



LABOR DAY

Lesson Length: 1 hour 15 minutes

Vocabulary & Expressions: Vocabulary related to working and Labor Day, numbers

Language/Culture Point: The use of 'per' as in '40 hours per week'

Objective: Students will be able to tell why Labor Day is celebrated in the US, and will be able to talk about how many hours per week they work.

Materials: Post-It notes, Interview Grid (found at the end of this lesson)

STEP 1: ACTIVATE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
10 minutes	- Post-It Notes	- Graphic Organizers

TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Tell students you are a teacher. Then ask them 'What is your job?' As students answer, write the names of their jobs on the board. If students do not have a job, encourage them to think of roles such as 'care giver' or 'mother' or 'house cleaner' as jobs.
2. Give each student two Post-It Notes. Ask them to write their name on each, and their job in the US on one, and the job they had in their home country on the other.
3. Have students come to the board and place their Post-It with their job in the US on one side of the board and their job in their home country on the other.
4. Have students stay at the board and discuss what's on the board. Ask them questions such as "Who was a teacher in their home country?", "What is Maria's job?" "How many people in this class work in hotels in the US?"
5. Lead a discussion by asking students how working in their native country is different from working in the US.

STEP 2: MINI-PRESENTATION WITH PROMPT

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
10 minutes		- Chalk Talk



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TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Use Chalk Talk, images, and/or realia to present information to students about the history of Labor Day and why we celebrate it in the US. Below is a sample presentation to use as a guide:

In the 1800s employees in factories worked many hours for little money.

The work was often dangerous.

Even children worked.

If employees complained, they were fired.

Employees joined together to make groups called unions.

They wanted changes.

Alone, one employee is weak.

Together, many employees are strong.

They started Labor Day in 1882.

They had parades to tell people about the problems.

Now there are laws to protect workers.

We still celebrate Labor Day as a day of rest to honor workers.

2. Repeat the story one or more times, highlighting key vocabulary and main points.

STEP 3: DISCUSSION AND COMPREHENSION CHECK

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
15 minutes	- Blank sheets of paper	- Think-Pair-Share

TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Pass out a blank sheet of paper to each student. Have them think for a moment and then write the main points from your presentation on their sheet of paper. If you have a lower-level group of students, you may choose to have them draw a picture based on your presentation.
2. Have students pair up or form small groups and refine their responses.
3. Ask each group to share with the full class and compare answers.

STEP 4: HIGHLIGHT LESSON FOCUS AND MODEL TASK

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
5 minutes		- Grids and Surveys



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TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Draw on the board an enlarged version of the interview grid at the end of this lesson with one line for each student and an additional line for yourself. Tell students about yourself, for example, “My name is Gina. I am a teacher. I am from Texas. I work full-time. I work 40 hours each week. I work 8 hours on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. I don’t work on the weekend. I don’t work Saturday or Sunday.”
2. As you tell your own story, complete one row of the interview grid on the board. You may choose to tell students about a past job rather than your job in your home country.

STEP 5: GUIDED PRACTICE

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
5 minutes		- Grids and Surveys

TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Ask a strong student, “How about you?” Go through the grid asking the student questions and filling in the grid with their answers. If you have a beginning class, you may want to take extra time to review the questions students will be asking their classmates. You may also want to review some phrases students will find useful when interviewing a classmate, such as “Can you repeat that?” or “How do you spell that?”
2. Ask 2 more strong students to come to the board, interview each other, and fill in 2 more lines on the grid.

STEP 6: PAIR OR SMALL GROUP WORK

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
20 minutes	- Interview Grid for each student	- Grids and Surveys

TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Pass out a copy of the interview grid to each student and ask them to talk to each other and record their classmates’ responses.

Alternate: If you have a more advanced class, you may want to create your own grid with additional questions such as “Is there a minimum wage in your country?”, “Can children work in your country?” etc.

2. Give students time to talk to three or four partners. Then, bring the class back together.



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3. Ask students to work together to complete the grid on the board using the information they recorded on their own interview grids. Give them the caveat that no student can fill in their own information.
4. After students have completed the grid, talk about it as a class. Look at the difference between hours worked per week in the US versus home country, compare how many countries have laws to protect workers, etc.
5. Use the grid on the board as a jumping off point for a class discussion. As a class (or in groups using Think-Pair-Share) compare work-related laws in different countries, for example those limiting how long employees can work, if breaks are required, etc. Then discuss whether students think these laws are important, and why or why not.
5. Survey the class about how many working hours a week they think is ideal and how many is too many.

STEP 7: HIGHLIGHT HOW ENGLISH WORKS

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
5 minutes		

TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Return students attention to the grid on the board. Tell students you work 40 hours each week, but there is another way you can say that. Tell them you can also say you work 40 hours per week. 'Per' and 'each' mean the same thing in these phrases. Show them you can write it '40 hours per week,' or '40 hours / week.'
2. Go around the room asking students how many hours a week they work practicing the phrase 'per week.'
3. Ask students if they can think of other situations where they have seen or heard the use of 'per' and have them share their answers. Some good examples relate to cars, for example '55 miles per hour' or '25 miles / gallon.'
4. After brainstorming other uses of 'per,' ask students to be on the lookout between now and the next class for other examples.



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STEP 8: QUICK CHECK AND REVIEW

Time Frame	Materials	Teaching Strategies
5 minutes		- Exit Check

TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Brainstorm with students what they remember from your earlier Labor Day presentation. Then regive the presentation. You may want to leave out parts and have students fill in some of the information. For example, “Labor Day started in _____?”
2. As each student leaves, ask them one fact they remember about Labor Day.

LABOR DAY SURVEY

Instructions: Interview your classmates and write down their answers

First Name	Last Name	Home Country	Job in US	Job in home country	Hours worked each week in US	Hours worked each week in home country