

LESSON 10: THE HISTORY OF UNIONS

Lesson aim:

- ✚ To enhance students' understanding of unions today by reference to their development and past history.

Learning objectives:

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- ✚ briefly explain the origins and development of the union movement;
- ✚ compare and contrast current and past working conditions; and
- ✚ identify significant figures in Irish labour history and understand their contribution.

Lesson outline:

Read through the section on the development of unions and ask the following questions of students to stimulate discussion:

- ✚ Have you ever studied or read anything about Irish labour history before?
- ✚ Do you think it is important to teach labour history? Why?
- ✚ What do you think workers can learn from labour history?

Assignment: Individual project

Ask students to consult the school or local library and identify an individual from labour history whom they would be interested in researching. They should then write a brief report on this individual to include the following:

- ✚ Who they were? Where they were from?
- ✚ What did they do? Why did they get involved?
- ✚ What in your opinion is the most significant thing about this person?
- ✚ How important was their contribution for workers?

Additional resources:

Additional resources should be consulted to assist students in their project and include:

- ✚ Irish Labour History Society www.ilhs.ie
- ✚ The multitenx project in UCC www.multitenx.ucc.ie
- ✚ The National Library of Ireland