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Our Working History

Guide for Curriculum Unit 80.06.07
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Our high school students find themselves on the margins of the working world. A few have part-time jobs, but most have no direct work experience. For many of these students the adult world of work often seems detached from their needs and interests. As adolescents they are preoccupied with social interaction and their own emotional and sexual development. This, and the bombardment of mass media advertising, which suggests that material consumption is a primary value and an immediate possibility, make the everyday world of low-paying, scheduled jobs seem both boring and unreal. In this topical course in American history, we will cover three aspects of work in America: the organization of work, working people, and the relationship between government and people through work legislation. Placing these points in an historical framework we hope that the students will acquire both a vocabulary and an understanding of the working world around them. We feel that with this understanding they can take more control of their lives. A major focus of each unit will be activities which exemplify the changing world of work. In the unit we have outlined possible activities, films, readings, and trips and have explained how they can be obtained.

(Recommended for 9th through 12th grade below-average students in American History.)

Key Words

Labor History American Industry Social

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