

Unit Five

INVESTIGATING THE WORLD OF WORK

UNIT FIVE: INVESTIGATING THE WORLD OF WORK

Suggestions for the Instructor

Pg. 5-7 -- Why Do People Work?

Ask students to work with a partner to brainstorm as many reasons as they can think of why people work. Ask them to share their ideas with the class and write a collective brainstorm on the board.

Answers might include:

- to pay bills
- to receive health benefits
- to meet new people
- to learn a skill
- to stay out of trouble
- to feel a sense of accomplishment
- to feel a sense of pride
- to contribute to the community
- to help people
- to get out of the house
- to be a role model for one's children
- to have structure and order
- to gain job experience
- to build a resume
- to get good references

From this list, ask students to list their top five reasons why they are or have been motivated to work.

Pg. 5-8 – 5-9 -- Words of Wisdom: Work

Ask volunteers to take turns reading the quotes aloud. Ask students to pick a quote that interests them and to write about it, reflecting on:

- what they think the speaker means
- whether they agree and why or why not
- how the quote is or is not relevant to their lives
- specific examples from their lives or the lives of others which highlight its meaning

Ask students to share their reflections with the class.

Pg. 5-10 -- "A Worker Reads History"

Copy the poem "A Worker Reads History" by Berthold Brecht:

<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/a-worker-reads-history/>

http://www.teachpeacenow.org/lessonplan_poetrytotalkabout.pdf

Read the poem aloud or ask for a volunteer to read. Discuss these questions after reading:

- What is the main idea of the poem "A Worker Reads History?"
- Who does the poet think should be honored in history books?
- Why?
- Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

Pg. 5-11 -- "Short Order Cook"

Copy the poem "Short Order Cook" by Jim Daniels:

<http://poemhunter.blogspot.com/2007/10/short-order-cook.html>

<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/16542>

Read the poem "Short Order Cook" aloud or ask for a volunteer to read. Discuss these questions after reading:

1. Why does the speaker say the man who comes in is "not an average Joe"?
2. Does the speaker in the poem know his job well?
3. Does he enjoy his job?
4. Does he take his job seriously?
5. In what ways does the short order cook get satisfaction on the job?
6. What is he feeling when he says "I puff my chest out and bellow"?

Pg. 5-12 - 5-14 -- Job Satisfaction: Student Writing

After students to read aloud writing by students about jobs they've had that have given them satisfaction. Then ask them to describe a time they did a job that gave them a feeling of satisfaction, and to think about these questions as they write:

- What were you were responsible for?
- Was it difficult?
- Did you enjoy it while you were doing it or after it was done?
- Why did it give you a sense of pride and satisfaction?
- Would you want to do it again?
- What does a job have to involve in order for it be satisfying for you?

Pg. 5-15 – 5-17 -- What’s My Job? Twenty Questions

Copy and cut out the job titles. Give each student the name of a job that other students will ask. Brainstorm a list of questions students might ask to try to guess each other’s jobs.

Have one student at a time come to the front of the class, and then go around the room having students ask questions about the job which can be answered with a “yes” or a “no.” (For some questions it may be necessary to answer “sometimes” or “maybe.”) A class member who thinks s/he knows the occupation may ask directly, “Are you a ___?”

Pg. 5-18 -- Who Built the Block?

In this activity, ask students to take a brief imaginary walk down a city block in order to observe the work that was done there and to imagine the workers who might have performed the work.

After agreeing upon a street most people have seen and remember, ask students to brainstorm the structures they would see and the workers involved in their creation.

Use this exercise as a springboard for discussion:

- Were you surprised by all the workers involved in a building a city street?
- Do any of the jobs listed interest you?
- What would you need to do to find out more about these occupations?

Examples might include:

Structures

Workers

Buildings.....	architects, general contractors, carpenters, electricians, glaziers, plumbers, roofers, foundation engineers, bricklayers, masons
Streets.....	surveyors, cement masons, urban planners, designers, operating engineers, civil engineers, heavy equipment operators, pipefitters, iron workers, jackhammer operators, blasting operators
Sewers.....	surveyors, cement masons, urban planners, designers, operating engineers, civil engineers, heavy equipment operators, pipefitters, iron workers
Sidewalks.....	concrete masons
Streetlights.....	utility workers, electricians, electrical engineers
Signs.....	sheet metal workers

Pg. 5-19 – 5-20 -- Open for Business

Ask students to work together in small groups to design a city block. Ask them, as they work together, to think about what the ideal city block would look like. What stores, businesses, institutions and community centers would be there? Ask them to draw the city block in the box on the handout.

After they have completed their drawings, ask students to imagine their new city block, full of enterprises all open for business and seeking employees. On the chart on the handout, have them work together to list the stores, businesses, institutions and community centers they included in their sketches. What kinds of jobs would they have to offer? What kinds of skills might be needed? Which of these jobs would interest them?

Pg. 5-21 – 5-22 -- “I Hear America Singing / Working”

Read aloud to the class “I Hear America Singing” by Walt Whitman, then ask students to take turns reading lines of the poem aloud. Discuss with the class:

- What is the poet trying to communicate?
- Whom does he celebrate?
- Why does he think it’s important to honor them?
- Do you agree or disagree with his attitude?
- What would you say is the poet’s attitude toward male and female gender roles?
- How have attitudes about male and female work roles changed since the 1800s?
- Why do you think the poet chose the title “I Hear America Singing”?

Ask students, either individually or in small groups, to rewrite “I Hear America Singing,” using modern language and their own opinions about contemporary working people. Ask them to follow the format of Walt Whitman’s poem, including:

- an introductory phrase which introduces the theme of the poem
- a list of at least five types of workers and why each should be recognized, one worker per line
- two or three closing phrases which reiterate the main theme

Unit Five

INVESTIGATING THE WORLD OF WORK

Student Activities

WHY DO PEOPLE WORK?

*With a partner, brainstorm as many reasons as you can think of why people work.
What motivates people to get up every day and work at a job?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK?

*Of the reasons listed above, identify which ones motivate you the most.
Share your values with the class.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

◆◆◆◆ **WORDS OF WISDOM** ◆◆◆◆
WORK



Honor lies in honest toil.
Grover Cleveland

A man said, "Don't you think someone who becomes an auto mechanic and is good at it should also be recognized? He's a specialist, too, like the man who goes to be a doctor." Yet he's not thought of that way. What's the difference?
It's a shame that people aren't looked at as each job being special unto itself.
Nancy Rogers, from Studs Terkel's *Working*

It is the working man who is the happy man. It is the idle man who is the miserable man.
Benjamin Franklin

Work banishes those three great evils, boredom, vice and poverty.
Voltaire

Somebody built the pyramids. . . The Empire State Building -- these things don't just happen. There's hard work behind it. I would like to see a building, say, the Empire State... on one side of it a foot-wide strip from top to bottom with the name of every bricklayer, the name of every electrician, with all the names. So when a guy walked by, he could take his son and say, "See, that's me over there on the forty-fifth floor. I put the steel beam in." Picasso can point to a painting. What can I point to? A writer can point to a book. Everybody should have something to point to. It's the not-recognition by other people. To say a woman is *just* a housewife is degrading, right? ...
It's also degrading to say *just* a laborer.
Mike LeFever from Studs Terkel's *Working*

There is no substitute for hard work.
Thomas Edison

Get happiness out of your work or you may never know what happiness is.
Elbert Hubbard



WORK REFLECTIONS

Pick a quote that intrigues you. Write about the quote, reflecting on:

- what you think the speaker means*
- whether you agree or disagree and why or why not*
- how the quote is (or is not) relevant to your life*
- specific examples from your life or the lives of others which highlight its meaning*

A Worker Reads History

by *Berthold Brecht*

<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/a-worker-reads-history/>
http://www.teachpeacenow.org/lessonplan_poetrytotalkabout.pdf



Image from Creative Commons <https://www.123freevectors.com/construction-workers-silhouettes-free-vector/>

*Read the poem "A Worker Reads History" by Berthold Brecht.
Discuss these questions after reading:*

- What is the main idea of the poem "A Worker Reads History?"
- Who does the poet think should be honored in history books?
- Why does he believe this?
- Why does he think these people have been left out of the history books?
- Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

Short-Order Cook

Jim Daniels

<http://poemhunter.blogspot.com/2007/10/short-order-cook.html>

<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/16542>



Read the poem “Short-Order Cook” by Jim Daniels. After reading, discuss the following questions:

1. Why does the speaker say the man who comes in is “not an average Joe”?
2. Does the speaker in the poem know his job well?
3. Does he enjoy his job?
4. Does he take his job seriously?
5. In what ways does the short order cook get satisfaction on the job?
6. What is he feeling when he says “I puff my chest out and bellow”?

Image from Creative Commons https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McDonald%27s_Israel

JOB SATISFACTION: Student Writing

When I was a steak cook at Ole Times Country Buffet on a Friday night I would have ten to fifteen steaks on the grill at the same time with no tickets, all different temperatures, for ten to fifteen different people. I delivered those steaks and maintained my bar. But the most proud moment was when a lady was watching me cook. She said it was unbelievable that I could cook, clean my bar, and deliver that many steaks at the same time. She gave me a \$10.00 tip and never ordered a steak.

-- Will Brown

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

When I worked at Sears, at times I was the only stocking clerk on the shift. I was left to clean and sort the stockroom and also process customers' on-line orders. I would have to find and bring up to the storefront items that were already purchased on-line and bring it up to the waiting customer and help them load it into their car. I was satisfied doing this because there was a whole process to doing this, using a hand-held device.

-- Shane Miller

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

My boss made me a partial partner and taught me how to bid installations for our company. My first bid was for FSU maintenance. I underbid three contractors and got the job. I had to oversee the entire job. We made a decent profit, did a great job, and finished ahead of schedule.

-- Coy Porter

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I restored a '73 Camaro with my grandfather. We replaced the interior, tore apart the engine, and replaced it with high performance parts. Then we sanded it down and slapped a new coat of turquoise paint on it and ran black racing stripes down the middle.

-- John Weatherspoon

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Laying the tile for displaying. Making the mix. Grabbing the tile from the warehouse. Lifting the drywalls. Making the tile cuts when pieces don't fit or when the tile breaks. I enjoyed fixing and taking down the wall. It gave me a sense of pride because this work would be seen around, and yes, I would love to do it again. It's fun to do work where people will notice.

-- Fabris McGriff

I've worked with seniors in nursing homes. My job there was to care and share life's living for seniors. I helped with daily care such as dressing, hygiene and mobility. The difficult part was seeing patients who felt left alone or not cared for because of family abandonment. Through all this I still loved this job for the look on a patient's face because they knew I really cared and was there for them. I'm now gaining education in this profession so that I can continue to help those not able to help themselves. This employment will enable me to bring life and joy back to my elders.

-- Cynthia

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In all honesty, I enjoy working any time. And there hardly ever is an unsatisfying moment. Because I take pride in every job I do. Some jobs I consider a daily workout, such as lawn care. Other jobs, like stacking lumber, I consider an art -- like the way I stack the lumber in different ways. Cooking is a special part of me, too. To watch people eat and smile while they are being filled brought happiness into my life. I do all these jobs to the best of my ability -- not as a show off, but because it is what I enjoy doing.

-- Charles

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In my past, I have talked and helped people based on my knowledge and experience. I sponsored one guy in AA. He didn't want to be there at first, but he eventually got with the program. He started going to school and became a lawyer. Another time I trained a guy in construction on the job as a helper. He is now a superintendent in construction. I am happy to have played a part in their lives.

-- Robert

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

My whole life I wanted to be a cook. On my last job, I was just that -- a cook at IHOP. Because I love to cook, the job was not difficult for me at all. I remember one night I had to work from 12 noon to 12 midnight because someone got sick. That day, I cooked over one hundred meals, but since I had help it wasn't so bad. I was so proud of myself and my best friend Mike who was the other cook. We had fun that day.

-- Ron

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I remember when I was paid to paint an entire apartment by myself in order to be hired on permanently. I did the living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, and two bedrooms in a day and a half. My wife came by to look at it and was amazed at how good it looked, and that it was done in such a short period of time and by only one person. Needless to say, I got the job. The owner of the apartment was very pleased with my work and so was I.

-- Darius Swatts

JOB SATISFACTION: Student Writing, cont.

Describe a time when you did a job that gave you a feeling of satisfaction. Answer these questions:

- *What were you were responsible for?*
- *Did you enjoy it while you were doing it or after it was done?*
- *Why did it give you a sense of pride and satisfaction?*
- *Would you want to do it again?*

What does a job have to involve in order for it be satisfying for you?

What's My Job?

Twenty Questions

How to play:

Each person is given a job title. One student at a time should come to the front of the class. Try to guess his or her job by asking questions that can be answered with a "yes" or a "no." (For some questions, the person may need to answer "sometimes" or "maybe.") After at least ten questions have been asked, a class member who thinks s/he knows the occupation may ask directly, "Are you a _____?"

How to get points:

If you decide to play for points, the class member who guesses correctly wins a point. If there are three incorrect guesses from the class, the person holding the job title wins a point.

Possible questions:

- Do you usually /always do this job alone?
- Do you work mostly with people?
- Do you work mostly with things?
- Do you do this job outdoors?
- Do you do this job indoors?
- Do you need special training to do this job?
- Does this job require college?
- Does this job require a GED?
- Does this job involve helping people?
- Do you make more than minimum wage?
- Do you work with food?
- Do you work with animals?
- Do you work with children?
- Do you work with the elderly?
- Do you have to do a lot of math on the job?
- Can you learn the skills on-the-job?
- _____
- _____
- _____

What's My Job?

Twenty Questions

Secretary	Butcher	Pharmacist	Baker
Carpenter	Bricklayer	Fire fighter	Auto mechanic
Teacher	Counselor	Corrections officer	Landscaper
Plumber	Cook	Farmer	Office manager
Nurse	Certified Nursing Assistant (CAN)	Barber	Cosmetologist
Computer programmer	Website designer	Photographer	Police officer
Customer service representative	Veterinarian	Social worker	Road construction worker
Bus driver	Realtor	Electrician	Architect

Business owner	Lawyer	Tree surgeon	Banker
Bank teller	Retail sales clerk	Actor	Rap singer
Phlebotomist	Aviation mechanic	Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) installer	Bookkeeper
Truck driver	Pilot	Garbage collector	General contractor
Veterinarian's assistant	Plumber	Accountant	School principal
Fast food restaurant manager	Stock clerk	Pediatrician	Maintenance worker
Housekeeper	Reporter	Meteorologist	Professional athlete
Counselor	Personal trainer	Massage therapist	Dog groomer
Used car salesman	Realtor	Parole officer	Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

WHO BUILT THE BLOCK?

In this activity, take a brief imaginary walk down a city block in order to observe the work that was done there and to imagine the workers who might have performed the work.

After agreeing upon a street most people have seen and remember, brainstorm the structures you would see and the workers involved in their creation.

Structures

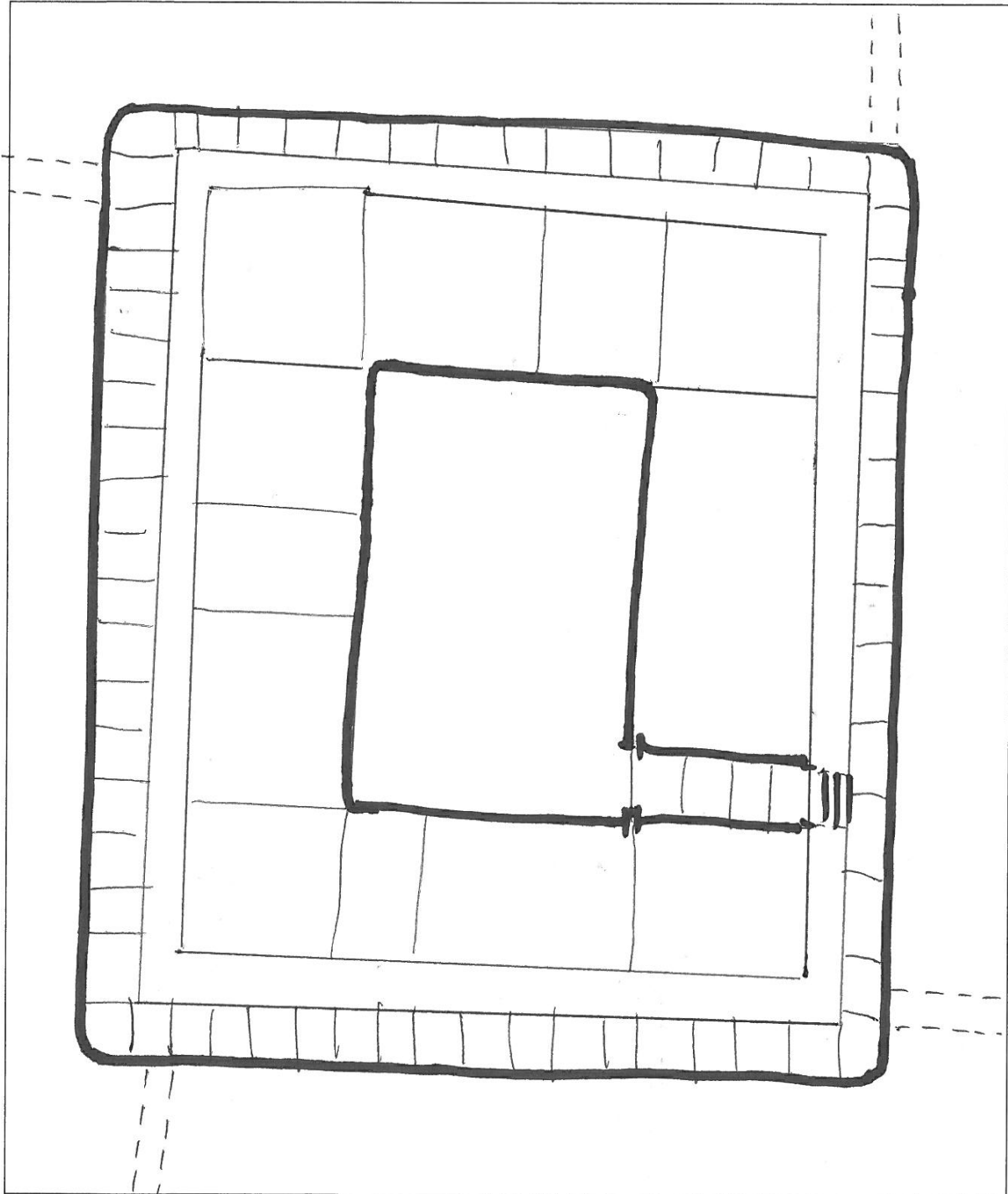
Workers

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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_____	_____
_____	_____



Open For Business

If you could design a city block, what would it look like? What stores, businesses, institutions and community centers would be there? Work in small groups to design a city block in the box below.



Open for Business, cont.

Now imagine your new city block, full of enterprises all open for business and seeking employees. List the stores, businesses, institutions and community centers you included in your sketch. What kinds of jobs would they have to offer? What kinds of skills might be needed? Which of these jobs would interest you?



Store, business, institution or community center	Jobs needed	Skills needed

1. Of the jobs listed above, which ones interest you?
2. What skills do you already have to do these jobs? What skills do you need?
3. What education or training could you get to be qualified to do these jobs?
4. How would these jobs help your community and make it a better place to live?

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I Hear America Singing

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics -- each one singing his, as it should be, blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his, as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his, as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat -- the deckhand singing on the
steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench -- the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song -- the ploughboy's, on his way in the morning, or at noon
intermission, or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother -- or of the young wife at work -- or of the girl
sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her, and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day -- At night, the party of young fellows, robust,
friendly,
Singing, with open mouths, their strong melodious songs.

Walt Whitman
(1819-1892)





“I Hear America Working”

Rewrite “I Hear America Singing” using modern language and your own opinions about contemporary working people. Follow the format of Walt Whitman’s poem, including:

- an introductory phrase which introduces the theme of the poem*
- a list of at least five types of workers and why each should be recognized, one worker per line*
- two or three closing phrases which reiterate the main theme*
