

Workplace Readiness Week

Day Four

Created by the Young Workers Education
Project with the UCLA Labor Center



Welcome students to Day Four and ask them to take out their AB 800 Know Your Rights document. They will be using it as a reference today. They also need to take out their Day One t-chart.

When our rights as people living in the United States, or our human rights, are ignored or violated, what do we do?

Ask students to take out their t-charts again and then post this question. Let them talk with a partner next to them for 1 minute before showing them the next slide.



Ask students- what is going on in these images?

Allow students to speak with their partners for 1 minute and then bring the class together for a 4 minute conversation.

Questions to prompt student thinking and conversation:

Which rights are being addressed in this images? Which are human rights? The rights we have as people in the U.S.? What strategies are people using to protect and enforce their rights?

Make sure to point out to students that the Disability Rights activists in the lower left hand corner are sitting in front of the nation's Capitol in 1980 to support the American with Disabilities Act. Above that image is a black and white photograph of the 1963 March on Washington. The color photograph in the upper right hand corner is a protest run in 2016 on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation as people sought to preserve their clean water. The newspaper headline in the lower right corner is about the 19th Amendment's ratification.

What happens when your rights as a worker are violated?



Remind students that at the start of today's class, you all discussed the different strategies people use to protect and enforce their rights as people in the U.S.. Ask students the question on this slide. Give them some time to discuss with their partners and then hold a 2-3 minute class discussion to generate some ideas....

Refuse to do anything that is dangerous and might harm you or others.

Reach out to a trusted adult for support.

Contact the appropriate government agency to make a report.

These are the immediate steps to take when students experience their rights being violated at work. Let them know that you are a trusted adult and can be supportive. Remind them to keep the AB 800 document handy- either in their notebook or as a picture on their phone.

We have to know our rights in order to protect and enforce our rights.

Take out your Know Your Rights document that was handed out on Day Two!

Give students a little time to find their documents and if needed, replace them with additional copies.

Let's do a quick review before we play a game!

You and your partner are a team. Use the document to help you figure out if the employer's action is...

LEGAL OR NOT?

The more familiar you are with the document, the easier it will be to find the info to answer the questions. Take two minutes to review the document again.

Give students two minutes to familiarize themselves with the document again and get settled with a partner.

Hand out two index cards or ask students to tear a piece of paper in half. They should write LEGAL on one card/piece of paper and ILLEGAL on the other. Another option is to have students use a pencil to signal LEGAL and a pen to signal ILLEGAL.

LEGAL OR NOT?



Group with the most correct answers wins eternal fame and a high five!

Legal or Not?

Explain to students that you are going to read some scenarios and their goal is to figure out if the employer is breaking a law. When they have figured it out, they should put their LEGAL or ILLEGAL cards in the air.

Depending on your students, you could give them 20 seconds to one minute to work through each scenario with their partners to make a choice.

Once students have made their choices, read the answers to the class. You can keep track of which groups get correct answers on a whiteboard or piece of paper. They will want their eternal glory and high five.

You just received your first paycheck from Maria's Italian Restaurant. When reviewing it, you notice that there is a charge for the two work uniforms you were given after being hired.



This is **ILLEGAL!** This is wage theft. Your employer cannot charge you for required uniforms, broken equipment, or cash register shortages because of mistakes or accidents.



A friend went for a job interview at the best hamburger spot in the city. He was really excited about starting a career with the company. He came back to school saying that the interview went really well but the manager said they couldn't hire him unless he got a haircut.

This is LEGAL. Unless the haircut is part of a religious tradition, an employer can tell you how to wear your hair at work.

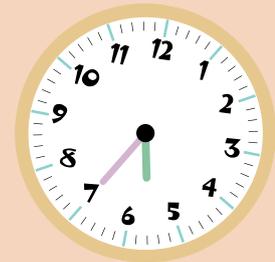
You were hired at minimum wage when you started working two years ago. Your boss told you not to talk about your wages with your co-workers. During your last lunch break, a few of the newer folks said they were being paid \$2 more than you.



This is **LEGAL!** Your employer must pay you at least the minimum wage set by your city and the state of California. You do have the legal right to discuss your wages and working conditions with fellow employees.

If you are a union member, your union contract should have wage increases negotiated and approved by employees.

The holidays are a super busy time for the store you work at in the mall. You and your co-workers are helping customers, unpacking boxes, restocking shelves, and cleaning up. Your schedule during Finals Week has your shifts on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, going from 4 pm until 11 pm.



This is ILLEGAL! If you are 14 or 15, you can only work 3 hours a day on a school night. If you are 16 or 17, you can only work 4 hours a day on a school night.

LEGAL OR NOT?



You and four friends get jobs moving boxes at a warehouse. You bring in a speaker to play music during your shift. One of the supervisors hears the playlist and tells you to turn it off. They say the only music that can be played from now on are all the remixes of “Baby Shark”.

This is LEGAL! You could try talking with your friends and other workers about having a conversation with your employer about the issue.

You are 17 years old and work in a grocery store bagging customers' purchases. One afternoon, your manager runs over and says you need to work at the deli counter because the usual person is sick. They take 5 minutes to quickly show you how to operate the meat slicer.

LEGAL OR NOT?



This is **ILLEGAL!** People under the age of 18 may not use equipment like a meat slicer. If you are over the age of 18, you must have the right amount of training to handle potentially dangerous equipment. Five minutes is not enough time to appropriately learn to safely handle this machine.

**LEGAL OR NOT?
THE TIE BREAKER QUESTION/
BONUS ROUND!**

Which California government agency can best help you with workplace safety issues???



You could have students do this as a lighting round for a tie breaker. Whichever group has the correct answer first, wins all the points and maybe the entire game.

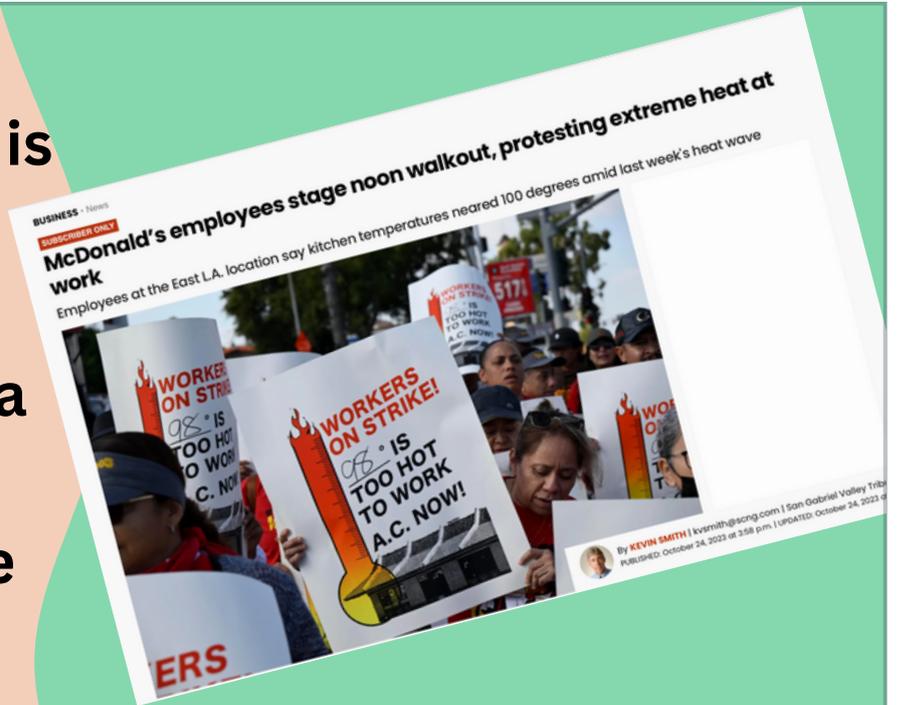
Whichever group had the most correct answers during the game should get high fives in class and maybe their names written on the class whiteboard as "The Champions". We did promise them eternal fame.

**Workers should use
the resources available
and can take additional actions to
protect and enforce their rights...**

**McDonald's employees in Los
Angeles took action outside
their work in October 2023**

Before students view this 45 second clip, ask them- What are McDonald's employees doing in this video? Why are they engaged in this action?

This demonstration is Protected Concerted Activity- when a group of employees take action about a workplace issue.



Let students know that Protected Concerted Activity is a protected right for all workers and that this type of protest is just one example of actions workers can take together at their jobs.

Protected Concerted Activity can also be...

a petition signed by employees

wearing buttons or shirts about a problem at work

workers coming together to demand a conversation with their employer

off duty workers handing out fliers about working conditions to customers

a group of workers reporting to a government agency about working conditions

Explain that workers have the right to work together to address problems at their job. Ask students whether they have ever seen or heard of employees taking these actions.

Employees can also organize a union at their workplace.



A union is a group of workers who come together in order to negotiate with their employer about wages and working conditions.

Ask a student in the room to read this slide to the class.

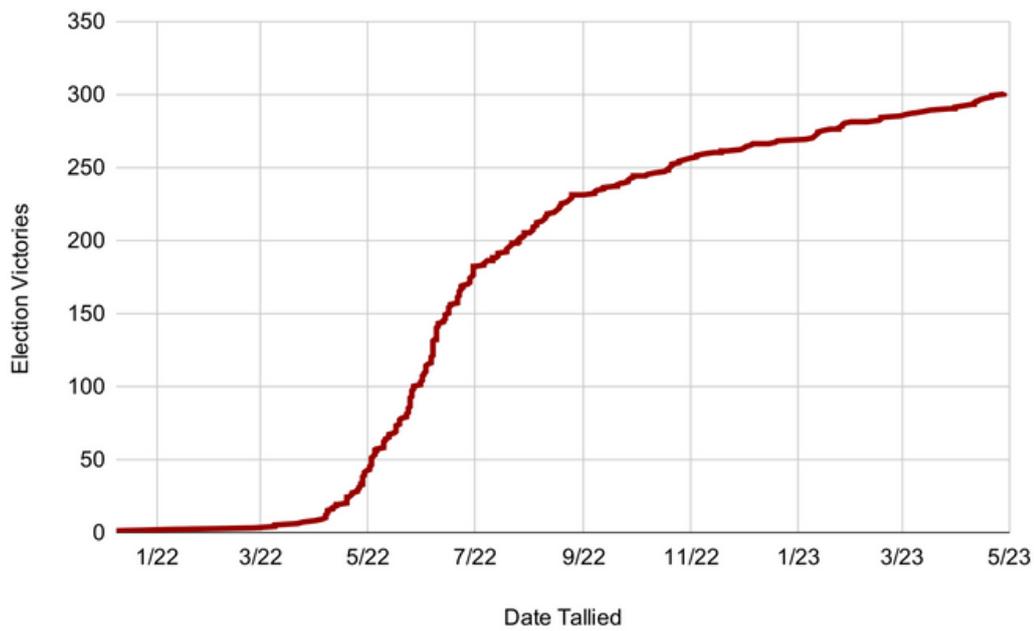
Starbucks workers across California and the U.S. have been organizing unions over the last few years.



<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2022/05/12/let-floodgates-open-starbucks-union-scores-first-wins-california>

<https://inthesetimes.com/article/starbucks-organizing-union-labor-coffee-historic-campaign>

Cumulative Union Wins at Starbucks Since December 2021



What does this chart help us understand about Starbucks workers?

<https://www.peoplespolicyproject.org/2023/05/11/the-starbucks-union-has-now-won-300-elections/>



Union members bargain a contract with employers to address workplace issues.

Once that contract is approved by union members, the employer must follow the contract. It is a legally binding document.

Read this slide to students first. Explain that as a union, workers negotiate with their bosses over wages and working conditions.

Ask students- What do Starbucks workers want in their contract?

Over the last few years, teachers' unions across California negotiated contracts for.....



- better wages
- smaller class sizes
- more resources for students and communities



Most contract bargaining is completed without workers needing to go on strike. During the last five years, teachers have gone on strike because negotiations broke down or because their employers engaged in Unfair Labor Practices.

As we end Day Four, put your Know Your Rights document in a safe spot. Then, grab a Post It or index card for you and your partner. Write down both your names on the paper and answer together the following question:

What was the most valuable piece of information you learned today?

Give students one minute to put away their paper, grab a Post It or card, and write a little something with their partner. These can be collected on the way out of class.