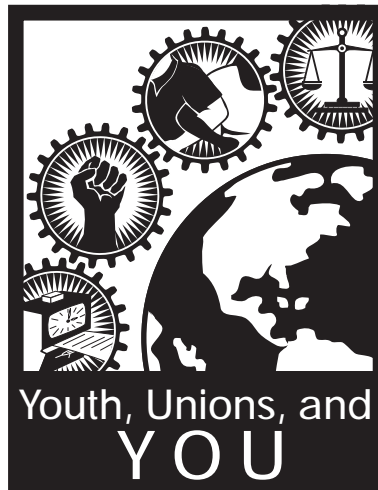
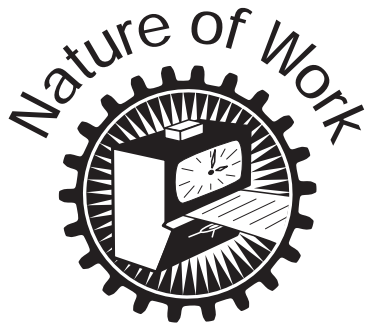


ENGLISH and



HUMANITIES



“The Moose and the Sparrow” —workplace harassment

LESSON 1 ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES 8–11

PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- appreciate the use of metaphor and character description in story telling.
- write a dramatic monologue.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- appreciate a Canadian short story set in B.C. earlier in our history.
- appreciate the harassment and violence many workers had to endure earlier in our history.
- be able to identify and demonstrate an understanding of definitions and a variety of forms of harassment unacceptable in B.C. workplaces today.
- be able to identify and demonstrate an understanding of for harassment in B.C. workplaces today.

LESSON TITLE

“The Moose and the Sparrow” —workplace harassment

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Hugh Garner's *The Moose and the Sparrow* is a Canadian short story that has appeared in many anthologies, particularly in the junior grades, including *Singing Under Ice*.

INTRODUCTION

Many workers in B.C., in isolated places such as logging camps and mining camps, have had to endure bullying and harassment as part of their working and social lives. Protections against such abuse are available today in many unionized workers' contracts, through the Labour Relations Board, and the B.C. Human Rights Commission.

Lesson 1

ACTIVITIES

1. Introduce the story with some discussion of bullying and harassment in the workplace.
2. Assigns students the task of reading *The Moose and the Sparrow*. Have students complete the following as they read: List incidents of bullying or harassment Moose inflicted on Cecil, “the Sparrow.” Which acts were harmful, dangerous, perhaps even life threatening? Was it

fair to transfer Cecil, or should Moose have been transferred? What is harassment? What is harassment in the workplace? What safeguards—institutions such as police, churches, schools, unions—were absent from the environment at that time? Why does the foreman not question Cecil about the marks on the trees? What do the marks on the tree suggest?

3. Collect the students' responses, and assign credit/marks for attempts to complete the assignment.
4. Review the answers with the students in an open discussion of the theme of harassment in the story.
5. Invite students to imagine themselves as Cecil, and assume that he tied the wire between the trees and tricked Moose into tripping over it. Have them record thoughts and feelings they imagine going through Sparrow's mind when he decides to set the trap. Have them write a dramatic monologue for Cecil in that situation.

TIME

Approximately 90 minutes.

Lesson 2

ACTIVITIES

6. Review with students the concept of metaphor, and discuss why "Moose" and "the Sparrow" are appropriate labels for these characters.
7. Review the story of David and Goliath and its message that brains can triumph over brawn; however, violent solutions are no longer acceptable. You might then ask, What solutions are available to us today in our workplaces?
8. Make available to students through overheads, or other means, definitions of harassment in the workplace, forms of harassment, and remedies for harassment, such as those that follow from the British Columbia Human Rights Commission web site:
www.bchrc.gov.bc.ca/docs/PreventingHarassment.doc
9. Assign students the task of identifying aspects of the definition that fit Cecil's situation, the forms of harassment that Moose used, and the remedies that should be available to Cecil. Notes and discussion groups might be used.
10. Then assign students the task of demonstrating their understanding of what might occur in a workplace today that is harassment, a form it might take, and a remedy that might be achieved. Brainstorming and other devices for generating ideas may be required. Each student may choose to demonstrate understanding through an essay, a short story, a poem, or other forms acceptable to you.

TIME

Approximately 90 minutes.

EVALUATION

Of lesson #2 above. Responses should reflect an understanding of the story, recognition of instances of harassment, and recognition that harassment can be demeaning, threaten someone's livelihood, even be dan-

gerous. Harassment might have been acceptable to some, may have been remedied unfairly, at times, perhaps violently. Mark out of ten. Marks 10 and 9: full, clear, accurate, and thorough responses. Mark 8: full answers. 6 and 7: most answers attempted, but not all. Mark 5: though some responses are missing, and serious misunderstandings exist, answers have been attempted in most instances. Less than 5 marks: only a few responses attempted, and responses attempted do not demonstrate an understanding of the story.

Of #5 above. Demonstrates an awareness of the humiliation, physical pain, and fears for his future, his livelihood, and physical well being that Cecil feels. Motivation and planning for setting the trap are provided. Demonstrates effective use of language, spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, and attention to physical factors necessary to capture a voice for Cecil. An extra point is given for notes or outlining, and two points for an edited rough copy.

Of # 10 above. Provides an example of a behavior that is unwelcome to a person in a workplace. The behavior continues in spite of the victim's informing the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome. The complaint is taken to a person of authority. A remedy that ensures the victim's dignity, livelihood, and well being is achieved. The student also displays skill in the use of the form chosen to demonstrate understanding. The understanding of the concepts is communicated clearly, accurately, and thoroughly. An extra point is given for notes or outlining, and two points for an edited rough copy.

HARASSMENT

—SOME DEFINITIONS, FORMS, AND REMEDIES

Taken from *Preventing Harassment in the Workplace*. British Columbia Human Rights Commission.

"i. General definition. Harassment in the workplace may be broadly defined as unwelcome conduct related to a prohibited ground of discrimination that detrimentally affects the work environment or leads to adverse job-related consequences for those experiencing harassment." And "Harassment is a demeaning practice. Harassment in the workplace requires an employee to contend with unwelcome and offensive behaviour. It attacks the dignity and self-respect of the victim both as an employee and as a human being. It is important that everyone be ready to change their behaviour in reasonable ways to ensure the inclusion and equal participation of women and minorities. The way someone talks, dresses, or acts should never be used as an indication that the person is entering into anything other than a normal workplace relationship. Different styles of dressing, talking, and acting reflect our multicultural society as well as individual taste." and "Not every member of a group may be subject to harassing behaviour. Most usually a person harasses one individual. The reason that one person is picked is irrelevant. Others may not be subject to the harassment because the harasser perceives them as empowered enough to put a stop to harassment or simply be-

cause the harasser picks one person to harass (at a time)."
www.bchrc.gov.bc.ca/docs/PreventingHarassment.doc

"iii. Harassment can take many forms

Depending on whether the behaviour is welcome or not, any of the following could amount to harassment:

- a) material that is racist, sexist, ageist, sexually explicit, anti-gay or anti-lesbian, or insulting because of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination that is displayed publicly, circulated, or put in someone's workspace or belongings, or on a computer or fax machine;
- b) verbal abuse or comments that put down or stereotype people generally, or an individual particularly, because of: their sex, pregnancy, race, sexual orientation, disability, or other grounds of discrimination;
- c) jokes based on gender, race, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or other grounds of discrimination. There is a difference between harmless humour which may refer to gender, race, etc., and using a racist or sexist joke to have a "dig" at someone and therefore harass them. If this difference is not clear, or if someone is offended, the behaviour should stop immediately.
- d) sexually or racially offensive gestures;
- e) ignoring, isolating or segregating a person or group because of their sex, race, sexual orientation, etc.;
- f) staring or leering in a sexual manner;
- g) physical contact of a sexual or aggressive nature;
- h) repeated behaviour which a person has objected to and, therefore, is known to offend."

www.bchrc.gov.bc.ca/docs/PreventingHarassment.doc

"Remedies for a person who has been harassed will include any of the following, depending on the nature and severity of the harassment:

- a) an oral or written apology from the harasser and XYZ Company;
- b) lost wages;
- c) a job or promotion that was denied;
- d) compensation for any lost employment benefits, such as sick leave;
- e) compensation for hurt feelings; and/or
- f) a commitment that he or she will not be transferred, or will have a transfer reversed, unless he or she chooses to move."

www.bchrc.gov.bc.ca/docs/PreventingHarassment.doc



Animal Farm—George Orwell

LESSON 2

ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES 10

PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- recognize Boxer and other characters, including Benjamin and Clover, as symbols of labour and working people.
- appreciate some of the struggles of working people as a theme in literature.
- develop and write a paragraph demonstrating awareness of Boxer or others as a symbol(s) of labour.

LESSON TITLE

Animal Farm—George Orwell

TIME

Approximately 45 minutes.

OBJECTIVES

- to recognize Boxer and other characters, including Benjamin and Clover, as symbols of labour and working people.
- to appreciate some of the struggles of working people as a theme in literature.

INTRODUCTION TO TEACHERS

You might use this lesson as one of several to bring students to an appreciation of literary symbolism and theme in *Animal Farm*.

Boxer is the hardest worker on the farm, and a symbol of labour and working people. Many of the other animals are workers also, including Benjamin, and Clover. Benjamin is intelligent and literate but cynical, and Molly is caring and comforting.

During the course of his life, Boxer suffers from lung disease, split hooves, and long hours of overtime, for which he receives no appreciable overtime, sick leave, or paid time off, and no medical attention from a doctor or veterinarian.

He and the other working animals are also promised pensions and a plot of land on which to enjoy their retirement years.

He, like Snowball, disappears under strange circumstances, is murdered before he receives his pension, and the plot of land promised for retirement is used to grow barley.

ACTIVITIES

1. Explain to the classroom the concept of symbolism—an object, a character, or an event that takes on more than its literal meaning through the course of the story. Generate examples from other works of literature and *Animal Farm*, such as Squealer's representing media, Molly's representing selfishness and materialism.
2. Make the following information available to students through notes on the board, an overhead, or other means:
The following labour leaders in B.C. also disappeared or died under strange circumstances.
 - Frank Rogers—vice-president of the Fishermen's Union murdered by thugs said to be working for the CPR, for supporting a railroad workers' strike, 1903.
 - Joseph Mairs—sentenced to 18 months of hard labour for "unlawful assembly" during a mine strike. Died of tubercular peritonitis due to negligent medical attention, 1914.
 - Ginger Goodwin—organizer for mineworkers, shot to death near Nanaimo, 1918 (see elsewhere in guide for poem of Ginger Goodwin).
 - at Blubber Bay, Bob Gardinar, the vice-president of an International Woodworkers of America local, after a brutal strike, was arrested and so badly beaten, he later died. The officer who beat him got six months in jail, 1937.You may wish to include or substitute current, national, or international examples. See the web site www.labourstart.org
3. Invite students to recall and find in the text of the story the circumstances surrounding Boxer's death: What did Benjamin see printed on the side of the lorry that took Boxer away? What does he believe happened to Boxer? Where does Squealer say Boxer was taken? What is his explanation for Boxer not returning to the farm?
4. Invite students, in pairs or groups, to explore and list parallels between Boxer's disappearance and the circumstances around the deaths of others connected to labour. Snowball and others from the story might be included in the discussion also.
5. Invite students to explain and list possible motives for Boxer's disappearance, Snowball's disappearance, the disappearance and deaths of others in the story, and possible motives for the disappearance of the labour leaders mentioned above.
6. Invite students to discuss and list other aspects of Boxer's life as a worker.
7. Assign students the task of explaining Boxer as a symbol of labour in a well written paragraph.

EVALUATION

Evaluate each student's paragraph out of five marks. Criteria includes: use of a topic sentence; clarity—good spelling and clear use of language; a demonstrated awareness of one or more similarities and one or more differences between Boxer's experiences and those of others, at least three points must be made; and a concluding sentence.

Also give a mark for notes and two marks for an edited rough copy.

Lord of the Flies



LESSON 3 ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES 11/ COMMUNICATIONS 11

PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- develop critical thinking in applying symbols to past and current world events.

LESSON TITLE

Lord of the Flies—William Golding—child labour

TIME

Approximately 150 minutes. Some students will need more time; others less.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- appreciate the littl'uns as symbols of child labour.
- appreciate child labour as a theme in the story.
- use web sites to collect information on child labour.
- represent their understanding of child labour.

INTRODUCTION

Hunters and workers are lured away from the democratic, responsible group with the promise of more fun and a more bountiful life. However, any desire to change political allegiances or question the status-quo is met with fear, torture, even death.

Sam'neric and other littl'uns are tortured, intimidated, and humiliated. Simon's murder is denied, and Piggy's murder is premeditated.

Such occurrences are not unknown in the story of child, labour past and present.

ACTIVITIES

1. Review with students the concept of symbolism, and examples, such as Ralph as a symbol of the democratic leader, Piggy as the logical thinker, and Simon as religion, the mystic, or spiritual person. Use evidence from history and current events to develop the concept and encourage critical thinking. Examples of such leaders might include Lester Pearson, Albert Einstein, and Jesus Christ. Encourage students to find similarities and differences between the literary characters and people from history and current events.
2. Offer the opinion that the littl'uns symbolize the abuse of children as labourers. Provide examples of torture, bullying, and intimidation of

littl'uns as evidence: Robert is used as a mock pig, Roger destroys littl'uns' sand castles, Sam'neric are beaten and tortured for information about Ralph, Simon is killed, and the murder is denied, and Piggy is a victim of premeditated murder.

3. If you wish, provide students with other examples of literary works that depict the tragedies of child labour such as in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, (Fagin's boys) or *Lyddie* (see bibliography).
4. Encourage students, in groups of three or four, to research and learn what they can of child labour.
Each group should answer from their research:
 - a) What is child labour?
 - b) Why do people object to child labour? Provide 5 specific examples of unfair child labour you found. Are girls and young women affected?
 - c) Name a well-known company or corporation and how it exploits child labour.
 - d) Is poverty a factor in exploiting children as labour?
 - e) What are people doing to correct the situation: Name at least one international organization, and one national organization that is fighting against child labour? Describe one strategy that has worked and provide evidence that it has been successful.
 - f) Who is Craig Kielburger? Where is he from? Who sponsors him? Describe at least one of his accomplishments in fighting child labour? (See bibliography.)
 - g) What might a person who wishes to fight child labour do?
5. There is useful information in the S.S.9 section of this guide on child labour.

The teacher may wish to assign specific resources and links to each group, depending on the number of groups assigned to the task. Resources might include encyclopedias and books available in the school library and from social studies teachers, and the following web sites:

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

Child Labour Internet Resources

- Amnesty International, www.amnesty.org/
- B.C. Federation of Labour, www.bcfed.com
- Canadian Labour Congress, www.clc-ctc.ca
- Free The Children, www.freethechildren.org/
- International Global March, www.globalmarch.org
- International Labor Organization, www.ilo.org/
- ILO Kids, www.us.ilo.org/
- Labour Behind the Label, www.web.net/~msn
- Reebok Human Rights, www.reebok.com/humanrights/home.html
- Rugmark Home Page, www.rugmark.de/
- United Students Against Sweatshops (visit BCTF web site to access)
- Model Code of Conduct (visit BCTF web site to access)

Try these keywords in searches for other child labour resources:

- Iqbal Masih
- Codes of Conduct
- International Labor Organization
- Global March Against Child Labour
- Craig Kielburger
- Sweatshop Codes of Conduct

These links and web sites were copied from The British Columbia Federation of Labour web site.

1. You may wish to give each group large sheets of chart paper on which to record their answers and sources. Post the chart papers around the room. Each group may also comment orally to the rest of the class about their findings. Invite the class to move around the room reading what their classmates have found.
2. Require each student to represent what they have learned about child labour in any form acceptable to the teacher. For example, some may choose to write a dramatic monologue for a child cited in an example of child labour. Others may choose to write a letter to Disney or another corporation explaining an action they might take, such as no longer consuming a product until a commitment is made to a particular course of action. Some might write an essay revealing their thoughts, feelings, and anticipated actions for the future as a result of information, knowledge, or insight they have acquired. Others might write a well-prepared letter or e-mail to an organization fighting child labour.
3. You might also consider allowing or having a group(s) make a multimedia presentation on the topic. A visual display or poster might be created, along with print display of research, prose, poetry or song, and a dramatization or performance. Require bibliography of sources used. Check the bibliographic section of this guide for some sources to start with.
4. You might also require each student to write an essay in response to the interpretation of the littl'uns as a symbol of child labour. For what reasons is this interpretation accurate? For what reasons is it inaccurate? Approximately 150–250 words.

EVALUATION

Of 4 & 5 above. Give each student in each group a point upon their accessing each web site and resource assigned to the group. Up to 10 points might be given for responses to the questions assigned in 4. Keep in mind that while some sites will have answers to some of the questions, not all sites will have answers to all the questions. The points given should reflect effort and, perhaps, the group's report of their findings to the class. The teacher should explain the possible biases and reliability of online resources.

Of 6 above. Up to 10 points might be given. Each student's representation should include at least one clearly recognizable instance of abuse, an intellectual and also an emotional response to the event, and a remedy or solution that is possible. The representation should be clearly presented, accurate, and detailed and display some depth. The student should display competence in use of the form chosen.

Of 7 above. Up to 10 points might be given to each student for effective use of the medium chosen to convey an accurate understanding of aspects of child labour. An additional five points might be given for the effectiveness of the whole presentation, and each student in the group receives the same score.

Of 8 above. Marked out of 10. An opening sentence or paragraph in which the student states his/her opinion of the interpretation that the littl'uns are symbolic of child labour is required. The body of the paper should discuss the literary characters in detail, instances from their study of child labour that resemble the experiences of the children in the novel, and also differences between the characters and the children they researched. A concluding statement or paragraph is required. Depth, detail, logic, reason, and effective, clear use of language are also important.

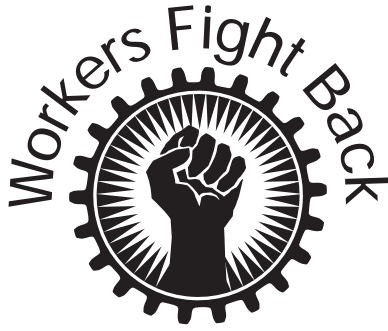
From out of our PAST
Stuff they don't tell you!
1957
Slap shot!

WHEN TED LINDSAY AND DOUG HARVEY formed a player's union, all they wanted was to find out about their NHL pensions. Instead, the two hockey stars of the 50s met with stonewalling club owners at every turn. In those days, NHL owners ruled players with an iron hand, not even letting them see their contracts. They were paid far less than their worth while the owners claimed poverty by hiding millions in profits. Led by Toronto's Corin Smythe, the owners cracked down ruthlessly on the players, threatening and dividing them. The union fell apart when Gordie Howe and Fred Kelly led the Detroit Red Wings out when the owners convinced them "I was for the good of the game".

1957: Russians launch first satellite...
 Elvis goes ba listc... First video tape

U.S. Troops de
 segregate schools

Williams
 11/79



Poetry and Labour

LESSON 4

HUMANITIES, ENGLISH 11, COMMUNICATIONS 11 AND 12

PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- identify lyrical, and narrative poetry, and ballads.
- identify literary devices including personification, metaphor, irony, paradox.
- identify poetic devices including rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, repetition, rhyming couplets, and stanzas.
 - interpret poems.
 - appreciates shifts in voice.
- work with others.
 - read and explain a poem to their classmates.

LESSON TITLE

Poetry and Labour

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- discuss and appreciate themes in labour, poetry, and song.
- identify and write about labour as a theme in poetry and song.
- write their own poem or song about work or working people.

INTRODUCTION TO TEACHER

The poems that follow have survived the test of time. Several have become labour standards. Each develops in an entertaining and skillful way a theme and struggle that may be timeless.

ACTIVITIES

1. The teacher outlines the objectives and provides students with definitions for the literary terms mentioned above.
2. The teacher may wish to organize students into groups of about four. One of the poems and assignments that follow is assigned to each group. Students study the poem and complete the assignment. Each group records their answers on chart paper in note form.
(Time: 20–30 minutes)
3. The chart paper is posted around the room. Someone from each group reads the poem as best they can. Someone from each group explains the poem's theme, how it is achieved, and answers questions.
(Time: 5–10 minutes for each poem)

4. The teacher reviews with the class the themes identified by the groups. The teacher may wish to assign students the task of writing a paragraph or essay on one or more of the themes identified in their studies, (for example, struggle). Students may wish to move around the room to study the notes.
(Time: keep the review short, about 5 minutes. Paragraph or essay time will vary, 20–60 minutes.)

5. The teacher reviews the characteristics of lyrical poetry and song, and the characteristics of ballads. The teacher may also wish to review poetic and literary devices used in the works studied. The teacher assigns students the task of writing a poem or song of their own about work, working people, or a theme from the poetry studied. Students may wish to move around the room to study the notes.
(Time: keep the review short, 5–10 minutes. Writing the poem or song can be varied, 20–60 minutes or longer.)

CHICAGO

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen
your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is
true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces
of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton
hunger.

And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer
at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to
them:

Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so
proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job,
here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft
cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a
savage pitted against the wilderness.

Bareheaded, Shoveling, Wrecking, Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white
teeth,

Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never
lost a battle,

Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and
under his ribs the heart of the people.

Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling, laughter of Youth,
half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool
Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and
Freight Handler to the Nation.

*Sandburg, Carl "Chicago." Gillanders, C., ed. Theme and Image I. Toronto,
ON: Copp Clark Pitman, 1976.*

QUESTIONS

This lyrical poem personifies or humanizes the city. While it doesn't tell a story or narrate, it does develop an idea, emotion, or theme. What characterizations does Sandburg give this city? What characterizations does Sandburg give working people? Is a sense of courage, physical toil, strength, youth, and change present? Provide examples. What activities seem to define the city? How would you characterize a large city like Vancouver and working people today? What is personification? What are lyrical poems?

WORKING GIRLS

The working girls in the morning are going to work—long lines of them afoot amid the downtown stores and factories, thousands with little brick-shaped lunches wrapped in newspapers under their arms.

Each morning as I move through this river of young woman life I feel a wonder about where it is all going, so many with a peach bloom of young years on them and laughter of red lips and memories in their eyes of dances the night before and plays and walks.

Green and gray streams run side by side in a river and so here are always the others, those who have been over the way, the women who know each one the end of life's gamble for her, the meaning and the clue, the how and the why of the dances and the arms that passed around their waists and the fingers that played in their hair.

Faces go by written over: 'I know it all, I know where the bloom and the laughter go and I have memories,' and the feet of these move slower and they have wisdom where the others have beauty.

So the green and the gray move in the early morning on the downtown streets.

Written by Sandburg, Carl. From Poetry of Our Time. Louis Dudek, editor. Toronto: ON. The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited. 1966.

QUESTIONS

This lyrical poem uses the metaphor of a river to describe large numbers of women, young and old, on their way to work in the morning. It also uses alliteration or the repetition of initial consonant sounds, and long detailed lines and sentences to imitate their variety and movement. This poem was first copyrighted in 1916. In what ways might the movement of women on their way to work resemble a river? How does the rhythm of the lengthy lines imitate the movement of the women? "Green and gray streams run side by side..." the poem doesn't use rhyme, but it does repeat consonant sounds, especially at the beginning of some words in a line, and it does use frequent repetition of some words. Find 3 other examples of alliteration and repetition of words. Why does the poet choose alliteration, but not rhyme? Why has the poet divided the women into young and old? How are they different? Is the poem happy, or sad, in your opinion? In what ways does this poem describe working women today? In what ways does it fail in its description and imitation of working women today?

SOLIDARITY FOREVER

When the union's inspiration through the
workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater anywhere
beneath the sun,
Yet what force on earth is weaker
than the feeble strength of one?
But the union makes us strong.

Chorus: Solidarity forever! Solidarity forever!
Solidarity forever, For the Union makes us
strong!

They have taken untold millions that they
never toiled to earn,
But without our brain and muscle not a
single wheel could turn.
We can break their haughty power, gain our
freedom when we learn
That the union makes us strong.

Chorus: "Solidarity forever!..."

In our hands is placed a power greater than
their hoarded gold.
Greater than the might of armies magnified a
thousandfold.
We can bring to birth a new world from the
ashes of the old.
For the union makes us strong.

Chorus: "Solidarity forever!..."

*Words by Ralph Chaplin. Tune: "John Brown's
Body.
From Carry It On!. Seeger, Pete and Reiser, Bob,
ed. Simon and Shuster. New York: NY. 1985.*

RADICAL VERSION OF SOLIDARITY FOREVER

(previous verses removed)

Is there aught we hold in common with the
greedy parasite
Who would lash us into serfdom and would
crush us with his might?
Is there anything left to us but to organize
and fight?
For the union makes us strong.

Chorus: "Solidarity forever!..."

It is we who ploughed the prairies, built the
cities where they trade
Dug the mines and built the workshops,
endless miles of railroad laid
Now we stand outcast and starving 'mid the
wonders we have made
But the union makes us strong.

Chorus: "Solidarity forever!..."

All the world that's owned by idle drones is
ours and ours alone
We have laid the wide foundations, built it
skyward stone by stone
It is ours not to slave in, but to master and to
own
While the union makes us strong.

Chorus: "Solidarity forever!..."

QUESTIONS

This lyrical poetry is an anthem often sung at gatherings of union members. It develops the theme that when we stick together we are strong. It uses rhyme and a repeated chorus to provide harmony and unity. The tempo is usually upbeat and strong. How is the theme of strength in numbers portrayed in the first stanza? How powerful is the individual? In stanza two who are "They"? What forces does the anthem suggest union members are in conflict with? How are those forces characterized? Provide evidence. What do the workers have that the rich and powerful need? What will the workers gain from the struggle? What does the union provide? In stanza three what "power" do they have? Why is it more powerful than gold or armies? What does the song suggest we will see in the "new world"? What does "solidarity" mean? What is the rhyme scheme or rhyming pattern of each stanza? Where is repetition used? Why is the simple structure, rhyme scheme, rhythm, and repetition effective?

EXTENSION

Read and compare the previous (more radical) verses of Solidarity Forever, and those that remain.

- a) What do the early words mean?
- b) Why do you think they have been removed?
- c) Do you think it is better to now include or exclude these words from "Labour's anthem"? Why/Why not?

JOE HILL

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night, alive as you & me.
Says I, "But, Joe, you're 10 years dead."
"I never died," says he.
"I never died," says he.

"In Salt Lake, Joe," I said to him, standing by my bed.
"They framed you on a murder charge."
Says Joe, "But I ain't dead"...

"The Copper Bosses shot you, Joe, they killed you, Joe," says I.
"Takes more than guns to kill a man,"
Says Joe, "I didn't die."

And standing there as big as life, & smiling with his eyes,
Joe says, "What they could never kill
Went on to organize."

"Joe Hill ain't dead," he says to me. "Joe Hill ain't never died.
When workers strike & organize,
Joe Hill is by their side."

"From San Diego up to Maine, in every mine and mill
Where workers stand up for their rights
It's there you'll find Joe Hill."

Repeat stanza 1.

Words by Alfred Hayes. Music by Earl Robinson. From Rise Up Singing: Blood, Peter and Patterson, Annie ed. A Singout Publication. Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. May 1992.

Note: Joe Hill was previously discussed in Socials Studies 10, Lesson 5, including why he "never died".

QUESTIONS

As a ballad this song is a narrative, uses dialogue, rhyme and an iambic rhythm, and alludes to a mysterious event. It has been sung and recorded by many. The tempo is usually slow and sorrowful, much like a dirge or funeral hymn. Under what circumstances is the narrator talking to Joe Hill? For how long has Joe been dead? Who shot and killed Joe? What suggests that Joe's death was murder? In what sense and under what circumstances is Joe still alive? Why might workers remember Joe? Why might he have been murdered? What events must we fill in for ourselves? What paradox or irony exists in the poem? Are union organizers' lives still threatened today? Who are Los Desaparecidos?

UNION MAID

Verse 1

There once was a union maid
She never was afraid
of the goons and ginks and the company
finks
And the deputy sheriffs that made the
raid
She went to the union hall
When a meeting it was called
And when the company boys came 'round
She always stood her ground

Chorus

Oh, you can't scare me, I'm sticking to the
union
I'm sticking to the union, I'm sticking to
the union
Oh no you can't scare me, I'm sticking to
the union
I'm sticking to the union 'til the day I die.

Verse 2

This union maid was wise
To the tricks of company spies
She couldn't be fooled by the company
stools
She'd always organize the guys
She'd always get her way
When she struck for higher pay
She'd show her card to the National
Guard
And this is what she'd say

Chorus

Verse 3 (version one)

A woman's struggle is hard
even with a union card
You've got to stand on your own two feet
And not be a servant to the male elite
We've got to take a stand
by working hand in hand
There's a job that's got to be done
and a fight that's got to be won

Verse 3 (version two)

You women who want to be free, take a
tip from me,
Break out of that mold we've all been sold,
you got a fighting history
The fight for women's rights with workers
must unite
Like Mother Jones, move those bones to
the front of every fight!

Verse 3 (version three, Woody Guthrie's original)

You gals who want to be free, take a tip
from me,
Get you a man who's a union man, and
join the Ladies' uxiliary.
A married life ain't hard when you got a
union card.
A union man with a union wife has got a
happy life.

Chorus

*Words by Woody Guthrie. Music: traditional.
"Redwing." From Rise Up Singing.
Blood, Peter and Patterson, Annie ed. A
Singout Publication. Bethlehem,
Pennsylvania. May 1992.*

QUESTIONS

The chorus is written in the first person, that is, it is spoken by the union maid(s). The other two stanzas are written in the third person, that is, they relate or narrate the events in which the union maid was involved, but are not spoken by her. Ballads are narrative, use quotes or dialogue, a repeated rhythm and a rhyme scheme. They also allude to a mysterious event which the listener or reader must reconstruct and fill in using their own imagination. How is this maid characterized? Provide support for your answer. How is the company or employer characterized? Provide support. What struggle do you think might be going on? What does the union maid struggle for? What does she advocate for a strategy for achieving these needs? Where should women be in these struggles in the writer's opinion? What "molds," in your opinion, should women break? Who has "sold" them? This ballad is usually sung in an upbeat and spirited tempo. What rhyme schemes or patterns are present? What effect does the frequent rhyming have on the spirit of the song? How is the final stanza different? Why?

JOHN HENRY

When John Henry was a little boy,
Sitting upon his father's knee,
His father said, "Look here, my boy,
You must be a steel driving man like me,
You must be a steel driving man like me."

John Henry went upon the mountain,
Just to drive himself some steel.
The rocks was so tall and John Henry so
small,
He said lay down hammer and squeal,
He said lay down hammer and squeal.

John Henry had a little wife,
And the dress she wore was red;
The last thing before he died,
He said, "Be true to me when I'm dead,
Oh, be true to me when I'm dead."

John Henry's wife ask him for fifteen cents,
And he said he didn't have but a dime,
Said, "If you wait till the rising sun goes
down,
I'll borrow it from the man in the mine,
I'll borrow it from the man in the mind."

John Henry started on the right-hand side,
And the steam drill started on the left.
He said, "Before I'd let that steam drill beat
me down,
I'd hammer my fool self to death,
Oh, I'd hammer my fool self to death."

The steam drill started at half past six,
John Henry started the same time.
John Henry stuck bottom at half past eight,
And the steam drill didn't bottom till nine,
Oh, the steam drill didn't bottom till nine.

John Henry said to his captain,
"A man, he ain't nothing but a man,
Before I'd let that steam drill beat me down,
Oh, I'd die with the hammer in my hand."

John Henry said to his shaker,
"Shaker, why don't you sing just a few more
rounds?
And before the setting sun goes down,
You're gonna hear this hammer of mine
sound,
You're gonna hear this hammer of mine
sound."

John Henry hammered on the mountain,
He hammered till half past three,
He said, "This big Bend Tunnel on the C.
& O. road
Is going to be the death of me,
Lord! Is going to be the death of me!"

John Henry had a little baby boy,
You could hold him in the palm of your
hand.

The last words before he died,
"Son, you must be a steel driving man,
Son, you must be a steel driving man."

John Henry had a little woman,
And the dress she wore was red,
She went down the railroad track and never
came back,
Said she was going where John Henry fell
dead,
Said she was going where John Henry fell
dead.

John Henry hammering on the mountain
As the whistle blew for half past two,
The last word I heard him say,
"Captain, I've hammered my insides in two,
Lord, I've hammered my insides in two."

*[http://www.ibiblio.org/john_henry/
prison.html](http://www.ibiblio.org/john_henry/prison.html)*

QUESTIONS

"John Henry" is a traditional folk ballad. Its origins are uncertain. It has been varied by the people who have sung it. We do know that prisoners, and railroad workers have sung it and many other men, most of them black, who knew hard labour and oppression. This variation comes from Edward Douglas, whose address was given as the Ohio State Penitentiary. Douglas said his version was based on interviews with "a number of Old-Timers of this Penitentiary." As a ballad it has a refrain, a repeated rhythm, stanza form, and rhyme. It also has dialogue, an unknown event, and tells a story. What was John Henry's skill? What had his father insisted he do? What did he want his son to do? With what must John Henry compete? Does he win the first round of competition? Provide evidence. What eventually wins? Provide evidence. For what reasons related to his family must John Henry compete? For what reasons related to himself must he compete? What messages about workers and technology are in this poem? How does technology affect working people today? What do the rhyming couplets and repetition at the end of each stanza accomplish?

BREAD AND ROSES

As we come marching, marching, in the
 beauty of the day
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand
 mill lofts gray
Are touched with all the radiance that a
 sudden sun discloses
For the people hear us singing, Bread and
 Roses, Bread and Roses.

As we come marching, marching, we
 battle too for men
For they are women's children and we
 mother them again.
Our lives will not be sweated, from birth
 until life closes
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us
 bread, but give us roses.

As we come marching, marching. Un-
 numbered women dead
Go crying through our singing, their
 ancient call for bread
Small art and love and beauty, their
 dredging spirits knew
Yes, it is bread we fight for, be we fight
 for roses too.

As we come marching, marching we
 bring the greater days
The rising of the women is the rising of
 us all*
No more the drudge and idler, ten that
 toil while one reposes
But the sharing of life's glories, Bread and
 Roses, Bread and Roses

**The original wording "of us all" was "of the race".*

(See Socials Studies 10— Lesson 5)

*James Oppenheim wrote the words to Bread
and Roses, while Caroline Kohlsaar wrote
the music*

QUESTIONS

The writers were inspired by a strike by women in the textile industry in Lawrence, Massachusetts over eighty years ago. The women carried a banner reading "We want bread and roses too." At the end of their strike the women had won gains for all textile workers in the area. This lyrical poem has also become an anthem for gatherings of women undertaking action for social justice. It is often sung much like a hymn. It develops a theme, a set of beliefs and values related to the motivation for their action. Quatrains are used as the stanza form and a unique rhyme scheme or pattern is employed. As the song progresses, the Bread and Roses become the symbols of their struggle. In stanza one, what is associated with the people singing, "Bread and Roses?" How do the mills and kitchens contrast with the other images in the stanza? In stanza two, what relationship with men is developed? In your words what does the third line of the stanza mean? In the fourth line, how do the images of hearts and bodies complement the images of bread and roses? In stanza three, the timelessness or universality of their needs is introduced with very powerful imagery. What image is used? What are the universal needs? In stanza four, who do the marching women represent? Who is identified as the culprit, what has he done that is wrong? What must be shared? What have the bread and roses come to symbolize by the end of the poem? Why are these symbols particularly appropriate for women's struggles? At first glance the rhyme scheme throughout the poem is simply rhyming couplets, pairs of lines that rhyme. However, a closer look reveals that the writer employs an additional rhyme between the third and fourth lines, and repetition, in the first and last stanzas. What effect does this have?

MARY GOT A NEW JOB

Mary got a new job, workin' on the line
Help to make the automobile.
Wasn't very long 'til the job was going fine
And she liked the way it made her feel.
It gave her independence to drive into the lot
And pull her heavy work clothes on.
She liked the rush and clatter,
she liked her new friends
And her fav'rite was a man named John.

John was like a brother, workin' at her side
And they both came on the job the same day,
Learned the job together,
how the ropes were tied.
Went together down to draw their first pay.
Opening up his packet, Johnny dropped his cash
Money was all over the floor.
Mary saw the money, saw to her surprise
Johnny had a whole lot more, and she said:

Chorus: "Who's been matching you
sweat for sweat?

Who's been working on the line,
Who's been earning what she ain't got yet?
All I want is what's mine.

I've got hands & eyes & a back like you
And I use them hard the whole day.

I stand here working just as hard as you do
And I want my equal pay."

(add after last chorus: And I want my E.R.A.!)

Johnny was a good man —Mary knew that,
Taught to think of women as queens,
Now here stood Mary in her yellow hard hat
And her broken down faded blue jeans.
He liked her more than anybody he knew,
He was close to understanding why
She didn't cuss or spit or even raise her voice
She just looked him straight in the eye
& she said:

Chorus: "Who's been matching you..."

*Writer: Tom Paxton. From Rise Up Singing. Blood,
Peter and Patterson, Annie ed. A Singout
Publication. Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. May 1992.*

QUESTIONS

This ballad tells a story of unequal pay for equal work because of gender. Statistics consistently demonstrate that women are paid less than men. The issue is called pay equity. As a ballad the song has a chorus, has a quotation, uses rhythm and rhyme, tells a story, and has a mysterious event which the audience must explain themselves? Where does Mary work and what does she do? What does she like about her job? How does she view her relationship with John? What does she like about him? What does her work have in common with John's work? Which of them is paid more? How does the writer make this point? What is Mary's complaint? What does she want? Is John a "good man"? How does he view and feel about Mary? Why might he be only "...close to understanding why..."? Provide more examples of women being paid less than men for equal work. The rhythm and rhyme in the chorus are regular and repeated, just as the chorus is repeated. The other stanzas, which narrate the events, are much less even in rhythm and rhyme. How does this difference in rhyme and rhythm complement our understanding of the song?

EVALUATION

Of 3 above: Out of 10. 10–9 —all questions are answered thoroughly and accurately, an accurate understanding of the theme, voice, and effect of poetic devices is displayed, notes are organized and legible. 8 —almost all questions are answered accurately, a good understanding of the theme, voice, and poetic devices is displayed, notes are organized and legible. 7–6 —most questions are answered with some accuracy, some understanding of the theme, voice, and poetic devices is displayed, notes are organized and legible. 5 —most questions are attempted, though serious difficulties are present in understanding theme, voice, and devices, some understanding is displayed, notes are organized and legible. Less than 5 — most questions not attempted, little or no understanding displayed.

Of 4 above: Out of 10. 10–9 —the composition states a theme present in two or more of the works studied. Specific evidence from the poems supporting the statement of theme is presented, cited, and interpreted accurately. A clear, in depth, and thorough understanding of each of the writers' positions on the issues is displayed. Strong supporting evidence from experience or sources outside the poetry studied is also presented. A conclusion is reached regarding the theme based on the evidence, logic, and reason. Spelling and language are clear. The composition is legible, neat and tidy. 8 —the composition meets the criteria for a 9 or 10, but the paper lacks some depth, precision or thoroughness in its analysis, understanding or interpretation. Only a few errors in spelling and language are present. 7–6 —the composition meets most of the criteria well and with some accuracy, However, the paper lacks depth, at times is inaccurate, and is sometimes unclear in presentation. 5 —the composition meets few of the criteria, is frequently inaccurate and unclear; however, evidence of some understanding is present. 4 or less —few, if any, of the criteria have been met.

Of 5 above. Out of 10. 10–9 —the poetry meets all the criteria of either a lyrical poem or a ballad. The rhyme, rhythm, and other poetic devices are controlled and complement the sense of the poem. The theme is of work, and working people. The spelling and use of language are clear and contribute to the sound and sense of the poem. 8 —almost all the criteria have been met. The theme is of work, and working people. 7–6 —most of the criteria have been met. The theme is of work, and working people. 5 —few of the criteria have been met. The poem has serious difficulties, but evidence of a decent effort is present. 4 or less —few, if any, of the criteria have been met.

ROSA PARKS

Women as union activists, leaders in social change.



LESSON 5

HUMANITIES AND ENGLISH 8–12

COMMUNICATIONS 11 OR 12

PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- read a biographical anecdote and nonfiction.
- appreciate biographies and nonfiction as literary forms.
- become aware of and use research materials including web sites, encyclopedias, and books with Canadian, British Columbian, or international focus.

LESSON TITLE

Rosa Parks—women as union activists, leaders in social change.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- appreciate women as activists, and union activists as a theme.
- appreciate that unions and union activists often lead social change.
- represent what they have learned about women as activists.
- write a nonfiction or biographical account of activism in their lives.

INTRODUCTION TO TEACHER

Rosa Parks by Eloise Greenfield from *Larger Than Life* is a relatively short, simple biographical anecdote to read. It is easy to use in the junior grades and in Communications 11 and 12. Other anthologies that include short works of nonfiction, such as *In Context III*, often include Ms. Parks story. Many web sites contain much biographical and other material on Ms. Parks and her many years of work as an activist, and on other women activists.

Many credit Ms. Parks' peaceful action in Alabama in 1955, refusing to sit on the bus where she was told, as the action that initiated the black civil rights campaign led by Dr. Martin Luther King. Rosa Parks had been a union activist for twenty-five years when she undertook her action. She was eventually fired from her job as a seamstress.

Many other women, including unionists, have also been involved in actions leading to social change.

ACTIVITIES

1. The teacher outlines for students the objectives listed above.
2. The teacher provides or has students provide explanations of the following terms: unions, activists, social change, biography, anecdote, nonfiction.
3. The teacher assigns students the task of reading *Rosa Parks* from *Larger than Life*.
4. The students attempt to answer the following questions:
 - a) What order did Rosa refuse to obey?
 - b) What were the immediate consequences of her refusal to obey?
 - c) Who was Edgar Daniel Nixon? What did he do? How did he learn of Rosa's situation?
 - d) Why was Rosa released?
 - e) How was Rosa treated when she went to work?
 - f) Who did Rosa meet with that night? Who was Dr. Martin Luther King? What decisions did they make? What did they do? What effect did their actions have on the busing?
 - g) What happened at Rosa's trial?
 - h) How many showed up at the church meeting that night? What did they decide to do? When would they quit their walking campaign?(Time: About 30 minutes.)

4. The teacher may wish to encourage students to learn more about Rosa Parks and other women who have been involved in social activism. Students could explore one or more topics individually or in groups:

- a) Rosa Parks; <http://www.grandtimes.com/rosa.html>, <http://www.e-portals.org/Parks/>, and Encyclopedia Britannica.

- b) Dolores Huerta, a leader of the farm labourers in the U.S.A. <http://www.ufw.org/dh.htm>. <http://www.teacherlink.usu.edu/TLresources/longterm/LessonPlans/famous/huerta.html#Background>.

- c) Canadian women have also distinguished themselves, some in the union movement, including Grace Hartman—first woman president of the Canadian Labour Congress, Judy Darcy—President, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Canada, Shirley Carr—President, CLC, and Madeline Parent—Quebec textile workers union and social activist.

The National Library of Canada web site: <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/digiproj/women/women99/women99-e.htm>, has a wealth of biographies of Canadian women activists. Canadian Women Activists are useful key words in any web search. See also the attached accounts of Sarah Inglis, Madeline Parent, and Kate Braid.

- d) Rosemary Brown— from Vancouver, became the first Black woman to be elected to a provincial legislature in Canada. She later became the first woman candidate for the leadership of a major Canadian political party. The Encyclopedia of British Columbia and <http://www.coolwomen.org/coolwomen/cwsite.nsf/vwWeek/7D2F3F31CA37DA08852568F2006A1D79?OpenDocument>.

- e) Some students might also be encouraged to explore literature and web sites for specific women's social issues, including workplace issues, such as sexual harassment: http://www.bchrc.gov.bc.ca/text_only/BCHRC.asp, or

- f) pay equity: <http://www.bcfed.com/ABOUT/stand/Payeqpol.html>, or
- g) child care: <http://www.clc-ctc.ca/woman/child.html>, or
- h) violence against women: <http://www.clc-ctc.ca/woman/women.html>.

5. The teacher directs the students assigned to each of the above to collect answers and specific examples for support for each of the following questions:
- a) Have women been involved in political efforts to improve conditions for themselves and others?
 - b) Were they involved in unions or other organizations?
 - c) Did their efforts take a lot of work, energy, sacrifice, and planning?
 - d) Have they met with some successes?
 - e) Identify 3 issues that are important to many women today? Why is each important? Identify a union or organization that is supportive of each issue? Students may wish to check the women's sights at the Canadian Labour Congress <http://www.clc-ctc.ca/woman/index.html>, the British Columbia Federation of Labour <http://www.bcfed.com/NEWS/sis/index.htm>, and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation <http://www.bctf.bc.ca/social/sw/>. Each student or group shares the information they have found. Individuals can use notepaper, groups might post chart paper around the room. The highlights and answers to questions can be presented orally.
- (Time for 5 and 6: about 60 minutes.)

7. The teacher may wish to have each student represent what they have learned in a form acceptable to the teacher. Some may write journal entries, diary entries, or monologues for an activist studied. Others may write essays on women as activists. Groups may make multimedia presentations of pictures and print on the theme of women activists, and perform scenes, short dramas, music, or poetry related to issues, the development of an activist, or critical events in the history of an issue.
- (Time: 30 to 60 minutes.)

8. The teacher may wish to have each student write a nonfiction or biographical account of themselves or someone they know who has taken a stand on a social issue. Perhaps it involved a boycott, demonstration, petition, or letter protesting an undesirable practice or action. Sometimes it is taking a stand against an instance of bullying, discrimination, or harassment at school. What organizations and actions might they consider for future social action?
- (Time: 30 to 60 minutes.)

EVALUATION

Of 4 above: Out of 24. Each reasonable answer receives 2 points. Detailed, thorough answers receive 3 points. An inadequate answer receives 1 point.

Of 5 & 6 above: Out of 10. 10–9 meets all of the following criteria very well, 8 meets most of the criteria well, 7–6 meets most of the criteria at a satisfactory level for the grade, 5 meets most of the criteria, but has serious difficulties, 4–1 most of the criteria not attempted. Answers to each question will vary in depth and detail. Each group or student, however, should have an answer to each question and an abundance of information for at least one answer. Logic, reason, and examples should support any opinions. The notes should be clear, orderly, legible, and provide sources of information. Speaking should be clear, audible, and concise. Answers to questions should be brief, to the point, and accurate.

Of 7 above: Students are to be graded individually for their efforts. Out of 10. 10–9 meets all of the following criteria very well, 8 meets most of the criteria well, 7–6 meets most of the criteria at a satisfactory level for the grade, 5 meets most of the criteria, but has serious difficulties, 4–1 most of the criteria not attempted. At least one woman activist is identified and represented in either words, pictures, or performance. An issue is identified and explained. An organization or union that supported the action is identified. An action that was taken and was supported by large numbers of people is identified. Some students may explore one activist and issue in depth and detail. Some might explore several activists and issues on the theme of women's activism. Clarity, accuracy, depth, detail, and skill are important. Students in group efforts will also receive a grade out of 5 based on the unity and effectiveness of the group effort as a whole.

Of 8 above: Out of 10. 10–9 meets all of the following criteria very well, 8 meets most of the criteria well, 7–6 meets most of the criteria at a satisfactory level for the grade, 5 meets most of the criteria, but has serious difficulties, 4–1 most of the criteria not attempted. The student identifies the injustice, the action taken, the person(s) who took the action, the source(s) of support, and future considerations. Attention to specific facts, details, and depth are important. Dialogue, at the least, quotation is used. Clear spelling, language, and writing or print are important.

KATE BRAID

I graduated from Mount Alison University with a BA and a secretarial certificate, but I was a terrible secretary.

I went through a series of jobs that seemed to be appropriate for a woman: child-care worker, teacher's aid, youth-related things funded by LIP (Local Initiatives Programs) grants. But I kept having trouble with the structures. For instance, in the schools they didn't want me to wear long skirts. This was in the early 1970s when short skirts were fashionable. But I didn't like short skirts, so I left. I began to feel very lost.

Since I didn't know what to do, I decided to go back to school to get my MA, which meant I needed to earn money fast to pay my tuition. In those days, lots of guys were going north to make money, so I thought I'd give it a try. By a wonderful coincidence I met a woman who also wanted to work in the north. She had taught up there and she knew the culture. We looked for jobs in pulp mills, plywood mills, anything.

We started hitchhiking and got a ride with a woman who said she was going to Fort St. James, where there was lots of work and they hired women. So we went to Fort St. James and started in the sawmill that day.

I worked there for the summer and fell absolutely in love with physical labour. It wasn't until years later that I realized my boss at the sawmill was way ahead of his time. In those days, nobody was hiring women to work in the mills. But this guy had clued in—his work force was half female. He told us he loved hiring women, and if he had his way, he'd only hire women because they worked harder, were never drunk or late, and if the machinery broke down, they grabbed a broom and started cleaning up. The other absolutely hilarious thing was that the women did all the heavy physical work. The men had the machine jobs and pushed the buttons.

On the first day, we started work at 10:00 and finished at 5:00. By 4:50, I was so tired I thought I was going to throw up. I wouldn't have made 30 seconds past the hour. That night I was in agony, my calves were so sore. This went on for about a week, then I started to feel incredibly good. My body began to tighten and I became trim and strong.

It was a great experience. The whole crew was terrific. The lumber piler was a phenomenal worker who laced her tea with rye. She introduced me to a whole subculture of Northern women who are very outspoken, as tough as nails and very aware of their lack of privilege as women. The experience was a revelation to a protected city kid.

I went back to Simon Fraser and did another semester before I realized that I didn't want to be an academic. So I dropped out and went to the Gulf Islands. By this time I was really getting worried because I was 30 years old and still didn't know what I was going to do when I grew up.

I started to apply for all the jobs I could think of: barmaid, waitress, clerical worker and so on. But there were no “women’s” jobs. One night, I was telling someone that I’d have to leave the island because I couldn’t find any work. He had just quit work as a carpenter, building the community centre, and he suggested I apply for his job.

A couple of other guys said they’d lend me some tools. They also told me to lie about my experience. That was very useful information. So a couple of days later I showed up with all this borrowed gear and told the foreman that I had built houses up North. When he hired me, my life changed. I adored construction.

I was obviously not used to a construction site. I couldn’t walk in the big boots without tripping, but I was hired as a labourer, which was perfect. As a labourer you get to watch what’s going on, to learn how to handle and carry materials, to understand tools and vocabulary. When the job was over, one of the guys hired me as a helper and I worked with him for a year. He showed me all his books and stuff and talked me into doing an apprenticeship to become a qualified trades person.

About this time, I moved back to Vancouver to finish my MA. I had never heard of another women doing the kind of work I was doing, and I was beginning to feel split. I decided to finish my degree and do my thesis on non-traditional work. Simon Fraser agreed and I travelled around the province talking to other women who were doing traditionally made jobs. That experience helped me to feel sane again.

*Kate Braid’s Poetry is featured in this guide’s bibliography.
Adapted from...Against the Current by Judith Finlayson, copyright 1995*

MADELEINE PARENT

While I was at McGill, I became involved in the Canadian Students' Assembly. We were fighting for government scholarships for students whose families couldn't afford to send them to university. At that time, higher education was a privilege that children from poor families were denied. We also had a battle to ensure that our platform included women, because it was often said that women shouldn't be educated since they would only get married.

Once the war started, there was a backlash against our work because it was thought we were taking money away from the war effort. Such strong opposition to students who were trying to help poor people made me think more than education was involved. My desire to get to the essence of this reaction led me in the direction of labour organizing.

I wanted to organize in factories where women were employed. One of my friends had a sister, Lea Roback, who was working for the International Ladies' Garment Workers union. She took on male bureaucrats in the union who discriminated against the women members. In the garment industries, male employees were in the minority and companies could afford to pay them a little more at no great cost. They made their profit on the poorly paid work of the women who compromised about 76 per cent of their employees. Some unions struck deals with management and male workers at the expense of women.

On May 1, 1942, I started working at the War Labour Organizing Committee in Montreal, helping to recruit workers in the munitions industry. Some months after the campaign began, Kent Rowley, a young organizer, argued that we should seize the moment to organize the domestic industries where many women worked and their exploitation was well established. Some of the men were reluctant. They feared women might become a force in the unions and they didn't want their power threatened.

I got involved in the debate and joined Kent, working in the cotton mills, where generations of women had struggled against injustice. In those days children, sometimes as young as 10, worked in the mills. They supported women's efforts to organize because the women had always protected them from abuse by employers.

The first successful women's strike in Quebec occurred in 1937, when a few thousand ladies' garment workers struck the dressmaking shops in Montreal and won, in the face of virulent opposition by the Catholic church. When we were organizing in the 1940s, parish priests delivered sermons on women's place being in the home. Apparently, it was okay for women to work in factories, so long as they didn't stand up for their rights.

Equal pay for equal work was a priority and we won that in the 1946 strike of 6,000 cotton-mill workers. Seniority was another issue. Women understand that with seniority, they would not be fired or otherwise punished by a boss when they refused his sexual advances.

Starting with the first workers meeting I attended in 1942, I learned that sexual harassment was a serious problem. When a woman left work to have a child, she lost all rights to her job if she hadn't given in to sexual harassment, her request to return to work was more likely to be rejected.

As a unionist, I was also challenged because of my sex. In the mid-1940s I was the first woman elected to the executive of the Montreal Trades and Labour Council. Some men argued that I shouldn't be on the executive because a couple of the officers were drunk at the meetings and used bad language. I replied that that was their problem, not mine.

Very early on, I realized that if I was going to commit myself to a fight for social justice, I'd have to cut myself off from my background—not from my parents, but from my former convent friends and the milieu in which I'd been raised. So I chose to live a working-class life.

By 1945–46, Quebec Premier Duplessis and his friends were determined that gains made by organized working people during the war—particularly women—would not be taken away. There were layoffs when the war ended and, in most cases, women had to go. Returning veterans were given the jobs that men had done before the war. And certain practices that had helped women working in war plants, such as day-care centres, were abandoned.

The government attack on unions was ferocious. Duplessis used strike-breakers, police, the courts and jail as weapons to break the will of the working people. Kent Rowley, whom I married in 1953, served a couple of jail sentences, and for nine years, beginning in 1946, I was under charges.

During the 1947 strike of Ayer's Woollen Mill workers in Lachute, Quebec, I was charged with "seditious conspiracy" and detained many times in jail. I was sentenced to two years, but was finally acquitted in another trial in 1955, as was Kent.

The dangers involved in union organizing in those times and the ongoing nature of the struggle for decent working conditions in the textile mills are two of the reasons why I didn't have children. Being in and out of court and jail for over nine years was not conducive to bringing a baby into the world. When that ordeal ended, I was almost 38 and had anaemia, which took over a year to cure. Also, if I had borne a child while faced with jail under Duplessis, he would have used the situation to torture my parents. They didn't agree with my ideas, but they stood up to a lot of pressure from the premier on my behalf. If a baby had been involved, it would have been too much for them to take.

In 1983, when I was 65, I retired from my union position. I've become actively involved as a volunteer in the women's movement in support of aboriginal women and women of other minority groups. I also work with unions and with the community-based organizations continuing the struggle for social justice.

*Adapted from: Against The Current
By Judith Finlayson, copyright 1995*

FAST-FOOD WORKER, AGE 20-CANADA

Sarah's Story

Sarah Inglis started out as a typical fast-food worker. She applied for a job at the local McDonald's in her town of Orangeville, Ontario, when, she was just fourteen. She was interviewed on the spot. When asked if she was punctual, Sarah said "Yeah, sure." She laughs now, admitting that she didn't know what the word meant. She got the job.

Sarah says she wanted to work so "I would have some independence from my parents" and so she could "buy clothes and go to movies and stuff like that." Like most new employees, she was nervous at first. For the first time in her life she had to get a social insurance number and give out personal information about herself. She had to learn new skills—now to take orders and use the cash register. "Nobody ever really taught me how to do the fries, so the manager gave me hell one day," she says. At the beginning she felt a little removed from the "day staff," the adult workers who did full-day shifts. But she made friends with the other teenagers and after a while got used to the ten or twelve hours a week she was working on Saturdays and Sundays.

She was named "Employee of the Month" when she was fifteen. (For this she got a Ronald McDonald watch and her picture on the restaurant wall.)

Then, "little things started happening." The management started cutting people's shifts so they would not have to give them paid breaks. The adult workers who had been putting in regular eight-hour days were suddenly working three-and-a-half hour shifts. One of the managers admitted that the reason was "you're more efficient on a three-hour shift, 'case you start to drag at the end of an eight-hour shift." Workers no longer knew long in advance when their shifts would be. Another manager often humiliated workers by yelling at them in front of the customers. One busy lunch hour, Sarah took a quick breather, leaned against the counter and sighed. The manager saw her and dressed her down for this lapse, and "just made me feel horrible." Another day, a number of teens were planning a trip to Toronto to go to a prom. They were having difficulty making arrangements for a hotel. The manager said to Sarah, "Why don't you just stand on the street corner and make a few extra bucks?"

Sarah says, "I know it's sexual harassment now, but I didn't know it then. They know that young people don't know their rights." She was humiliated and outraged.

The final straw came when a woman day-shift worker Sarah had become close to was fired for asking a manager to be more sensitive with the workers. Sarah says she was becoming more politically aware at that point in her life. She's begun paying attention to the newspapers and what was happening in the world. She decided to organize a union in her workplace. She was sixteen.

"Wages weren't such a bid deal for me," says Sarah. What she was after was "job security, respect and dignity." Some people responded to her unionizing attempt by saying, "You gotta expect to be treated like shit. It's your first job!" But she didn't buy it. "Besides," she says, "they treated the adults who worked the day shift as if they were kids too." Sarah thinks that schools must teach kids about their human rights, including their rights as workers. As she says, "How important is Greek history when kids don't know their rights on the job?"

After attempts with several unions who were unwilling to work with anyone so young, she contacted the Service Employees International Union (SEIU)—and didn't tell them her age. Within a month, she and her friends had signed up 67 of the 102 workers at the restaurant. The union's certification should have been automatic, since they had a majority of workers on their side. But McDonald's heard about the plans to unionize and managed to convince some of those who had signed up to change their minds. McDonald's charged that the organizers had used Unfair Labour practices and the case was taken to the Labour board. "Someone said I held a knife to them!" Sarah exclaims. "And another person said I'd locked her in my car! But the locks on my car didn't even work!"

At the Labour Board hearing, McDonald's lawyers implied she was an alcoholic and a "dopehead". After four months of deliberation, the company and the union agreed to a vote because there was no end in sight. Sarah explains. "The union never got a chance to call witnesses due to the lengthy trial."

McDonald's gave out "No Union" T-shirts and buttons saying "Just Vote No" and even held a party for the workers. Sarah and her friends were waging a struggle against the multinational that has been unionized in only a few of its thousands of restaurants worldwide. It was uphill all the way. They lost the vote 77–19.

Sarah is now 20 and enrolled in Labour Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. She works part-time at a designer clothing shop to finance her studies. Sometimes she has had to keep her experience quiet in order to get a job. But she continues to speak to high schools, unions, and youth groups. And in December, 1995 she traveled to London, England, to testify in favour of David Morris and Helen Steel, who were being sued by McDonald's for distributing a leaflet criticizing McDonald's food and its treatment of its workers. During her day-and-a-half-long testimony, a McDonald's Vice-President stared at her for hours on end, sometimes winking, sometimes glaring. McDonald's lawyers insisted she reveal the names of people who had signed union cards in her organizing attempt. She refused and was threatened with contempt of court. They backed off and she was not charged. But it is clear that Sarah Ingles was a big threat to McDonald's four years ago—and she still is.

*Adapted from: Listen to us: The World's Children
by Jane Springer, Copyright, 1997*

