beans... one hun.....

John How are the beans going, Dylan?

Dylan Pretty good, thanks. Reckon I've got this lifting on to the shelf thing sussed. It's all in the wrist. Look. (Demonstrates his action.)

John Nice technique.

Dylan Do you reckon?

John Yeah. Up there with the best. Shame about the appearance though.

Dylan What do you mean?

John Look at you, you're a disgrace to this company. Your shirt's hanging out. You're wearing those scruffy trainers again. You need a haircut.

Dylan Oh yeah. I was in a rush this morning and couldn't find my shoes. Big deal.

John Aren't you going to tuck your shirt in then?

Dylan In a minute. Can't you see I'm busy here with these beans? I've only got two hands.

John Right, I've had just about enough of your lip. Sure you've been with us for over a year now, and it's a shame to let you go and all that, but I warned you last week about your appearance and you've completely ignored me.

Dylan What are you saying?

John I'm saying that's it. You're fired. You'll get your week's pay, so you might as well go now.

Dylan What, just 'cos I didn't tuck my shirt in? Are you joking?

John And because of your trainers and your hair and your general attitude. It all needs to smarten up.

Dylan I told you, I didn't have time to find my shoes.

John What about your hair? I told you about that last week.

Dylan You can't tell me what my hair should be like. You're just jealous 'cos you ain't got any.

John Look this isn't up for discussion. I had a quiet word with you last week and nothing has changed. I've had enough. You look a disgrace. Now get out of here before you scare the customers off.

Dylan Look I'm tucking my shirt in. (Tucks his shirt in.) Is that better?

John I don't care. You've had your chance and you blew it. Now get out out of here before I call security.

Dylan You can't do this. You're out of order.

Record Breakers

Callum, 20, works in a large record store as a sales assistant. Michelle is his sales manager. Callum is behind the counter, not doing much.

Michelle Excuse me Callum, can I have a word in my office?

Callum Yeah, yeah. I'll drop by in a minute, alright?

Michelle Now, if you could.

In the office

Michelle Look, this is the third time you've been late this week. It's not good enough.

Callum What you talking about? I've been in bang on time every day.

Michelle As you know, you have to be ready to work by 1:30. Monday and Tuesday you weren't on the shop floor till 1:40, and today it was 1:45

Callum I was in the building 1:30 every day.

Michelle Turning up at 1:30 is not good enough. You have to be ready to work at 1:30. By the time you've changed and had a coffee 15 minutes have gone. You're not ready to work until 1:45. And this isn't the first week it's been happening.

Callum Take a chill pill! So what?

Michelle Don't speak like that to me. Look I'm letting you know that I'm going to issue you with a written warning. It will say that if you don't improve your punctuality then we will have to dismiss you.

Callum Are you sacking me?

Michelle No. I'm just letting you know that you will receive a written warning. This will put you on a probation period. If during that time you are late for no good reason, then you will be dismissed with no further warning. Do you understand?

Callum Look, what is this really about?

Michelle It's about you being late.

Callum No it ain't and you know it. You just don't like me. Ever since I've started. I'm popular with the others and you can't stand that. This is harassment, that what it is. I've been bang on time every day, and now you're making up stuff about me being late. This is too much. I'm going to do you for harassment.

Michelle Look, this is nothing personal. I'm just telling you that you will receive a written warning. When you're late it affects other people. The person you relieve on the till can't leave until you arrive. It's not fair if they have to work an extra 15 minutes just because you're late.

Callum This is personal, and you know it. As soon as I get that letter I'm going straight to the manager and tell him you're harassing me.

Michelle Well that's up to you. If you have a grievance the procedures are in the book.

Callum You're the one with the grievance. (Callum storms out.)

Office Politics

Ali (female) works in a large office entering data on a computer. Geoff is her line manager

(Ali is walking to Geoff's office.)

Worker 1 Off for a quickie with the boss love?

Worker 2 He's rubbish in bed. You should try me instead.

Ali Whatever. (Walks into Geoff's office). Can I have a word?

Geoff Hi, Ali. Sit down. How can I help?

Ali. It's about the other workers. They won't stop with all these sexist comments. 'Fancy a quickie luv? What knickers are you wearing? Why don't you give us a smile?' I mentioned it to you two weeks ago and nothing has changed.

Geoff What do you expect me to do? I like to run a happy office. It's only a bit of good-natured banter. It's like the oil that makes the machine run smoothly. If I march in there and tell them they can't say this or that, how's that going to go down? The whole office would grind to a halt and it would only be worse for you.

Ali So I should just sit there and take it? Is that what you're saying?

Geoff Not exactly. Look, if you joined in with it a bit, had a laugh with the lads, then it wouldn't be so bad. Look at Lizzy in accounts. She loves all the banter. A bit of backchat makes her day.

Ali So I should be like Lizzy? Is that what you're saying?

Geoff Not exactly. Look at it this way: Lizzy is, well, fun and flirty. She's a bit of an animal. And you're more... cold and serious like a like a rock or some sort of mineral. You need to be somewhere halfway between the two. Not quite an animal, but not a mineral either.

Ali What like a vegetable, or something?

Geoff Exactly. You should become a vegetable. Er, no..., that's not quite it. But you get the picture.

Ali So you're saying its my fault. I should change.

Geoff Well, it would certainly make things a little easier for everyone.

Ali Look, I've made a verbal complaint and that's done nothing. So I've written out a formal complaint under the company procedures and I'm handing it to you now. (She hands him the complaint.)

Geoff (Takes the letter and looks at it for a few seconds.) Look Ali, if you hate it so much here why don't you just leave?

Ali Because it's a good job and I quite enjoy the work. I shouldn't have to put up with sexist abuse in the office. It's not my problem: it's theirs. This is the 21st century you know.

Geoff Listen. I'm getting a bit sick of all this. I've got enough on without listening to you whinge. Welcome to the real world. It ain't perfect, but it's the only one we've got. In this office we all have a laugh, no one gets hurt, and it's a nice atmosphere. Everyone seems to like it. Everyone, that is, except you. You're the one with the problem.

Ali I don't have to take this personal abuse. Are you going to deal with the problem seriously or not?

Geoff (Throws the letter in the bin). Not. Now, if you don't mind I've got real work to do.



Unions

8. Unions

● **OVERVIEW**

Two exercises around unions. The first exploring the idea of a school union for students. The second, a role play around the idea of collective bargaining.

● **AIMS**

- To explore how unions work.
- To look at the process of negotiation.

● **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to:

- discuss the idea of a school union
- explain what collective bargaining is
- identify some of the main functions of a union.

● **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

Does anyone know what a union is?

Can anyone name a union?

What do they do?

● **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY 1- School unions

A thought experiment

It has been decided by the head teacher that the school day is to be extended by two hours. Instead of finishing at 3.45pm, school will now finish at 5.45pm. (Adapt this to your own school.)

The head gives the following reasons for this change:

- 1 The longer day will provide more teaching time. Pupils will get a better education.
- 2 The extra two hours can be devoted to things like music and sport, which don't get that much time on the normal curriculum.

Discussion points

How do the students feel about this proposal?

What would be the advantages and disadvantages?

Do the majority approve or disapprove?

How would those that don't like the proposal go about getting their voice heard?

Would it be better to oppose the proposed change as individuals, small interest groups, or as a united front?

What would be the advantages and disadvantages of opposing as a large group?

Would one person be chosen to represent the group?

Who in the class would be prepared to be that person?

How could the group make their opinion heard?

(Could they strike, hold collective negotiation, run a pressure campaign with protests and posters?)

Students could follow through the idea of a school union using the *School union sheet*. Answers could be feedback and discussed.

Extension activity

Students could draw a poster advertising their union.

ACTIVITY 2 - Negotiation

A roleplay exploring negotiation and collective bargaining. The *Background sheet* outlines the scenario. The class is divided into 4 groups: the rail workers' union, the drivers' union, workers without a union, and management.

Each group should be given its briefing cards and should gather in separate corners of the room.

After 5-10 minutes discussion amongst themselves the three representatives from the management should meet with the three representations from the both of the unions at a designated negotiation table. Other students should not listen in. The meeting should last for up to 5 minutes. Individuals go back to their respective groups and discuss again before meeting again for a second time.

A non-union member can ask to speak to a member of management at any time. But the management does not need to grant an audience if they do not wish to do so. Non-union members can also write notes and hand these to management if desired. Other than this students should stay in their allotted corners unless meeting for official negotiations.

One student or teacher should chair each meeting. Their role is to keep order and to set the agenda, which should involve going through the proposed changes line by line and hearing the different views.

After the second meeting. The union representative should ask their members whether the deal offered is acceptable. One or more of the following can then occur:

A negotiated settlement is reached.

The management refuse to renew anyone's contract unless they sign the new one.

Industrial action is taken.

Discussion points

What are the benefits of collective bargaining?

What skills are required by a good negotiator?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of strikes?

What are the benefits of being in a union?

(Students should be aware that unions offer more than just collective bargaining. Amongst other services they can also help with individual problems at work by offering free advice and legal support - see background notes.)

Why do some people choose not to join a union?

● BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A brief history of Trade Unions and their role

Britain has one of the longest traditions of Trade Unionism in the world. This is, in part, due to the fact that organised labour is synonymous with an industrialised society and a market based economy.

As the industrial revolution began to create places of mass employment workers became increasingly tied to one form of work, and therefore dependent upon the wages they earned to buy all the other goods and services they needed. On his own the individual worker is in a weak position to negotiate his wage. The employer owns the capital (i.e. the machines) and the employee can be easily replaced by another worker. Therefore, only by combining as a unit can labour negotiate their terms and conditions on an equal footing.

However, unions have, for most of the past 200 years, been seen as a force that had to be restricted. During the early part of the nineteenth century unions were seen as a potential source of social unrest and revolution. This was also the case during the 1920's. Organised labour was seen as a threat to the social order especially by those who benefitted from the current system, and the government passed legislation prohibiting, or severely restricting their activities.

Towards the end of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries unions have been viewed as a conservative force on the economy. During periods when economic orthodoxy was dictated by free market economics and laissez faire doctrine, unionism was believed to hold back the modernisation of the economy. Many feared that unions had grown too strong, and in calling disruptive strikes throughout the 1970's were damaging the economy. During the 1980's union power was thus reduced again.

Despite these dominant views unions have been a major factor in winning better pay and conditions for their members and have won major advances in employment legislation. It is difficult to say what would have been achieved without unions, they have been a major influence in ensuring employers and government hear the voice of the individual worker. Currently there are around 7.5 million members of unions (from a peak of around 13 million in the late 1970's). This is a historically low proportion of the working population (27% as opposed to over 53% in 1979), yet still significant.

But what is a union? The best known definition of trade unionism is that of Sydney and Beatrice Webb who, in 1920, characterised a union as "a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the condition of their working lives". Over the last century this definition has been largely uncontested, though current legislation does expand upon this description by noting that unions may be permanent or temporary, and consist wholly or mainly of workers, with their 'principal' purpose being the regulation of relations between employers and workers.

So what do unions do? Most people would associate unions with collective bargaining. This is the process whereby unions use their collective voice to negotiate better pay and conditions with employers. It is also the area that many Governments have tried to regulate through legislation, and the history of Trade Unionism is both one of rising and falling membership as well as a struggle over the right of recognition and to take action.

However, the Webbs identified other roles for unions, and noted that they often attempted to achieve their purposes through mutual insurance, (the provision of welfare services and benefits to members) and legal enactment (the use of political pressure to achieve statutory support). Modern unions are also active in providing training and development opportunities for members, legal protection over legal action taken against the individual, or offering cheaper goods and services through negotiating preferential rates for their members with external bodies. The middle of these three functions has become particularly important as workers see unions as protection from unfair dismissal, accusations made against them in the workplace, or loss of earnings due to ill health. A reflection of this role is that unions affiliated to the TUC won a total of £320 million in compensation for their members during 2000.

Therefore, unions are diverse bodies – both in terms of membership and function, many people only associate them with negative action, such as strikes, and linked both to the Labour party and old heavy industries. However, to associate the modern union movement only with collective bargaining would miss out many other services that they provide. Millions of Britons; especially those who feel that they have the weakest voice (e.g. low paid workers), gain great security, benefit, and strength from joining together.

School unions

It is your job to start a union for students at your school.

What would the union be called?

Would it have a motto?

How much would it cost to join?

Imagine every student joined and paid £2 to join then £1 a term. How much money would be generated in the first year?

What would you spend this money on?

What benefits could you offer your members? (Could you help them, if they received unfair detention for example?)

Negotiation – what sort of changes would you negotiate with the school. What could you negotiate? (e.g. punishment rules, ground improvements, how the school prioritise. Its spending, evaluating the staff.)

How could you help the school start new initiatives?

Would the union want to sit in on meetings with the governors of the school?

Could the union negotiate discounts with local shop for its members?

What would be the main problems in getting the union off the ground?

How would you persuade people to join the union?

Negotiations

● **BACKGROUND**

The train company SuperduperRail is having problems. The passengers are unhappy with the unreliable service and old, dirty carriages and are starting to use buses or cars to get to work. Profits are down, investment is desperately needed, something needs to be done. Management have announced that the following changes will take effect in one month's time. Any worker not willing to sign up to the new proposals will not have their yearly contract renewed. They have to make these changes, they say, for the sake of the company. Without these changes the company may go out of business and there will be no jobs for anyone. SuperduperRail employs 700 people; 75% of the staff are members of the union. Nearly all of the workers are unhappy about the new proposals, particularly as they weren't consulted beforehand – a practise that has built up over the years as part of the good relationship between management and the unions. This time the good relationship has broken down and the workers want to negotiate changes to the proposal. The management have agreed to meet with representatives of the main unions to discuss the changes.

● **PROPOSAL**

Staff are employed on one of three grades of weekly pay: Drivers will receive a large increase to help to attract new staff and overcome shortages, which lead to constant cancellations. Other wages will be reduced to allow for the rise in driver salaries.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Current weekly wage</i>	<i>Proposed wage</i>
Train driver	£600	£750
Inspectors/general staff	£350	£310
Cleaners	£150	£130

● **OTHER CHANGES**

- Holiday allowance reduced from 5 weeks to 4 weeks a year.
- All staff required to work bank holidays on demand. An extra day of holiday will be granted for each bank holiday worked.
- Staff will be required to work up to 5 hours per week overtime on demand. This will be paid at 1.5 times the usual rate.
- Increase in the standard working week from 35 to 38 hours.
- 30 Inspectors will have to lose their jobs.

● **NEGOTIATIONS**

You will be assigned one of the following roles:

- a member of the rail workers' union
- a member of the drivers' union
- a railworker or driver not in a union
- part of the management team

Whatever your role you will be involved in negotiation and collective bargaining. Remember that bargaining in its very nature is about a willingness to compromise and not about confrontation.

Briefing sheets

Railworkers' Union

Over the years, the unions have had good relations with the management. Working conditions have improved steadily.

You have consulted your members. If management do not listen to your views, the workers are prepared to strike. However, this should only be used as a last resort. Nevertheless, a short strike will help to draw public attention to the management's unfair proposals. A short strike might put pressure on the management, it might also get sympathy from some of the public that didn't need to make a journey. However, a long strike could destroy the company and may well annoy the public. Your members accept that some changes are necessary to provide a reliable train service to the public. But they are unlikely to accept any reduction in pay.

Work out what you want to achieve, which areas you are prepared to be flexible on, and which things you feel you cannot move on.

- Perhaps you could accept that 30 inspectors must lose their jobs but these should be voluntary, people who are coming up for retirement or who want to leave anyway. There should be no compulsory redundancies.
- Perhaps workers should be paid more if they do work on bank holidays?

Rules

- You must choose 3 representatives to talk to the management at allotted times.
- You may talk to the train drivers union at any time and present a united front if you so wish.
- You are also free to talk to the other workers and try to get them to join the union.

Drivers' Union

Your workers are paid much less than similar workers in other train companies. The proposed rise will still leave your members below the national average for train drivers, as most of the other train companies have awarded big pay rises.

Your members also feel very upset about the changes in working conditions. Especially about the reduction in holidays. Train driving is a highly skilled job that requires intense concentration. Most drivers feel they need frequent holidays to prevent burn out.

Think about which areas you are prepared to negotiate about.

- Perhaps a longer working week is acceptable if you keep the 5 week holiday allowance.
- Your members are prepared to strike, but this should only be used as a last resort.

Rules

- You must choose three representatives to talk to the management at the allotted time.
- You may talk to the railworkers' union at any time and present a united front if you so wish. You are also free to talk to the other workers and try to get them to join the union.

Briefing sheets

Management

The shortage in drivers is critical. Many have moved to other train operators, where the wages are much higher. You must raise the wages of the drivers; even the proposed changes leave the drivers below the national average. However, to pay them more you have to reduce the wages of the other railworkers. It is the only way. Every £10 you reduce from the other workers allows you to fund a £30 rise to the drivers. So if you agree to increase the workers' pay by £10, you will have to knock £30 off the drivers' proposed pay rise.

You also need greater flexibility in the workforce. They must be prepared to work longer hours when necessary. Otherwise the service will never improve.

Bad relations between management and union help no one. You must try and avoid a strike at all costs. The company could cope with a short one-day strike by general workers, as management could step in and help to provide a minimum service to the public. However, a strike by the drivers would shut the trains down completely. A long strike would lose many customers and put the company in severe financial difficulties.

Think about which areas you are prepared to negotiate about.

- Perhaps you could agree to letting workers have an extra unpaid week of holiday. Or maybe increase overtime pay to double the usual rate if the workers agree to work up to 10 hours of overtime a week.
- Perhaps you could agree to keep to a 35 hour week if they accepted most of the other changes?
- Maybe you could persuade the drivers to have less of a pay rise and pass some of this on to the other workers?

Rules

- You must choose three representatives to talk to the unions at the allotted time.
- Non-union workers may occasionally ask to speak to you. It is up to you whether you speak to them or not. They may also pass you notes; again it is up to you whether you read them.

Non-union workers

You are unhappy about the changes in working conditions. You feel angry with the management. You can discuss the proposals with your fellow workers, but you cannot negotiate collectively. So if anyone speaks to management they can only do so on behalf of themselves not anyone else.

You cannot enter into formal negotiations with the management; but you may approach their table and ask to speak to someone. Or you can write a letter and pass it to the management.

You may join a union if you so wish.