

A Job for Life?

Aim: to examine the effects of work on young people's development.

Time: 1 hour

Age: 11 years and up.

Materials: Large room, big enough for two separate groups, scenario cards for each group, props* (optional)



What to do

You will need two leaders for this activity. Form two groups. Give one group Kevin's story and the other group Ana's Story. Explain that they have fifteen minutes to discuss the scenario in their groups and choosing volunteers to act out the scene. The rest of the group acts as the audience for the drama. The dramas should be no more than 3 minutes duration. Begin by setting the scene. In the scene, a person wishes to do something, which is blocked by a second person (usually a family member or someone in authority). When the drama is completed, ask the audience if Kevin or Ana could have done anything differently. What about the other character? Rerun the scene, this time inviting the audience to stop the action at any point if they can see an alternative path of action. Encourage as many interventions as possible. This should take 25 minutes.

Note to Leader

You will play a central part in the drama by observing, guiding, questioning and continuously organising the groups and the unfolding of the scenes. If there is only one Leader, you could choose just one of the scenarios.

In the large group, discuss the following:

- What happened in the drama?
- What were the similarities between the two scenes? What was different?
- How was progress achieved in both cases?
- Where do you think the first scene might take place?
- Where might the second scene be taking place?

Kevin's Story

Kevin has a part-time job after school and at weekends. He is just about to leave for work when his mother reminds him that he has homework to be handed in the next day at school. Kevin knows that his results have been poor lately and this assignment is very important, but they are really short-staffed at work. If Kevin doesn't show up, he will be let go. Then he'll never be able to afford the new playstation game.

Ana's Story

Ana goes to school three days a week. The rest of the time s/he works to help the family put enough food on the table. She really enjoys school. However, her father has just got very sick and has been let go from his job. Her Mother says to Ana that she will have to give up school and work full-time to help make ends meet.

Source: Save the Children 2000.

* Props could include empty boxes, cloth/clothes, string, pieces of wood, chairs and old newspapers or magazines.



Face the Facts Two

Child Labour Around the World

- The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that 250 million children aged between 5 and 14 are working worldwide. Of these, 120 million are working full-time.
- About 80% of children's work is unpaid.
- About 61% of working children live in Asia, 31% in Africa and 7% in Latin America. The rest are in Europe and North America
- In 1995, more than 10,000 children were working in the garment industry in Bangladesh. More than 8,000 of these children are today being paid 300 taka (£18) a month to go back to school by the government.
- Most children work because of poverty. On average, working children contribute about 20-25% of family income.
- Africa has the highest concentration of working children – one in three African children work full or part-time.
- Less than 5% of children work in the production of goods for export. Most children work in family-based agriculture, service industries (street trading and food), small-scale manufacturing and the sex trade. The ILO estimates that millions of these children are in bonded labour and slavery.
- In Ireland, there is no evidence of economically active children between 10 and 14 years, though many children, particularly boys, aged between 11 and 18 are found to work in agriculture and in home deliveries. The ILO estimates that there are 94,000 economically active teenagers between 15 and 19 in Ireland.

Source: One World Centre for Northern Ireland (2001), Exploring Our World. DEFY (1998), The Rights Stuff.

Did You Know?

Child slavery is where children are forced by violence or the threat of violence to work for no pay. In the case of children in bonded labour, their labour is demanded as a means of repayment for a loan, often from the child's parents. The child is then tricked or trapped into working for very little or no pay, often for seven days a week.

