

# WELCOME

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The study of labour by secondary school students is a study of their heritage. In many cases, it will also point to their future. This resource guide arose out of the recognition that our students (the workers and leaders of tomorrow) need to understand the issues that will define their working lives, worlds which will include unions with which they will deal, or to which they will belong.

Our students will have a better sense of themselves and the part they play in the productivity and vitality of their communities if they have studied the history of working peoples, not just the rich, famous, or infamous. Without this, will they really understand the struggles of those who went before, who gave them what they may believe has always been there?

As educators, we have our part to play in determining the answers to this and other questions. The labour studies resource guide can be one significant way to assist in meeting this responsibility. The guide is intended for teachers, and for youth, not as a manifesto hung from erudition, but a practical tool grounded in the reality of working lives and the needs of today's teachers and students.

We deeply hope that teachers find it a useful resource, supplement, or catalyst for their programs. We have linked it specifically to the Ministry's prescribed learning outcomes (PLOs) so that it can be immediately useful for the teacher on Monday morning (and not requiring a summer of study). As a practical guide, the team spent as much time learning as it did writing—how to condense so much complicated material for busy teachers and students with widely different backgrounds and interests.

The guide is not intended to be prescriptive nor definitive. We hope we have made the first steps, that will be quickly followed by other teachers making new content for this resource (as teachers always have and always will).

Working people have done, and continue to do, their part in building this country that many believe is the best in the world. We also believe that the British Columbia built by its workers has been a unique jewel in this crown of achievement. However, the world does not stand still, nor do its builders. What will the future hold for those workers, those citizens? Perhaps knowing where they came from will help them chart where to go.

