



**EIGHT HOUR DAY**

Celebrate 150 years  
of work, rest & play

# Winning the Eight Hour Day

*A unit of work designed within the framework of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards*

## VELS Level 4

- Interpersonal Development
- Civics and Citizenship
- The Arts
- English
- Humanities (History)
- Humanities (Economics)
- Communication
- Thinking

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## Introduction

*This unit of work has been designed using the Victorian Essential Learning Standards for Level 4.*

In *Winning the Eight Hour Day* students use an investigation of an important historical event, the campaign for the eight hour day, as a starting point for considering critical questions in the lives of their families, communities and country. They employ a variety of means to gather and reflect on information and points of view. They draw conclusions based on evidence and seek to present their conclusions persuasively.

Students work in teams to plan and execute their research, to select their mode of presentation and to develop it.

During the research phase they use strategies such as brainstorming, planning, questioning, recording, note-taking, selecting, interpreting and evaluating to generate the information upon which they will base their presentations. They develop an understanding of the importance of evidence in developing a persuasive argument.

In the development phase, students consider the influence of audience, mode and context on the shape and form of their final presentation, and learn to critique and edit their own work.

This unit provides opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement against the standards in Interpersonal Development, Civics and Citizenship, The Arts, English, Humanities (History and Economics), Communication and Thinking.

## Learning focus

This unit address learning focus statements from all three strands at Level 4.

### Physical, personal and social learning

#### *Interpersonal development*

- Connecting with a variety of groups.
- Exploring similarities and differences in the values and beliefs of a range of individuals and groups.
- Working effectively as part of a team.

#### *Civics and Citizenship*

- Events leading up to the establishment of the Australian nation at Federation.
- Examine features of Australian democracy.
- Understanding of purpose of rules and laws and ... how laws are made and changed.
- Research an issue or issues important to them... consider actual and possible actions by citizens and nations in response to the issue(s).

### Discipline-based learning

#### *English*

- Read, interpret and respond to a wide variety of texts.
- Analyse texts and support interpretations with evidence drawn from texts.
- Describe how texts are constructed for different purposes.
- Produce a variety of texts for different purposes.
- Plan, rehearse and make presentations for different purposes.

### *Humanities (History)*

- Change and continuity over time through the history of the establishment and growth of Australia.
- Consider important events and people in Australia's history who have brought change.
- Use a range of resources to study the past... frame research questions and plan their own inquiries... begin to question sources and make judgments.

### *Humanities (Economics)*

- The nature and meaning of work and its relationship to other activities in people's lives, including leisure.
- Practice contesting ideas, debating and using evidence to form and express opinions on economic issues that interest them and/or have an impact on themselves and their society.

### *The Arts*

- Design, improvise, interpret, make and present works that communicate their feelings and their understanding of themselves and other people.
- Experiment with imaginative and innovative ways of generating ideas and manipulating arts elements and principles to explore the potential of ideas.

## **Interdisciplinary learning**

### *Thinking*

- Demonstrate a growing awareness of the complexity of the world about them.
- Carry out investigations (which) include time for sustained discussion, deliberation and inquiry.
- Develop strategies to find suitable information and learn to distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Develop an understanding of how our views are socially constructed.
- Make links between ideas and reflect on how their ideas and beliefs change over time.

### *Communication*

- Develop skills in asking clarifying questions and seeking validation of their interpretation from their peers.
- Compare and contrast differing interpretations and explore why they differ.
- Develop their skills in organising ideas and information logically and clearly to suit their purpose and the needs of their audience.
- Select appropriate formats for sharing knowledge and influencing others.

## Victorian Essential Learning Standards

*Winning the Eight Hour Day* can be used to assess students' achievement against a range of Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

The table below shows how some Level 4 standards might be applied to this unit.

Strand	Domain	Dimension	Key elements of standards
Physical, personal and social learning	<i>Interpersonal development</i>	Building social relationships	Students: ...demonstrate, through their interactions, respect for a diverse range of people and groups.
		Working in teams	...work effectively in different teams and take on a variety of roles. ...accept responsibility for their roles and tasks.
	<i>Civics and citizenship</i>	Civic knowledge and understanding	...describe key democratic principles and values. ...demonstrate understanding of the process of making and changing laws.
		Community engagement	...research issues important to them, using different kinds of data and sources to identify evidence supporting a point of view. ...demonstrate understanding that there are different viewpoints on an issue.
Discipline-based learning	<i>The Arts</i>	Creating and making	...communicate ideas incorporating influences from their own and other cultures and times. ...prepare arts works for presentation to a variety of audiences.
	<i>English</i>	Reading	...analyse texts and support interpretations with evidence drawn from the text.
		Writing	...produce, in print and electronic forms, a variety of texts for different purposes using structures and features of language appropriate to the purpose, audience and context of the writing.
		Speaking and listening	...plan, rehearse and make presentations for different purposes. ...sustain a point of view and provide succinct accounts of personal experience or events.

continued... Discipline-based learning	<i>Humanities (History)</i>	Historical knowledge and understanding	...learn about change and its impact on people's lives and the significance of continuity – how aspects of past societies have been preserved.  ...learn about cause and effect, the relationship between people's actions.
		Historical reasoning and interpretation	... learn to frame questions in the light of their own knowledge and experiences and to develop inquiry skills (including)gathering and communicating evidence from a variety of sources, including artefacts, documents and graphics, and interpreting evidence.  ...learn the language of history, and communicate their understanding of history using the conventions of a range of forms of representation such as timelines, media reports, multimedia presentations, oral presentations, posters, photographic and written essays.
	<i>Humanities (Economics)</i>	Economics knowledge and understanding	...explain the role of work in society and distinguish between paid and unpaid work.
Interdisciplinary learning	<i>Communication</i>	Listening, viewing and responding	...ask clarifying questions, develop interpretations and provide reasons for them.
		Presenting	...use a range of presentation formats to summarise ideas and organise information logically and clearly to meet the needs of audience and purpose.  ...using the criteria provided, they evaluate the effectiveness of their own and others presentations.
	<i>Thinking</i>	Reasoning, processing and inquiry	...collect relevant information from a range of sources and check it for accuracy.  ...use the information they collect to develop concepts, solve problems or inform decision-making.  ...articulate reasoned arguments with supporting evidence.

For further advice on how some Level 4 standards might be applied to this unit of work, see *Assessment* (p.12).

## Teaching and learning activities

This unit is framed around an investigation of the successful campaign for the eight hour day in Victoria in 1856, an event which established a benchmark for the rights of working people around the world. It uses internet based research and oral histories to enable students to explore and discuss a range of issues related to the eight hour day such as:

- how technological change affects people's lives;
- justice and human rights in relation to working conditions; and
- how people organise to protect their rights in a democratic society.

The unit is designed to allow teachers and students to explore the issues raised in an extended fashion, or to spend a shorter period focusing on selected activities.

Throughout the unit, teachers support students to develop skills in reflective and critical thinking, internet research, using evidence to support opinions, and communicating ideas and opinions in a variety of modes.

Before commencing the associated research tasks, teachers assist students to familiarise themselves with the history of the eight hour day, its origins and outcomes.

### Research tasks, presentations and assessment

Throughout the unit students are engaged in a variety of research tasks, including oral history activities, with the option of presenting their findings both formally and informally. Many of these tasks provide opportunities for both formative assessment and student self-assessment.

The presentation task outlined in Activity 4 allows students to present their ideas about aspects of the unit in a variety of ways, either as individuals or as members of a group.

It could be used as either a formative or a summative assessment item.

## Activity 1: Thinking about connections between the past and the present

### Connecting the campaign for the eight hour day with students' experiences

Students discuss working hours in their own families, and the relationship between paid and unpaid work and leisure. How do long working hours affect family life? What are reasonable hours of work?

They consider the sorts of things people could and could not do outside work if working hours were longer (family responsibilities, sports and leisure activities, social contacts with friends and family, further education, community service etc). Teacher records key points.

Discuss the origins of *Moomba*. The teacher provides background information (see *Teacher Notes* p.3).

### Understanding the purpose of political activity

The teacher shows an image of the eight hour day banner and students discuss the context in which such a banner would be used, and what the slogan suggests about working hours at the time.



*8 Hours Day banner, Melbourne, 1856.*

Image believed to be in the Public Domain;  
available from *Wikipedia* <http://en.wikipedia.org/>

#### *Exploring (a)*

- What led to the eight hour day campaign?

Students complete *Student Resource 1: Working conditions in Victoria* internet research (see p.7).

#### *Exploring (b)*

- What happened in the eight hour day campaign?

Students complete *Student Resource 2: The eight hour day campaign* activity about what happened in the campaign (see p.4).

#### *Discussion questions:*

- Were working conditions unfair?
- Were workers right to protest in the way they did?
- Were working conditions similar elsewhere?

### Predicting and verifying

#### *Victoria in the 1850s - a new British colony*

Students view and discuss *Timeline of Victoria to 1850s*.

#### *Discussion questions:*

- Where did the early migrants come from?
- What might have caused them to migrate to Victoria?
- What ideas and experiences might migrants have brought with them?

### *The Industrial Revolution and change*

Teachers explain the background to the Industrial Revolution (see *Teacher Notes p.4*).

In small groups students select a topic from the *Student Resource 3: Group internet research* worksheet and use the web addresses provided to research it.

They present their findings to the class as an oral report.

Teachers encourage students to use the processes of 'Community of Inquiry' to reflect on the changes to family and community life that occurred as a result of scientific and technological development.

Information on Community of Inquiry processes available at  
<http://itag.education.tas.gov.au/proflearn/pedagogy/communityofinquiry/> .

### **Reflecting on the past and the present**

Students discuss the effects of the latest 'revolution'—the development of information and communication technologies—on work and workers in more recent times (see *Teacher Notes p.7 New technologies, and the changing face of work*).

- How have new technologies affected work and working conditions?
- Does change always benefit some people and hurt others?
- Should society try to protect people from the negative effects of change?
- Why/why not? And if so, how?

## Activity 2: Researching real life stories about work and change

Change is sometimes called the only constant. In this activity, the aim is to encourage students to examine the impact of historical change at the level of people's daily experiences of work and family life, and to generate questions about how people manage and respond to change, at both the personal and the political levels.

The core task is an oral history activity, in which students collect stories from family and friends about work, changes in working conditions over time and across industries, and the ways work and working conditions affect family and social life.

### Planning to collect stories

Recording oral histories requires some planning. Students will need to decide:

- who they are going to interview—a range of ages would be desirable, so interviewing grandparents, or older neighbours, as well as parents might be useful;
- what sorts of questions they want to ask; and
- how they are going to record their interviews.

A step-by-step guide to organising and conducting an oral history project is available at [http://www.museum.vic.gov.au/Hidden\\_Histories/classroom\\_materials/oral.htm](http://www.museum.vic.gov.au/Hidden_Histories/classroom_materials/oral.htm).

Students work in groups to design a series of interview questions that will give them information about:

- the kinds of paid work performed by friends and families in the past and in the present;
- working hours and conditions;
- the kinds of unpaid work people performed, and whether they have changed over time;
- how aspects of work (working hours, shift work) affected other activities in life – family activities, recreation, further education etc;
- what people liked and disliked about their jobs; and
- how people tried to change things they thought were unfair.

Students may need to be reminded to record information such as the age and name of the person being interviewed, the nature of their job, and the years when it was performed.

Students may write a list of questions and rehearse asking them and recording answers with other group members to ensure that their questions will elicit the information they are looking for.

Students may refer to *Teacher Resource 2: Oral history criteria* sheet to assist them in their planning.

### Drawing conclusions

Students working in groups listen to taped interviews. They prepare a summary of information from each recorded interview and identify key themes and issues, then compare and contrast their stories.

In their groups, they listen to the interviews again, extracting key points and drawing conclusions about the changing nature of paid and unpaid work, working hours and working conditions.

- They prepare to present their observations and ideas to the class.

### Making meaning of the information gathered

In their groups, students present the results of their oral history project to the class. They describe how they went about gathering and organising their information. Class members and teacher may ask further questions of each group to clarify ideas or seek further information. Using the Oral History Criteria Sheet, students and teacher assess each presentation.

### Predicting from past experience

- In response to presentations, students discuss the forces that generate change in work and the lives of workers. They consider the ways in which technological development has changed and continues to change the nature of work in our own time (*see p.8*).

### Activity 3: Thinking about change and democracy

This activity asks students to think about how people respond *politically* to events that affect their lives, and to consider how such responses relate to ideas about democratic values.

Students reflect on the issues they studied earlier in the unit. In small groups, they discuss the following issues, using evidence from their earlier work to support their arguments.

- Was the idea of eight hours work, eight hours rest, and eight hours recreation a good one? Why/why not?
- How were ideas about change transmitted across space and time to generate action at the time of the eight hour day campaign? (See *Teacher Notes* 'The role of the Chartists' p.4) How does this happen today?
- Should there be rules or laws to regulate things such as working hours and other conditions? Why/why not?
- Should workers be able to take action, as the stonemasons did, to improve their working conditions? Why/why not?
- Should there be limits placed on the kinds of actions people can take?

They record the reasons for their responses and present them to the class.

### Human rights and democratic values

Students read *the Student Resource 4: Australian Values?* and identify which of the values listed are involved in the issue of working conditions. Further information on democratic values is available from the *Discovering Democracy* website: <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/democracy/teachciv.htm>

A group of students volunteer to take part in a fishbowl exercise to discuss whether (a) all of the democratic values described in the Framework are at work in Australia today, especially in relation to the rights of workers; and (b) whether making laws is sufficient to protect people's rights.

Information on the Fishbowl is available at <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/teaching.html>.

The teacher introduces students to the practice of 'outwork' (see *Teacher Notes* p.9).

Students use *Student Resource 5 - Outworkers and child labour* to compete an internet based research activity on outworkers and child labour in Australia today.

Teachers may wish to introduce additional information about international conventions on human rights and the rights of children.

*UN Declaration on Human Rights*: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

*UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*: <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>

Using a community of inquiry approach, students discuss their responses to what they found, and what issues such as outworking and child labour mean in terms of democratic values.

## Activity 4: Responding

Students who have engaged with most, or all, of this unit will have covered a wide range of topics related to working conditions and human rights.

The final activity invites them to respond to any of the issues raised in the work unit by preparing, either as part of a group or as an individual, a presentation\* which draws on the research they have done during the unit.

Presentation formats could include:

- Performance.
- Powerpoint presentation.
- Visual arts.
- Story writing.
- Debate.
- Three-Dimensional Display.
- Multimedia – Website or CD Rom

See *Teacher Resource 3: Presentation criteria* sheet.

## Assessment

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards supports a combination of assessment practices:

- assessment of learning (summative);
- assessment for learning (formative); and
- assessment as learning (ongoing).

**Assessment of learning** occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.

**Assessment for learning** occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching.

**Assessment as learning** occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/blueprint/fs1/assessment.asp>

When assessing student achievement, assessment criteria can be developed from relevant standards and associated tasks or activities. The table below shows a range of assessment criteria, tools and strategies applicable to this unit. Teachers could choose to use some or all of these, or use the unit to assess other standards.

<i>Standards</i>	<i>Assessment criteria (examples)</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
<b>Interpersonal development</b> <i>Working in teams</i>	Ability to: ...accept responsibility for their roles and tasks.	Oral Histories (Activity 2)
<b>Civics and citizenship</b> <i>Civic knowledge and understanding</i>	...describe key democratic principles and values.	Fishbowl activity in 'Thinking about change and democracy' (Activity 3)
<b>The Arts</b> <i>Creating and making</i>	...prepare arts works which communicate ideas to a variety of audiences.	Responding (Activity 4)
<b>English</b> <i>Reading</i>	...analyse texts and support interpretations with evidence drawn from the text.	Human rights and democratic values (Activity 3)
<b>English</b> <i>Speaking and listening</i>	...plan, rehearse and make presentations for different purposes.	Oral Histories (Activity 2)
<b>History</b> <i>Historical knowledge and understanding</i>	...learn about change and its impact on people's lives.	Thinking about connections between the past and the present (Activity 1)
<b>History</b> <i>Historical reasoning and interpretation</i>	...frame questions in the light of their own knowledge and experiences, to gather and communicate evidence from a variety of sources, and to interpret it.	Oral Histories (Activity 2)

<b>Economics</b> <i>Economics knowledge and understanding</i>	...explain the role of work in society and distinguish between paid and unpaid work.	Connecting the campaign for the eight hour day with students' experiences (Activity 1)
<b>Communication</b> <i>Presenting</i>	...use a range of presentation formats to summarise ideas and organise information logically and clearly to meet the needs of audience and purpose.	Responding (Activity 4)
<b>Thinking</b> <i>Reasoning, processing and inquiry</i>	...articulate reasoned arguments with supporting evidence.	Thinking about change and democracy (Activity 3)

## Unit resources

### Websites

Image of eight hour day banner

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:8hoursday\\_banner\\_1856.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:8hoursday_banner_1856.jpg)

Fishbowl and other teaching and learning activities

<http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/teaching.html>

Oral history

[http://www.museum.vic.gov.au/Hidden\\_Histories/classroom\\_materials/oral.htm](http://www.museum.vic.gov.au/Hidden_Histories/classroom_materials/oral.htm)

Community of Inquiry

<http://itag.education.tas.gov.au/proflearn/pedagogy/communityofinquiry/>

Discovering Democracy

<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/democracy/teachciv.htm>

UN Declaration on Human Rights

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

UN Convention of the Rights of the Child

<http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>