

# VIOLETION OF WORKERS' RIGHTS

## LESSON 2: CHILD LABOUR

### Lesson aim:

- ↘ To teach students about child labour.
- ↘ To highlight the impact of child labour on children, education systems, society and the economy.

### Learning objectives:

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

- ↘ define and understand the concept of child labour;
- ↘ explain why child labour needs to be eradicated; and
- ↘ conduct research on this topic and present findings to the class.

### Lesson outline:

#### In-class activity: Introduction

By way of introduction, ask students to answer the following (responses should be recorded on the blackboard for all students to see):

- ↘ How many of you have home chores?
- ↘ How often do you do them?
- ↘ Do you have to do them?
- ↘ What happens if you don't do them?
- ↘ Do you get anything in return for this work?
- ↘ How many of you have jobs outside your home?
- ↘ How long have you had this job?
- ↘ At what age were you when you took this job?
- ↘ Do you have to work? Why? What would happen if you stopped working?
- ↘ Do you work during school term or only on holidays?
- ↘ Do you think working affects your school work?
- ↘ How old do you have to be to work in Ireland?

#### In-class activity: Opening discussion

Continue the lesson by reading through the definition of child labour provided in the resource. Ask students what they understand child labour to be? What are the problems of child labour? What impact do you think it has on countries that allow its children to work? What do you think rich countries should do, if anything? Do you know anyone who falls into this definition?

(NOTE: This should be discussed with particular reference to the impact on the child's health, welfare and education.)

#### Individual project: ILO conventions

Ask students to research which ILO conventions deal with this problem? What do the conventions state? Which countries have ratified those conventions? Which have not? What conventions are broken if child labour occurs?

Resources: [www.ilo.org/conventions](http://www.ilo.org/conventions)

#### Individual exercise: Report

Ask students to write a report on the key issues surrounding child labour that they have learned. The report should also contain a summary, their own conclusions drawn from what they have found and recommendations they would make to eliminate child labour.

#### Student activity: Child labour in the past

Divide students into small working groups and ask each group to work on at least one of the following questions regarding child labour.

- ↘ During the Industrial Revolution, why do you think the families of children allowed them to work?
- ↘ What jobs did children do during the Industrial Revolution?
- ↘ Why do you think employers encouraged child labour?

## LESSON 2: CHILD LABOUR (CONTINUED)

- Why did trade unions oppose the use of child labour during this time?
- What are the positives and negatives of child labour on a) children b) education system c) society at large?

### Individual student assignment: Comparing the past with the present

Now investigate child labour in the 21st century.

- At what ages are children expected to work around the world? (Take one country from each continent for this question.)
- Where does child labour exist?
- What industries continue to employ children?
- What is the reason they give for employing children?
- What is the effect of child labour on a) the child b) education system c) society d) country's economy?
- What has changed from the past to the present?

### Class activity: Group discussion & research

Put students into small groups and ask them to list the reasons children may be forced to work.

Then ask one individual from each group to present their reasons to the class. (All unique contributions should be noted on the blackboard.)

Ask students to form different groups to discuss:

- Do any of the reasons listed justify child labour?
- Should children be forced to work to feed their families?
- Under what circumstances should children be allowed to work to contribute to family income?
- If children were allowed to work, what would you expect their life to be like? What type of future do you think they would have?
- What are the differences between your life and theirs?

- What jobs should children never be permitted to do under any circumstances?

(NOTE: These questions are designed to stimulate and teach students about child labour, solutions to which are complex. Students should be encouraged to become more informed on all the issues related to this topic.)

### Student activity: Finding solutions

In groups or individually, ask students to consider the issues surrounding child labour and discuss.

- a) Identify the role and responsibilities of government, business, trade unions, NGOs and other institutions in eradicating child labour.
- b) List ways to raise awareness of child labour.
- c) Outline recommendations on ways to eradicate child labour.

At the end of the discussion ask students to list the ways in which they could get involved in the fight against child labour. Record all suggestions on the board and then ask the class to decide which action they would like to take.

This could form the basis of a class campaigning project.

### Additional resources on Child labour

[www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

[www.cpag.co.uk](http://www.cpag.co.uk) (Child Poverty Action Group)

[www.globalchange.umich.edu/globalchange2/current/lectures/dev\\_pov/dev\\_pov.html](http://www.globalchange.umich.edu/globalchange2/current/lectures/dev_pov/dev_pov.html)

[www.infoshop.org](http://www.infoshop.org)

[www.globalisationguide.org](http://www.globalisationguide.org)

[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

[www.marxist.com](http://www.marxist.com)