



The Benefits of Hard Work*

Key Ideas: All honest work should be respected/We benefit each day from the work of others.

Character Traits: Respect/Gratitude/Trustworthiness

Level: Elementary

Good morning, name of school. This is name of narrator with a few words of wisdom.

Today, notice the people around you who are working to improve our world. Whether it's a teacher or a parent or a bus driver, we benefit from their work.

Someone wise once said that:

All work is honorable.**

Every day, people around our nation are working hard, and as a result, making our lives easier. Just think about the simple task of turning on your television. All kinds of workers made that possible, from factory workers to salespeople to the electrician who wired your home.

The everyday jobs of your parents, caregivers, and teachers may not seem as exciting as the work of people on television and in movies, but just imagine what our daily lives would be like without the work they do.

Be sure to tell someone you know how much you appreciate the hard work he or she does every day.

With something to think about, this is _____. Make it a great day . . . or not. The choice is yours.

*Note: This message and lesson plan work well for Labor Day.

**Author unknown



The Benefits of Hard Work

Key Ideas: All honest work should be respected./We benefit each day from the work of others.

Character Traits: Respect/Gratitude/Trustworthiness

Concept: Students will examine the benefits and rewards of hard work.

Materials: Suggested activities for art may require materials. Books may be checked out or borrowed from the library or the school's resource center.

Directions: Read or ask a student to read aloud the Project Wisdom message that accompanies this lesson plan. Ask for volunteers to share responses to the following questions.

Discussion Generators

1. What jobs do your parents or caregivers have? Why is their work important?
2. What kinds of jobs had to be done so you could come to school today? So you would have food to eat? So you would have clothes to wear?
3. What work do you want to do as an adult? Why is this work important?
4. What kind of education and/or training does this job require?
5. What personal qualities (character traits) do you think would help a person in this job?

Closing Comments – Every day each of us benefits from the hard work of other people. We don't always stop to think about it. Farmers grow the food we eat. Factory workers sew our clothes. Truck drivers make sure the groceries get to the grocery stores. Workers help provide us with gasoline for our cars, and doctors help keep us well. It's good to stop from time to time and think about the workers who do a good job each day and to remember that because they do, we enjoy a better life.



The Benefits of Hard Work

Follow-up Activities

K-1

- Discuss the jobs that children have in the classroom. Why are these jobs important? What are some of the jobs that we have at school? Why are these jobs important? Discuss the different jobs that are in the community and discuss the importance of each job. List these jobs on chart paper and have each student pick one of these jobs and write a letter thanking the person for his or her hard work and noting how that job makes a difference in the community or school.
- Read *When I Grow Up I Want to Be*, by Blaise Douglas. Have students create drawings of themselves doing the job they want to do when they grow up. Write the following open-ended sentence under each illustration: "I want to be a _____ because _____. I will need to be _____ (character trait)." Collect the illustrations, brainstorm a title, design a cover, bind, and share.
- Read *Pig Pig Gets a Job*, by David McPhail, and have students talk about how people choose their careers and what sorts of characteristics a person might need for a certain job. Have students list three things that they are good at and then list a job for each strength that would be a good match for them.
- Read *What Do People Do All Day?*, by Richard Scarry. *Curious George Takes a Job*, by H.A. Rey, and *Fox on the Job*, by James Marshall, are also good books for young children to see the many job opportunities there are.

Grades 2-3

- Linda Hayward has a series of books. *Jobs People Do: A Day in the Life of a Builder* is one example. Also, have available to the children as many Gail Gibbons books as possible that deal with a variety of different jobs. Have the students (working in pairs is an option) read about one of the careers that they find of particular interest. Have the readers write down any questions that are not answered by the book. Discuss which questions are "necessary," "researchable," or "not researchable" and "not necessary." Using other resources — books, Internet, people at home or in the community — find the answers. Have the students report back to the class on the careers and the character traits necessary to do those particular jobs well.
- Have the students research the different "tools of the trade" for different careers. Ask students to bring in different tools that their parents or caregivers use in their jobs. Display the tools in the "Tools of the Trade Museum." Have students write "museum labels" for the tools and share orally why they are important to their parents' or caregivers' jobs.



Grades 4-5

- Show examples of job listings. Discuss what they are for, who writes them and why, and who reads them and why. Ask students to write a want ad and include the characteristics that they would look for in an employee.
- Show examples of résumés. Using well-known characters from literature, have students create résumés highlighting the characters' skills and work ethic. Use evidence and references from the stories in which the characters appear. Ask the students to include whatever personal traits the stories' characters possess that would make them good employees. Be sure to include what kind of jobs the characters are seeking.
- Giving the students a template, have the children create their own résumés. Be sure the students highlight their own skills and work ethic. They should include whatever characteristics they have that would make them good employees and good at their jobs. Be sure to include what kinds of jobs are being sought. Have students interview each other using the résumés that they have written. They can take turns being the employer.

Reading List

K-2

- *A Chair for my Mother*, V. B. Williams
- *Curious George Takes a Job*, H.A. Rey
- *Fox on the Job*, J. Marshall
- *Pig Pig Gets a Job*, D. McPhail
- *What Do People Do All Day?*, R. Scarry
- *When I Grow Up I Want to Be...*, B. Douglas

2-4

- *A Day's Work*, E. Bunting
- *Jobs People Do: A Day in the Life of a Builder*, L. Hayward (This is a series of books.)
- *Uncle Jed's Barbershop*, M. K. Mitchell

3-5

- *The Red Pencil*, A. D. Pinkney