

ACTIVITIES FOR ACTIVISTS:

EDUCATION ON THE PICKET LINE



PUBLIC SERVICE ALLIANCE OF CANADA



Activities for Activists



PRODUCED BY THE EDUCATION SECTION OF THE
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INTRODUCTION

No one wishes to find themselves on a picket line. A respectful and fair bargaining process, which leads to a fair and respectful collective agreement, is probably every worker's preferred outcome! Many unionized workers find themselves on a work stoppage picket line at least once in their work life and many more will be active participants in information pickets or solidarity pickets.

In fact, picket lines are one of the most well-known symbols of unions - they are the place where groups of workers and activists come together in support of each other and their common goals. For many union activists, the most enduring and defining moments of their union experience come from the picket line. Picket lines also provide a great opportunity for union education - for participatory and critical learning that can change lives and communities.

This booklet contains activities and ideas to help us "seize the moment" that picket lines provide - to engage union members (and their supporters), learn something about workers and their issues, boost energy levels, and maintain the picket line as a place of solidarity, energy and fun.

This collection of activities and ideas comes from many sources including PSAC picket lines, other unions' picket lines, popular education materials, web resources, and sisters and brothers in Canada and around the world.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK:

Here are some suggestions for picket captains, strike captains, area coordinators, PSAC Alliance Facilitators, or anyone else helping to organize and support members on the picket line:

- choose at least one activity per picket shift;
- mix and match activities from different sections (i.e. several chants, followed by a story, then a song or two);
- choose a theme for the day i.e.

for **story-telling day**, begin with a few “Labour Minute” stories and finish with a picket-line version of the never-ending story;

for **street theatre day**, ask participants to wear costumes (Value Village and Goodwill are good places to shop), then form groups to plan, prepare and perform a sketch for the picket line; the “prize-winning” sketch could go on a road tour, presenting their sketch to other picket lines in the community;

for **art day**, ask picketers to bring art supplies from home (paints, markers, collage materials) and create one-of-a-kind artwork picket signs; do the same thing for music day, using household items like cans, uncooked beans or rice, bells, etc., and form a marching band;

for **family day**, invite families, including children, to the line for lunch and some creative picket-sign

making (have a child-safe area set aside with blank picket signs, crayons and child-safe markers, etc.). Bring sidewalk chalk for games and drawing.

some of the activities can be used to organize “intra-picket-line challenges (songwriters challenge, best costume, best street theatre performance, etc.) with the winner getting to be first in line for fresh donuts or hot coffee the next day;

- organize “**flying squads**” of Alliance Facilitators (AFs) i.e. AFs who will visit the line every day, bringing news and an activity or two for the picketers. Members will soon begin to look forward to the arrival of the AF squad and their bag of tricks (energizing activities);
- to maintain a **safe picket line**, ensure that picketers are aware of their rights and responsibilities on the line i.e. if a car is heading for the line at high speed, get out of the way!

BE INCLUSIVE! Ensure that your activities respond to the needs of sisters and brothers with disabilities and make use of culture inclusive songs and chants.

Be creative, have fun and stay safe.

Chants and Cheers



Many of the chants in this section are taken from *“Good Chants for a Lively Picket Line”* written by Ruth Goldbaum and produced by the Greater Hartford Labor Council. Copies of the complete booklet are available from The Labor Heritage Foundation at:

<http://www.laborheritage.org/goodchants.html>

“In these times of renewed activism and organizing, good chants and songs can be important organizing and energizing tools and can really brighten a picketline and a rally. A picketline is in its glory when it has a few loud noisemakers to keep the step lively and the spirit strong!!! Homemade noisemakers work great and are so easy to make. Shakers using empty soda cans and filled with beans, pebbles or ballbearings and covered with tape can make a powerful sound. Whistles, bicycle horns, cowbells and drums made of pots, pans and spoons sound great , too.”

Ruth Goldbaum, *“Good Chants for a Lively Picket Line”*, Greater Hartford Labour Council.

Hey, hey, what do you say?
_____ is here to stay!

Hey, hey, what do you say?
We want a contract right away!

Hey, hey, what do you say?
_____ all the way?

Hey, hey, don't delay!
Give us a contract with equal pay!

Hey, hey what do you know?
_____ is moving mighty slow!

Hey hey, ho ho,
_____ has got to go!

_____ is unfair,
all we want is our fair share!

Wanna know what all the fuss is?
We are standing up for justice!

Their _____ per cent won't pay the rent!

_____ says Yes	We say NO!
_____ says Hell Yes	We say HELL NO!
_____ says Give Back	We say FIGHT BACK!
_____ says Take Away	We say NO WAY !!!

What do we want? _____ (i.e. contract; jus-
tice; pension)

When do we want it? NOW!

Put on the heat, out in the street,
Union power can never be beat!

There's one thing that's clear to me,
the people here have unity!

Fee Fi Fo Fum
look out _____ here we come!

I don't know but I've been told,
_____’s pockets are lined with gold!
Lies and tricks will not divide,
workers standing side by side!

<i>Call</i>	<i>Response</i>
Dignity	Union YES!
Justice	Union YES!
Respect	Union YES!
Organize	Union YES! (etc.)

<i>Call</i>	<i>Response</i>
Union power on the rise	Now's the time to organize!
no more bosses' tricks and lies	Now's the time to organize!
give our children better lives	Now's the time to organize!
organize - organize	Now's the time to organize!

<i>Call</i>	<i>Response</i>
We are the _____	We are the _____
Mighty mighty _____	Mighty mighty _____

Everywhere we go
People want to know
Who we are
So we tell them...
(i.e. union; people)

Everywhere we go
People want to know
Who we are
So we tell them...
(go back to the beginning)

Ain't no power like the power of the people,
and the power of the people don't stop, don't stop!

Call

Power - Power -
Union's got the power
Working people's power
Power - Power - Power

Response

Power Power by the hour
Power by the hour
Power by the hour
Power by the hour

Call

We need staff
We need supplies
We need money
But if we fight

Response

They just laugh
They roll their eyes
They think it's funny
They'll do what's right!

1 - 2 - 3 - 4

We know what we're out here for!
or: No one should be working poor!
or: We won't take it anymore!

5 - 6 - 7 - 8

Sit down and negotiate!
or: Come on and play it straight!
or: Where's our contract - why so late?

We're out of the office
and onto our feet
we're off of our _____
and out in the street!

We're working families under attack;
What do we do? Stand up! Fight back!

I said my feet are achin'
my shoes' too tight
my heart is breakin'
'cause things ain't right
let me hear it now
_____ (i.e. contract; healthcare)
enough is enough!
We must Rise UP!!!

Call: When I say "Union" you say "YES" (2x)

Call: Union (4x)

Response: Yes (4x)

Call: When I say "Organize" you say "NOW" (2x)

Call: Organize (4x)

Response: NOW (4x)

and... When I say "Justice" you say "FOR ALL" (2x)
When I say "Cutback" you say "NO WAY" (2x)

We Are Union (to the tune of "We Will Rock You" by
Queen)

(thump, thump, clap ---)

(thump, thump, clap ---)

(thump, thump, clap ---)
(thump, thump, clap ---)

We are, we are UNION!
We are, we are UNION!

Popular activism has its roots in the Latin and South Americas. This is a powerful Spanish chant:

Un pueblo, unido
Jamà sera vencido!
(A people, united, will never be defeated!)

Gay, straight, black, white. Same struggle, same fight.

Give me a U - N - I - O - N! What's that spell?

Our world is not for sale! (anti G8 slogan)



Songs

“A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over.”
(Joe Hill)

Picket lines are a great place for singing songs, whether they're old favourites or newly created words to familiar tunes.

Picket captains may want to organize a “Walk on the Line” featuring taped music with every tune imaginable with the words “walk” in it (i.e. *“I go out walking after midnight”* (Patsy Cline); *“I Will Walk 500 Miles”* (The Proclaimers); *“Walk on by”* (Dione Warwick); *“These Boots Were Made for Walking”* (Nancy Sinatra). Ask picketers to bring their guitars, etc. to strum along.

Invite the “Raging Grannies” to your line. They are committed to social justice causes – they come with their own fantastic songbook, too!

This section contains some picket line “standards” and describes a songwriters activity that picketers can have fun with. Also included are some PSAC “Songwriters Extraordinaire” favourites.

Solidarity Forever

When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood
shall run,
there can be no power greater anywhere beneath the
sun.

Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble
strength of one?

But the union makes us strong.

Chorus: Solidarity forever
Solidarity forever
Solidarity forever
For the union makes us strong.

They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn,
But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel could turn.
We can break their haughty power, gain our freedom when we learn
that the union makes us strong. ...**Chorus...**

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold,
Greater than the might of armies magnified a thousand fold.
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old,
for the union makes us strong. ...**Chorus...**

We're the women of the union in the forefront of the fight,
We fight for women's issues, we fight for women's rights,
We're prepared to fight for freedom, we're prepared to stand our ground,
Women make the union strong. ...**Chorus...**

Through our sisters and our brothers, we can make our union strong,
For respect and equal value we have done without too long,
We no longer have to tolerate injustices and wrongs,
For the union makes us strong. ...**Chorus...**

When racism in all of us is finally out and gone,
Then the union movement will be twice as powerful and
strong,
for equality for everyone will move the cause along,
for the union makes us strong. ...**Chorus**...

* * * * *

Union Maid (by Woody Guthrie, plus a verse by
women)

There once was a union maid who never was afraid
of goons and ginks and company finks and deputy sher-
iffs that make the raid

She went to the union hall when a meeting it was called
and when the company boys came around, she always
stood her ground.

Chorus: O you can't scare me I'm stickin' to the union
I'm stickin' to the union, I'm stickin' to the
union

O you can't scare me I'm stickin' to the union
I'm stickin' to the union, till the day I die.

Now this union maid was wise to the tricks of the com-
pany spies

She couldn't be fooled by the company stool, she'd
always organize the guys,

She always got her way, when she struck for higher pay
She'd show her card to the National Guard and this is
what she'd say ...CHORUS...

Now you women who want to be free, just take this tip
from me

Got you a job, that's a union job; and fight like hell for
liberty

Working life's still hard with the hard earned rights you guard

But you'll enhance a fighting chance when you've got a union card.

... CHORUS (repeat twice)

* * * * *

Imagine by John Lennon

Imagine there's no heaven, it's easy if you try

No hell below us, above us only sky

Imagine all the people, living for today ...

Imagine there's no countries, it isn't hard to do

Nothin' to kill or die for, and no religion too

Imagine all the people living life in peace ...

You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one

I hope some day you'll join us and the whole world will live

as one.

Imagine no possessions, I wonder if you can

No need for greed or hunger, not folks with empty hands

Imagine all the people sharing all the world ...

You may say I'm a dreamer ...

* * * * *

The Internationale

Words by Eugene Pottier (Paris 1871) Music by Pierre Degeyter (1888)

(Refrain) So comrades, come rally

And the last fight let us face

The Internationale unites the human race.
So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.

Arise ye workers from your slumbers
Arise ye prisoners of want
For reason in revolt now thunders
And at last ends the age of cant.
Away with all your superstitions
Servile masses arise, arise
We'll change henceforth the old tradition
And spurn the dust to win the prize.
... REFRAIN...

No more deluded by reaction
On tyrants only we'll make war
The soldiers too will take strike action
They'll break ranks and fight no more
And if those cannibals keep trying
To sacrifice us to their pride
They soon shall hear the bullets flying
We'll shoot the generals on our own side.
... REFRAIN...

No saviour from on high delivers
No faith have we in prince or peer
Our own right hand the chains must shiver
Chains of hatred, greed and fear
E'er the thieves will out with their booty
And give to all a happier lot.
Each at the forge must do their duty
And we'll strike while the iron is hot.
... REFRAIN...

This Land is Your Land (slightly amended)
by Woody Guthrie

Chorus: This land is your land, this land is my land
From Bonavista to the Vancouver Island
From the Arctic Circle to the Great Lake Water
This land was made for you and me.

As I went walking that ribbon of highway
I saw above me that endless skyway
I saw below me that golden valley
This land was made for you and me ...CHORUS...

I've roamed and I've rambled and followed my footsteps
From the sparkling sands of your diamond deserts
And all around me, a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me...CHORUS...

When the sun came shining and I was walking
And the wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
As the fog was lifting, a voice was chanting
This land was made for you and me...CHORUS...

As I went walking I saw a sign there
On the sign said "no trespassing"
But on the other side it didn't say nothing
This side was made for you and me...CHORUS...

In the shadow of the steeple I saw the (homeless)
By the (food banks) standing I saw my people
As they stood hungry, I stood there asking
Is this land made for you and me? ...CHORUS...

Nobody living can ever stop me
As I go walking that freedom highway

Nobody living can make me turn back
This land is made for you and me. ...CHORUS...



We Shall Not Be Moved (traditional tune)

Chorus: We shall not, we shall not be moved
We shall not, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's standing by the water
We shall not be moved.

Verses:

The Union is behind us; we shall not be moved (2x)
Just like a tree...
We're black, brown, white together...
We're fighting for our children...
We'll stand up and fight together...
We're old and young together...

Activity: Songwriters Extraordinaire

Description: Picketers write and perform songs. Groups always have fun with this exercise. NOTE: If there is skepticism or initial hesitation, assure the picketers that in the history of conducting this exercise, every group has thoroughly enjoyed it!

Time Frame: 15 minutes plus performance time

of participants: 2 - 100+

Tools: pens and blank paper

Advance Preparation: Prepare a set of word cards each containing the name of a particular music style (i.e. rock, country, reggae, folk, rap, blues, latin music, opera) - you'll need one word card for each songwriters group of 4-6 picketers. Fold the cards and put them in a container (basket, bag, box lid, etc.).

Method:

Ask picketers to gather in groups of 4-6 and invite each group to choose a musical style from the word cards you've prepared ahead of time.

The task is for each group to write a 4-line song about the picket line or strike issues, to a popular tune in the musical style they've chosen.

Provide about 10 minutes for the song writing and 5 minutes for each group to practice their song.

Announce the “Songwriters Extraordinaire Festival” and wildly applaud each group’s performance.

* * * * *

Here are some PSAC Songwriters Extraordinaire favourites:

the *Ballad of the Alliance* (Prairies 2003 UDP; lyrics by Shaun and Raj)
to the tune of “*The Beverly Hillbillies*” theme

Come ‘n listen to my story ‘bout a man named Paul
Poor non-union worker, he had no rights at all
An’ then one day, while he was under huge abuse,
An’ in comes the union and loosened off the noose
The noose is loose my friend.

Well, the first thing ya know,
Old Paul is organizing
Workplace is better
Everyone is harmonizing
Working in a union is the place you ought to be
Workers living better in Solidarity.

* * * * *

Chrétien (Prairies 2003 UDP; lyrics by Don, Sid, Robin, Pat, Cindy, Marilee and Foxfire)
to the tune of “*You picked a fine time to leave me, Lucille*”

You’ve picked a fine time to grieve us Chrétien,
From PSAC members and the cutbacks we feel,
We’ve gone thru some hard times,

we've gone thru some rollbacks,
But this time your stealing won't heal.
You've picked a **wrong** time to grieve us Chrétien.

You've picked a fine time to grieve us Chrétien,
We've seen a-lot of down sizing,
and some re-or-ganizing
You sit there in your Regency
While you **force** us into a-gencies

You've picked a bad time to grieve us Chrétien,
We're going to pick the right time,
With our mem-bers on a picket line,
And we are going to get our sur-r-plus back
You've picked a **bad** time to grieve us Chrétien,

You've picked a fine time to leave us Chrétien,
We are standing together,
We will fight you forever,
This time the hurting you will feel
You've picked a **great** time to leave us Chrétien.

* * * * *

Untitled (Prairies 2003 UDP; lyrics by Ralph, Leila and
Brenda)
to the tune of "*A Horse with No Name*" by America

Oh - I've worked on a job where there was no union
I felt - used - and a-bused
It didn't take us long - to say that's enough.
And so we had a rally - to choose,
We thought we'd choose a Union that had a good
Name - One, - that, - We, - could trust

When we looked around - we found P,S,A,C,
and decided it was them - or Bust.

Now we have rights - and yes we pay Dues
But now - we don't get abused.

If there's one thing - we've learned from all this
is- it's up to you - to choose.

We can go to Work - Bitch - complain, but
if we want to make - a change.

We have to get off our butts and choose
P - S - A - C.

* * * * *

RUN PSAC (Prairies 2003 UDP; lyrics by Janet, Carol,
Marianne and Carm) - a rap song

The union's made of different folks
Our membership's diverse
Each group brings something to the whole
Just like in our universe.

Social justice that's the aim
Corporate bastards they are to blame
Take back the night, take back the streets
Freedom, safety, dignity

If you want to get involved
Now is when you're needed
Write your MPs; state your voice
We won't be defeated.

United we shall stand
Divided we will fall
If we are hand in hand
Nothing will get through our wall.

Arm in arm we march the street
Building solidarity
The union is the place to be
For you to influence history.



Bye Bye Brian (1991 PSAC National Strike 1991 -
Amherst, NS)
to the tune of Bye, Bye Blackbird

Pack up all your gang and go
Don't forget High River Joe
Bye, Bye, Bri-an.

You made sure you got your pile
While we walk the lonely mile
Bye, Bye, Bri-an.

No one here can love or understand ye
No one can stand the BS that you hand me
You screwed up on the Trade so Free
Then kissed us with the G.S.T.
Bri-an, bye, bye.

No one here can love or understand ye
No one can stand the BS that you hand me
Make my day, please step down
We'll say good-bye, Charlie Brown
Bri-an, bye, bye.

**Note: Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and his
Tory government were soundly defeated in the
election following the 1991 strike.**

* * * * *

We Are Union (1999 Ontario Fall School)
to the tune of "I Am Woman, Hear Me Roar" by Helen
Reddy

We are Union
Hear us roar
We're more organized than before
And we know too much
To go back there again
United we will stand
Together hand in hand
Until we implement our Union plan

Yes we are wise
But it's wisdom born of pain
Yes we paid the price
But look how much we've gained
If we have to, we can do anything
We are strong
We are invincible
We are Union

* * * * *



The Women Go Marching... (2000 North Women At Work course)
to the tune of "The Ants Go Marching"

The women go marching hand in hand,
Hoorah, Hoorah
the Women go march across the land,
Hoorah, Hoorah
We march for rights and equity, to end the violence and
poverty...CHORUS...

Chorus: and the fight continuities on
to the ends
of the earth
and beyond
boom boom boom, boom - boom boom boom

We won't sit back and watch abuse
we won't, we won't
We'll never accept any excuse,
we won't, we won't
Women's shelters and medical care and human rights
should all be there....CHORUS...
Some say we're irrational
oh no, oh no
We even made The National
oh no, oh no
While women who we're trying to save, are beaten, mur-
dered and treated as slaves...CHORUS

Sisters come and join the fight
Hoorah, Hoorah
Together we'll take back the night
Hoorah, Hoorah
Alone we are just one small sound, but as a group we're
quite profound...CHORUS.

Stories

Storytelling has its roots in many cultures and in most of our experiences as young children, workers, and members of our families and communities. Telling stories informs us of our past and provides an opportunity to dream about the future.

The learning opportunities of storytelling can be deepened with a post-story discussion. Here are a few sample debriefing questions that can be used:

HOW DOES THIS STORY MAKE YOU FEEL?

WHAT ARE THE MESSAGES IN THIS STORY?

HOW DO THE MESSAGES RELATE TO OUR PICKET LINE? (our struggles with this employer?, etc.)

HOW DOES THE STORY RELATE TO OUR COMMUNITY (the labour movement?, etc.)

WHAT IDEAS OR ACTIONS DOES THIS STORY INSPIRE? FOR OUR PICKET LINE? FOR OUR COMMUNITY?, etc.

* * * * *

First they came for the Communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, but by that time, no one was left to speak up. –

Pastor Martin Niemoeller, Nazi Germany

* * * * *

A Labour Minute: **“Collective Bargaining 1799”**

In early August 1799, voyageurs who worked for the Hudson’s Bay Company at Cumberland House in north-eastern Saskatchewan went on strike. The voyageurs moved tons of goods and furs along rivers and portages in the Canadian wilderness. They were often ordered to paddle all day through all kinds of weather, eating rations scarcely fit for livestock and all at wages that, once deductions were made for food and lodging, amounted to next to nothing. When Hudson’s Bay managers told the voyageurs to take some heavily-loaded freight canoes to Beaver River near present-day Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, the Aboriginal, Métis, Scottish and French voyageurs refused unless they got a raise. On August 30, 1799, the Hudson’s Bay Company fired the “strikers” and withheld their backpay. Showing a spirit of solidarity, the voyageurs went en masse across the river and started working for the North West Company - the rival of the Hudson’s Bay. And they took their canoes with them.

Source: CALM

* * * * *

Another Labour Minute: **“We’re All Kathies”**

In the spring of 1999, Saskatchewan nurses were fed up with years of understaffing, excessive overtime, low wages, cancelled holidays and lack of respect from their employers. When management refused to negotiate meaningful improvements, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses asked for and got a strong strike mandate from its

membership. The government recalled the legislature and passed a bill, promising big fines for SUN members and their leaders if they didn't stay on the job. The nurses responded by holding huge meetings where they voted unanimously to disobey the back-to-work legislation. At one meeting, Kathy Connors, president of the National Nurses' Union, quoted Martin Luther King, saying "every responsible citizen has an obligation to defy an unjust law". Rumours started to circulate that the authorities were planning to issue a court summons and charge Connors with contempt. In response, nurses on picket lines across the province wore buttons saying "Hi, I'm Kathy" to confuse officials. No summons was ever served.

Source: CALM

* * * * *

The Story of Mouseland and the black and white cats

Mouseland was a place where all the little mice lived and played, were born and died. And they lived much the same as you and I do.

They even had a Parliament. And every four years they had an election. Used to walk to the polls and cast their ballots. Some of them even got a ride to the polls. And got a ride for the next four years afterwards too. Just like you and me. And every time on election day all the little mice used to go to the ballot box and they used to elect a government. A government made up of big, fat, black cats.

Now if you think it strange that mice should elect a government made up of cats, you just look at the history of

Canada for last 90 years and maybe you'll see that they weren't any stupider than we are.

Now I'm not saying anything against the cats. They were nice fellows. They conducted their government with dignity. They passed good laws — that is, laws that were good for cats. But the laws that were good for cats weren't very good for mice. One of the laws said that mouseholes had to be big enough so a cat could get his paw in. Another law said that mice could only travel at certain speeds so that a cat could get his breakfast without too much effort.

All the laws were good laws. For cats. But, oh, they were hard on the mice. And life was getting harder and harder. And when the mice couldn't put up with it any more, they decided something had to be done about it. So they went en masse to the polls. They voted the black cats out. They put in the white cats.

Now the white cats had put up a terrific campaign. They said: "All that Mouseland needs is more vision." They said: "The trouble with Mouseland is those round mouseholes we got. If you put us in we'll establish square mouseholes." And they did. And the square mouseholes were twice as big as the round mouseholes, and now the cat could get both his paws in. And life was tougher than ever.

And when they couldn't take that anymore, they voted the white cats out and put the black ones in again. Then they went back to the white cats. Then to the black cats. They even tried half black cats and half white cats. And they called that coalition. They even got one government made up of cats with spots on them: they were cats that tried to make a noise like a mouse but ate like a cat.

You see, my friends, the trouble wasn't with the colour of the cat. The trouble was that they were cats. And because

they were cats, they naturally looked after cats instead of mice.

Presently there came along one little mouse who had an idea. My friends, watch out for the little fellow with an idea. And he said to the other mice, "Look fellows, why do we keep on electing a government made up of cats? Why don't we elect a government made up of mice?" "Oh," they said, "he's a Bolshevik. Lock him up!" So they put him in jail.

But I want to remind you: you can lock up a mouse or a man but you can't lock up an idea.

(as told by Tommy Douglas, 1944)

* * * * *

Fill It

There once lived a farmer who worked hard to till his land and feed his three children. His wife had died some years before and he realized that he was getting on in years and should think about how he would one day pass on the land to his children. Should he die suddenly, he didn't want there to be any fighting over who would get what. So he called his two sons and his daughter together and told them that he had designed a contest. Each would have a turn at filling the shed beside the barn as full as they could. The one to fill it the most would be the winner and would get to have the first choice of land to inherit. The children agreed and the father turned to his oldest child, his son, and nodded.

The boy went all over the land and gathered every stone and boulder and pebble and brought them back to the

shed where he piled them all in. He pushed and shoved the Stones and boulders into the shed until he closed the door with difficulty. The shed's walls and door bulged with the weight of the stones inside. The boy, knees and elbows scraped and bloodied, turned to his father.

The father nodded and smiled and said, "That is a very good effort. I am most impressed." Then he bent down and picked up a handful of dirt which he threw into the shed through a small window. The sand disappeared inside. "A very good effort," repeated the father. "Now let us see how your brother can do."

The shed was cleaned out and the second child, taking a wheelbarrow, gathered as much sand and dirt as he could from all over the farm. Load after load, he piled the sand and dirt into the shed. He pushed it in and stamped it down and packed it tight. With the door shut and bulging he still pushed sand and dirt in under the crack. He packed it into the window. Again the walls of the shed bulged from the weight of the sand inside. The boy turned to his father.

"Very impressive. A mighty feat. I congratulate you." The father went over to a bucket of water and dipped a ladle in. He brought this back to the shed and poured the water in through a crack in the roof. The water disappeared inside. "A good and noble effort, my son. Now let us see what your sister can do."

The young girl disappeared into the house. The shed was cleaned out and prepared. After a while the girl emerged from the house with her hands cupped around something small. She walked into the shed and placed something down. She stepped back and her brothers and father saw that it was a candle. And the light from that candle filled

that shed to its farthest corner. The girl turned and faced her father and brothers and they smiled at her.

(retold by chris cavanagh)

Source: www.catalystcentre.ca/Resources/tales.htm

* * * * *

Cambodian Story - Eang Mao

Ah Chey and the Chewing Pouch, 1997

“One time, the rich man gave Ah Chey his chewing pouch, in which he carried his betels and nuts. The rich man told Ah Chey to carry his pouch for him, and to follow him on a visit to the palace. The rich man rode on a horse and Ah Chey ran after. The pouch was heavy and Ah Chey did not tie it up - so everything fell out as he ran.

When the rich man got to the palace, he called Ah Chey to bring his pouch but there was nothing in it. The rich man asked, ‘Where is my betel and nuts?’ Ah Chey said, ‘I ran after you. You were riding too fast and I do not know where the betel and nuts went. I did not dare to stop to pick them up because I was afraid that I would lose you.’ The rich man said, ‘Next time, don’t embarrass me like this. If anything falls off, you must pick it up.’

So next time, Ah Chey was ready to pick everything up, and he did - he even picked up the horse droppings. When they arrived at the palace, the rich man called Ah Chey again, asking for his chewing pouch. When he opened up the pouch, he saw that it was full of horse droppings. The rich man was very embarrassed and shouted at Ah Chey, ‘Why did you put all of these horse droppings in the pouch?’ Ah Chey answered, “You told me to pick everything up!”

- told by Touch San, translated by Chin Ky

This traditional Khmer folktale is one of many stories told by Khmer refugees here, survivors of the Khmer Rouge. It concerns a poor servant who outwits his rich and powerful master. Ah Chey wins this power struggle by taking his master's words literally: his seeming stupidity masks his cleverness. Ah Chey refuses to take his master's crap (figuratively) and gives him his own crap back (literally).



* * * * *

The Sermon of Nasrudin

One day the villagers thought they would play a joke on Nasrudin. As he was supposed to be a holy man of some ineffable sort, they went to him and asked him to preach a sermon in their mosque. He agreed. When the day came, Nasrudin mounted the pulpit and spoke:

“O people! Do you know what I am going to tell you?”

“No, we do not know,” they cried.

“Until you know, I cannot say. You are too ignorant to make a start on,”

said the Mulla, overcome with indignation that such ignorant people should waste his time. He descended from the pulpit and went home. Slightly chagrined, a deputation went to his house again, and asked him to preach the following Friday, the day of prayer. Nasrudin started his sermon the same way as he had before. This time, the congregation answered as one:

“Yes, we know.”

“In that case,” said the Mulla, “there is no need for me to detain you any longer. You may go.”

And he returned home. Having been prevailed upon to preach for the third Friday in succession, he started his address as before:

“Do you know or do you not?” The congregation was ready.

“Some of us do, and others do not.”

“Excellent,” said Nasrudin, “then let those who know communicate their knowledge to those who do not.”

And he went home.

(retold by Clare Nobbs)

Source: www.catalystcentre.ca/Resources/tales.htm

Activity: The Story of Viola Desmond

Description: This story provides an opportunity to learn more about an activist’s struggle for justice in Canada.

Time Frame: 10-20 minutes

of participants: 2 - 100 (smaller groups of 10-15 may be preferred for debriefing the story; the storyteller will probably need a microphone or megaphone for a larger group.)

Tools: Optional: copy of the story (*Viola Desmond - Defining Canadian History*) for each participant.

Method:

Introduce the story as one that is based on a true event in Canadian history - one that describes the actions of Viola Desmond. Ask picketers to listen closely and to mimic the actions described in the story.

Tell the Viola Desmond story.

Debrief. Provide an opportunity for participants to share their reactions to the story and what meanings and lessons can be drawn from it. Link the experience of Viola Desmond to that of Rosa Parks who took similarly heroic action nine years later in the United States.

Note: Adapted from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Pacific Region, version of Rosa Parks, also produced in Education for Changing Unions - Bev Burke, Jojo Geronimo, D’Arcy Martin, Barb Thomas, Carol Wall (2002).

Viola Desmond - Defining Canadian History

It was November 8th, 1946, the wind was howling and Viola Desmond squinted to see through the early snow on her windshield. She worked in a beauty parlour and taught at the local beautician school. She lived in Halifax but was on her way to Sydney, Nova Scotia. Right now, she was passing through New Glasgow. Except her car started to sputter. She cocked her head to the right and listened to the clanking sound coming from the motor. She lurched back and forward with the car as it started to stall. She put on her turn signal and turned the wheel hard to the left as the car rolled into a gas station. She turned off the ignition and wrapped her coat around her as she got out of the car.



She stamped her feet in the cold to keep warm as the mechanic told her the car couldn't be fixed until the next day. She walked up the street, carrying her overnight bag over her shoulder. After finding a place to stay for the

night, she decided to pass the time with a movie at the local theatre.

She walked up the street to the Roseland Theatre. She opened the front doors, shuddered from the cold and brushed the snow from her shoulders. She walked up to the ticket counter and asked for a ticket for house seats. The teller sold her a ticket for the balcony. You see, in 1946 in Canada, there was racial segregation in many public places like churches, restaurants, schools and movie theatres.

Viola walked into the theatre, looked for a good seat and sat down in the house. The usher came and said, "You can't sit here." Viola said, "But I bought a ticket here." The usher said, "No, you have a ticket for the balcony." Viola couldn't believe it. She was angry and walked back to the ticket window and said, "I want a ticket for the house." The ticket seller said, "We're not allowed to sell you people tickets to the house. You people are to sit in the balcony."

Viola was so angry, there were tears in her eyes. She walked purposely back into the theatre, back in the house seats section, and sat down. The manager came over and ordered her out. Viola shook her head slowly. The manager called the police and when the police came, they picked her up and carried her out of the theatre.

Viola was arrested and she sat all night on a hard bench in a jail cell. She was charged with attempting to defraud the federal government. You see, retail sales tax was calculated on the base price of the seat ticket. The ticket seller had sold Viola a balcony seat but she had sat in a more expensive seat, which meant that she was one cent short on the tax.

She stood for sentencing, the judge fined her \$20 and told her she must spend 30 days in prison for tax evasion. She wondered why no one, not the judge, the lawyers or the police had admitted that she was a person of colour or that the theatre was using a racist seating policy. Instead, everyone was proceeding as though this tax evasion charge had nothing to do with race.

Viola stood tall and proud in her fight. The NSAACP(1) helped pay her fine and legal fees. Viola was also joined by another strong activist, Carrie Best(2). Carrie Best published Viola's story in *The Clarion*, a community newspaper she had started for people of colour in New Glasgow.

Even though all appeals to have the conviction overturned at higher levels of the Court failed, the case was used to build community activism to fight against racial segregation in Canada. We gain strength from activists like Viola Desmond and Carrie Best. Through their stories we learn that we can all take action against something we believe strongly in.

Let's applaud Viola Desmond and all the social justice activists who came before and after her.

Notes

(1) NSAACP (Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People).

(2) Carrie Best was the founder of Nova Scotia's first newspaper for People of Colour. After publishing Viola's story, Carrie organized community activists to lobby the Nova Scotia government, which finally repealed the laws on segregation in 1954.

(3) Viola Desmond's action against racial segregation took place in New Glasgow, Canada, nine years before Rosa Parks sat in the white section of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in an action that was a key part of the U.S. civil rights movement.

* * * * *

Activity: The Never-ending Story

Description: Participants tell the story of their experiences, their hopes, and their plans for future actions.

Time Frame: 10-30 minutes (depends on group size)

of participants: 2 - 20 (a large group can be re-formed into smaller groups of 10-20)

Tools: optional - pen and paper for the planning activities in step #3.

Method:

Introduce the activity by explaining that there will be three rounds of storytelling, all based on participants' experiences, hopes, and ideas for actions that could help realize their hopes.

Each round of the story consists of a one-sentence contribution from each participant (either randomly, or in order of where people are standing/sitting).

In the first round, participants tell the story of their experiences, building on what previous speakers have said. The story continues (in the second round) with the hopes that participants have for negotiations (or the workplace, the community, etc.), again building on what previous speakers have said. The third round tells the story of

actions the participants are willing to take to help realize their hopes.

Here's an example of how the story might unfold, starting with the first round:

Facilitator: "Once upon a time there was a picket line..."

1st speaker: "and on that line walked the members of PSAC Local 12345..."

2nd speaker: "It was the first picket line for many of the us and we weren't sure what to expect..."

3rd speaker: "so we were very happy to see that other unions
and the public supported us by..."
etc.

continuing the story with the second round:

Facilitator: "The strikers hoped that the picket line would bring about some changes..."

1st speaker: "like the employer going back to the bargaining table and ..."

2nd speaker: "supporting pay equity and ..."

3rd speaker: "a fair wage increase and ..."
etc.

concluding the story with the final round:

- Facilitator: “So the picketers decided that, to make their hopes a reality, they would...”
- 1st speaker: “organize a big rally with speakers from labour and the community...”
- 2nd speaker: “have a “family day” on the picket line...”
- 3rd speaker: “march to the MP’s office and demand a return to the table...”
- Facilitator: “and they all lived happily every after or did they?”
-



Establish how the story will be told (i.e. random speakers, or in order of where picketers are standing/sitting) and begin the story with the first line.

After the story has been told, picketers can form small groups to further plan the actions identified in the story.

Activity: Union Moments

Description: Participants describe “defining” moments in their union lives.

Time Frame: 15 - 30 minutes

of participants: 2 - 100+

Method:

Introduce the activity by noting that people join unions and get involved in the labour movement for all sorts of reasons and through many paths.

Most don't start out to become picketers and union activists and yet that is the position all the participants find themselves in at this point in time, probably because of some *“singular experience or incident, within the union movement, that had a profound effect on them and demonstrated, often for the first time, the power of democratic, collective action”*. For some the union moment happened 15 years ago, while others experienced it just last week or earlier today.

Explain that, during this activity, participants will share their “union moment” with each other and explore the common elements of their experiences.

Ask participants to form groups of 3-4 to tell each other about their personal union moment (see above description). After the stories have been told, ask each group to identify the common elements of their personal experiences.

Invite each group to share the common elements with the full group.

After all groups have reported, challenge participants to consider how the activities of the picket line (and the union) could be reorganized to create more participatory, empowering union moments for all of their members so that they too can experience what it really means to be a union.

Source: *Education for Changing Unions, Between the Lines, 2002*

* * * * *

Games and Theatre

Activity: Your First Job

Description: Participants describe their first job to one another, using pantomime (i.e. actions but no sounds or words).

Time Frame: 10 - 30 minutes

of participants: 2 - 100+

Advance Preparation: Post the “debriefing” questions on a picket sign or large piece of cardboard.

Method:

Introduce the activity by asking participants to think back to their first job and to think of a few actions that could demonstrate that job to another person.

Ask each participant to find a partner and pantomime their first job until their partner correctly guesses what that job is.

NOTE: For participants or partners whose disabilities would not allow them to participate in a pantomime, ask them to think of a few sentences that describe the job, without naming the job in their description.

Ask each pair to discuss the debriefing questions (5-10 minutes):

Was the job unionized? If yes, which union?

Was it a “good” job? Why/why not?

How did working make you feel?

What did you learn from that first job (i.e. a skill, or a lesson learned) that still applies today?

Invite participants to find another partner and repeat the pantomime and debriefing discussion.

* * * * *



Activity: Labour History Game

Description: Participants mingle with one another to learn more about significant people, groups and events in our labour history.

Time Frame: 10 - 30 minutes

of participants: 2 - 20

Tools: tape or safety pins; paper “info” sheets - a different one for every participant; optional: copies of the “Labour History Info” used in the activity (see attached example)

Advance Preparation: Prepare the individual “info” sheets that will be taped or pinned to participants’ backs, using the attached example or other moments in your group’s labour history. Info sheets contain the name of the person or event along with some brief historical details.

Method:

Introduce the activity by explaining that, in a moment, you will pass out “info” sheets containing the names and a few historical details of people, groups and events in our labour history.

Each person will receive a sheet of paper and then be asked to “find a back” to attach the information to (without divulging any of the information on the sheet).

Participants then mingle and ask each other questions to determine the person, group or event attached to his/her back. There are no rules on the types or numbers of questions. However, there are rules concerning answers - respondents may answer only “yes” or “no”.

Once the identity of the person, group or event is correctly guessed, participants can sit down or help others in their search for “Labour History”.

Wrap up the explanation by asking if there are any questions of clarification before proceeding with the game.

Play the game.

Debrief accordingly (e.g., why is some history more well known; what does this tell us; why a game like this is useful).

Notes:

LABOUR HISTORY INFO

1919 Winnipeg General Strike:

On May 15th more than 24,000 workers join striking metal trades workers. Within a few weeks they were joined by thousands of workers in B.C., Alberta, Ontario and Quebec, and 10,000 returned soldiers who marched to the provincial legislative buildings. In an effort to quash the strike the Federal Government amended the Immigration Act to deport strike leaders. On June 21st, "Bloody Saturday", one protester was killed and 30 were injured when "Special Police" fired at protesters and attacked them with batons. The strike ended June 26th.

1972 Quebec Common Front strike:

Quebec public sector unions (QFL, CNTU, Quebec Teachers Federation) formed a Common Front group that led 210,000 public sector workers in a massive strike against the Bourassa Liberal government. The government imposed legislation, injunctions and fines on the unions and jail terms for some of the leadership when their members defied these measures. Sympathy strikes spread to the private sector, resulting in the largest strike in Canadian history. In the end, most of the unions' contract demands were met by the government.

1980 PSAC CR Strike

Thousands of clerical workers walked off the job to challenge the pay and benefit inequities of the Federal government. Gains from the strike included landmark provisions for care and nurturing leave, adoption leave and paid maternity leave.

1991 PSAC General Strike:

On September 9th tens of thousands of PSAC members began the largest national strike in Canadian history. The strike broke down workplace barriers and transformed the PSAC into a union to be reckoned with. One major improvement as a result of the strike was the Workforce Adjustment Directive which provided significant employment security benefits. *“We stood up to be counted. We stood up for ourselves, our families and other workers. We stood up for justice and fairness and human dignity.”*

1996 Women’s March Against Poverty:

Preceded by the 1995 Quebec Women’s March Against Poverty organized by the Fédération des femmes du Québec, this event saw labour groups join with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) in a country wide march through hundreds of communities highlighting the themes of jobs and justice. It was followed by the World Women’s March in 2000.

Bob White:

Brother Robert White is a President Emeritus of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), past president of the CLC (1992 - 1999) and past President of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) (1985-1992). He is committed to equality and equity issues inside and outside of the labour movement, and is an Officer of the Order of Canada for exceptional service to the country.

Bonnie Robichaud:

Sister Bonnie Robichaud is a PSAC member who filed a harassment complaint against the Federal Government in 1980. Her struggle for a safe workplace led to a landmark 1987 Supreme Court decision that “employers are responsible for maintaining an harassment-free workplace”.

The Canadian Labour Congress:

Founded in 1883 as the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLC), the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is the pan-Canadian voice of the labour movement representing 2.5 million unionized workers through their Unions, Federations of Labour, and District Labour Councils. The purpose of the CLC is to advance the economic and social welfare of Canadian workers, including those who are unemployed or retired.

Ginger Goodwin (1887 - 1918)

Albert “Ginger” Goodwin was a British coal miner who emigrated to Canada in 1906, arriving first in Cape Breton and later moving to British Columbia. As an organizer for the United Mine Workers and a vice-president of the BC Federation of Labour, he led the first strike for an 8-hour day. Soon after, Ginger’s conscription status was changed to “fit for service” despite the fact that he had lung disease. Ginger Goodwin was shot and killed while on the run in 1918; his death sparked Canada’s first general strike.

Grace Hartman:

Sister Grace Hartman was elected as the first woman President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees

(CUPE) in 1975. She defied back to work legislation on behalf of Ontario hospital workers and was sent to prison for one month. Upon retirement from CUPE, Sister Hartman turned her energies to women's and the peace movement. Sister Hartman died in 1993

Hassan Yussuff:

Brother Hassan Yussuff, a plant worker and CAW member, was elected Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 1999. Brother Yussuff is very involved in the international solidarity movement, the United Way, the Council of Canadians, the National Institute of Disability Management, and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund.

Jean-Claude Parrot:

A former Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress, Brother Parrot was also a former President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) who spent two months in prison in 1980 in defiance of unjust legislation that ordered postal workers back to work.

Madeline Parent:

Sister Madeline Parent first became militant with the Canadian Students Assembly while at McGill University. She was the first woman elected to the Montreal Trades and Labour council and helped to organize more than 6000 cotton workers at the Dominion Textile plants in Valleyfield and Montreal who then achieved equal pay for equal work after their 1946 strike. Sister Parent continually battled the anti-union Duplessis government who

attacked her with charges and jail sentences for 9 years. A founding member of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), Sister Madeline Parent continues to be active in social justice work.

Nycole Turmel:

Sister Nycole Turmel was elected as the first women president of the PSAC in 2000, and was re-elected in 2003. Sister Turmel is a valued Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress. A former employment counsellor assistant, Sister Turmel has been a union activist for more than 25 years.

Privy Council Order 1003 (PC 1003):

Proclaimed in 1944, PC 1003 enforced a worker's right to choose a union, to impose collective bargaining and a grievance procedure, and to curb unfair practices by unions and management. It led to national labour legislation such as the Canada Labour Code (1948) and the Public Service Staff Relations Act (1967).

The PSAC:

Formed in 1966 as an amalgamation of sixteen staff associations, the PSAC is Canada's 5th largest union with 24 Regional Offices from coast to coast to coast, seventeen Components and seven Regions. The 150,000 members of the PSAC work in a variety of settings, including the federal government and agencies, women's shelters, casinos, universities, and so on;

PSAC Pay Equity (Federal Government):

In 1984 the PSAC filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission on behalf of 50,000 clerical workers, which gave rise to the Joint Union-Management Equal Pay Study. The CHRA Tribunal found in favour of the PSAC (1998) and their decision was supported by the Federal Court of Appeal (1999). The success of this complaint for six groups represented by the PSAC has had far-reaching effects of efforts to achieve pay equity across the country and around the world.



Shirley Carr:

Sister Shirley Carr was elected president of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 1986 and, in doing so, became the first woman ever elected as a leader of a national labour body in the world. She was re-elected to the

President's position in 1988 and 1990 and is now President Emeritus of the CLC. Sister Carr has served on the governing bodies of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Shirley Carr is an Officer of the Order of Canada and was awarded the Order of Diego De Losada, First Class (Venezuela) for her work in defending trade union rights around the world and for her tireless battle against Apartheid.

The Union Local:

Locals are the heart of the PSAC, the day to day link between the membership and the union structure. They consist of a group of members, usually at a particular workplace or within a particular geographic area, and a Local executive and stewards who are willing to do the day-to-day work to build and maintain the union. An effective Local is essential to having a mobilized membership and a strong union presence at the workplace.

Notes:

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Activity: Bargaining Demands theatre

Description: Participants create skits or pantomimes that illustrate their priority bargaining demands.

Time Frame: 15 minutes plus performance time

of participants: 2 - 100+

Tools: pens and blank paper for recording ideas, scripts, etc.; optional: materials for costumes and props.

Advance Preparation: Prepare a set of cards each containing the name of one of the priority bargaining demands - we suggest one card (demand) for each theatre group of 4-6 picketers (if you have a lot of picketers, several groups can develop a performance for each demand). Fold the cards and put them in a container (basket, bag, box lid, etc.).

Method:

Ask picketers to gather in groups of 4-6 and invite each group to choose a bargaining demand from the word cards you've prepared ahead of time.

The task is for each group to write a 3 minute skit/pantomime about the bargaining demand they've chosen. The skit/pantomime should convey what the demand is and why it is important to the members and the Union.

Provide about 10 minutes preparatiopn and 5 minutes for each group to practice their song.

Announce the "Bargaining Demands Theatre Festival" and wildly applaud each group's performance.

Activity: Women in Black (Belgrade), adapted from the Israeli concept. From “Feminist Resistance to War and Violence in Serbia” by Lepa Mladjenovic and Donna M. Hughes.

Description: This activity is adapted from activities carried out by Mothers of the Disappeared in Argentina, where women responded to the State by “confessing” to their crimes in attempting to end state violence against its people. This is a great tool to respond to negative rhetoric that media and others often use against us or our issues. This activity can also be adapted and used to have individuals voice what they believe in or stand for.

Time Frame: 10-20 minutes

of participants: 2 - 100+

Advance Preparation: Ask picketers to wear black for the day you plan this activity.

Method:

Introduce the activity by explaining that this is an adaptation of an activity developed by a group of feminists in Belgrade who, in 1991, named themselves *Women in Black* after the Israeli group that wore black and protested in silence. To provide the historical back-drop to this activity, describe the following:

For seven years the Belgrade *Women in Black* staged peaceful protests against the civil war by putting on black clothes and standing silently in the Republic Square in Belgrade:

“We are the group of women who stand in silence and black every week to express our disapproval against war. We have decided to see what is the women’s side of this war. Women wear black in our countries to show the grief for death of the loved ones. We wear black for the death of all the victims of war. We wear black because the people have been thrown out of their homes, because women have been raped, because cities and villages have been burned and destroyed” (Women In Black 10 June 1992, 50).

In 1998 the Serbian regime banned the antiwar rally Against War and threatened *Women in Black* and other human rights groups, referring to them as “Serbia’s inner enemies”. *Women in Black* responded, in their 1998 annual report, with a confession of their guilt for seven years of activism for peace, freedom and democracy for all people in former Yugoslavia:

“I confess to my longtime anti-war activity;

I confess that I did not agree with the severe beating of people of other ethnicities and nationalities, faiths, race, sexual orientation;

I confess that I understand democracy as support to anti-war activities/ friends/ sisters - Albanian women, Croat women, Roma women, stateless women;”

and so on...

For this picket-line version, make reference to the negative images (from the employer, the media, etc.) of the strike and the picketers. Invite picketers to come up, one by one, and confess to their crimes in relation to the strike or its issues i.e.

I confess to supporting the labour movement;
I confess to my longtime fight for justice and equality;
I confess to having refused to cross this picket line;
I confess to my desire to provide quality public services;
I confess that I did not vote for the current government;
and so on...

Further information on the story of the Belgrade
Women in Black can be found at
<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/warvio1.htm>



Activity: Quotes

Description: This activity provides an opportunity for members to discuss quotes that relate to solidarity and standing up for your rights.

Time Frame:

of participants: 2 - 20+

Tools: one quote for every 2-3 participants (they'll work in pairs or triads)

Advance Preparation: Write out each quote 2 or 3 times (decide in advance if participants will be working in pairs or triads), each time on a separate piece of paper. Some sample quotes are provided. Fold up the individual pieces of paper and put them in a container (basket, bag, box lid, etc.)

Method:

Introduce the activity by explaining that, in a moment, you will pass out quotes that relate to solidarity and standing up for your rights.

Each person will receive a quote and then be asked to find their partner (s) i.e. the other participant (s) with the same quote.

After finding the other picketer(s) with the same quote, invite picketers to discuss the quote and how it relates to the current strike, or strike issues.

When the full group reassembles, each group will read out their quote and other participants will try to guess who wrote it. Each group will then briefly summarize their

discussions regarding the quote and the current strike or strike issues.

Wrap up the explanation by asking if there are any questions of clarification before proceeding with the game.

Play the game.

Debrief accordingly.

Sample quotes:

“They cannot take away our self respect if we do not give it to them”. (Mahatma Gandhi)

“You can’t always get what you want;

You can’t always get what you want;

But, if you try sometimes,

You just might find,

You get what you need.” (Mick Jagger and Keith Richards)

“An injustice committed against anyone is a threat to everyone.” (Anonymous)

“Something which we think is impossible now is not impossible in another decade.” (Constance Baker Motley, first Black Woman in the United States to become a Federal Judge)

“The status quo protects itself by punishing all challengers.” (Gloria Steinem)

“Be the change you want to see in the world.” (Gandhi)

“The need for change bulldozed a road down the centre of my mind.” (Maya Angelou)

“It lets you take certain strength in finding that there are more of you than you might have dared to hope.” (John Saul, Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa)

“There are risks and costs to a programme of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.” (John F. Kennedy)

“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.” (Paulo Freire)

“When we have the courage to speak out – to break our silence – we inspire the rest of the “moderates” in our communities to speak up and voice their views.” (Sharon Schuster)

“There are two primary choices in life: to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them.” (Dr. Denis Waitley)

“Fish or cut bait.” (American Proverb)

“Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.” (Mother Teresa)

“If I can’t dance, I want no part of your revolution.” (Emma Goldman)

“The struggle of humanity against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.” (Milan Kundera)

“UPPITY WOMEN UNITE” (popular feminist slogan from 1969)

“No Pasaran! They Shall Not Pass” (Spanish Civil War slogan)

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” (Martin Luther King Jr.)

“Democracy is not the law of the majority but the protection of the minority.” (Albert Camus)

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead, American anthropologist)

“Speak your mind, even if your voice shakes.” (Maggie Kuhn)



* * * * *

Activity: Strike BINGO

Description: Based on the traditional bingo game, this version captures participants’ experiences with strikes.

Time Frame: 10-15 minutes

of participants: 10-30

Tools: a bingo card and pen/pencil for each participant; prizes are optional

Advance Preparation: Prepare the bingo cards (see attached sample).


Method:

Introduce the activity by explaining that each participant will be given a bingo card and asked to find a picketer’s name for each square on the card. Depending on the number of participants (and the number of squares on your Bingo card) you may suggest that each participant’s name can only be used once (if you have a large group) or twice (if the group is smaller). The first participant to fill in all the squares on her/his bingo card should yell out “UNION” and the game will stop.

Start the bingo game; facilitators can participate too.

Once “UNION” has been called, debrief the game by reviewing each square to find out more about participants’ experiences.

Sample Strike Bingo card:

STRIKE BINGO				
Participated in the 1980 PSAC CR strike:	Contributed to a strike fund:	Participated in an airport strike:	Has been on a solidarity picket	Participated in another union's strike:
Walked another union's picket line:	Voted on a first (or new) collective agreement:	Spoken to the media about a strike issue:	Participated in a Labour Day event:	Is (or has been) a strike captain:
Is (or has been) an area-coordinator:	Received strike pay:	FREE SPACE 	Is (or has been) part of the strike committee:	Honked their car horn in support of a picket line:
Participated in an "illegal" strike:	Participated in a May Day march:	Is (or has been) part of the Local's welfare committee:	Brought their child to the picket line:	Participating in their first picket line:
Taken the PSAC's Strike course:	Voted YES to a strike:	Participated in the 1991 PSAC Strike:	Is (or has been) a picket captain:	Worked to rule?

* * * * *

Activity: ***Brain Teaser game #1***

Description: A quick mental energizer.

Time Frame: 5 minutes

of participants: 2 - 100+ (facilitator will need a loud voice or megaphone for large groups)

Method:

Explain that you have a number of questions requiring a quick answer. All relate to the alphabet.

Ask the questions:

What letter of the alphabet is ...

a bird? (J)

a pronoun (U)

part of your head? (I)

a line-up (Q)

an insect? (B)

a drink? (T, or O in French)

a question (Y)

a vegetable? (P)

a body of water? (C)

Option - form teams, have prizes....

* * * * *

Activity: Brain Teaser game #2

Description: Another quick mental energizer.

Time Frame: 10 minutes

of participants: 2 - 100+ (facilitator will need a loud voice or megaphone for large groups)

Method:

Explain that you have a number of questions requiring a quick answer.

Ask the questions:

If you had only one match and entered a cold, dimly lit room where there was a kerosene lamp, an oil heater, and a wood-burning stove, which would you light first? (**The match**)

Two women play checkers. They play five games without a draw game, and each woman wins the same number of games. How can this be true? (**They weren't playing each other**)

Two roosters were perched on the peak of the barn roof. One side of the roof was steeper than the other. On which side would their laid eggs roll down? (**Roosters don't lay eggs**)

Which is correct? "The yolk of eggs is white" or "The yolk of eggs are white". (**Neither - yolk is/are yellow**)

A farmer had 18 pigs, and all but 7 died. How many were left? (**7**)

Option - form teams, have prizes....



etc.

Activity: The Slime Line (a.k.a. “Sticky Picketing”)

Description: Participants create a sticky picket line that discourages scabs from crossing it.

Time Frame: preparation - 5 minutes

of participants: 1 - 100, although it will be particularly effective for small picket lines trying to cover large entrances.

Tools: plastic raincoats or ponchos (available from the dollar store), or large garbage bags with holes cut out for the head and arms; sticky stuff to smear on the raincoats, ponchos or bags (i.e. mustard, ketchup, syrup, jam) and something to smear it with (i.e. plastic disposable gloves, disposable spoons).

Advance Preparation: Ask picketers to wear old clothes and shoes to the picket line for the day you plan this activity;

Method:

Invite picketers to put on their plastic raincoats, ponchos or plastic bags, then find a partner who will help them cover the front of it with sticky stuff.

Ask picketers to stand next to one another in a usual picket line formation.

Options: Customize the sticky stuff to connect with a specific employer or bargaining issue (i.e. syrup with a few chicken feathers for CFIA members who are trying to achieve wash-up time).

NOTE: Please ensure that the sticky stuff that's used doesn't create a public health hazard (i.e. no animal parts or waste,

or peanut butter for those with allergies); please caution picketers not to deliberately walk into SCABS to smear them, but rather to stand in their usual place on the line.

* * * * *

Activity: Line-Up (you're on a picket line anyway!)

Description: Different ways to mix and match the picketers on the line.

Time Frame: 5-10 minutes per line-up

of participants: 2 - 100+

Tools: a place to line up (i.e. in front of the building you're picketing)

Method:

Introduce the activity by explaining that, since members are in a line anyway, these activities will provide them with the opportunity to meet new picketers and identify picketers with whom they have something in common.

Begin the line-up (choose from the options below):

- line up according to day/month of birth - from January to December;
- line up according to place of birth i.e. from the BC west coast across the country and around the world to Japan;
- line up according to how long you've worked for this employer starting with 1 day through to 35+ years;
- line up based on the total of your 7-digit home phone number added up (i.e. 423-1290 = 21)

- line up according to the spelling of your first name, starting with Aa and ending with Zz. Each picketer says his/her name, then makes up a place for where s/he lives that begins with the same letter and finishes with something s/he would like, again, beginning with that letter. An example would be “My name is Anne, I’m from Aylmer and would like an apple”.

After each line up invite picketers to introduce themselves to their neighbour and exchange some personal stories about their place in the he line-up.

To gather new ways of lining up, form groups of equal numbers of participants.

Ask each group to quickly line up according to height, and clap when the task is completed. The group that starts clapping first is declared “the winner” for that round (provided of course they were in line from shortest to tallest).



Groups are then provided with two minutes to develop 2-3 new topics for line ups for the full group.

Starting with the group that was the “winner” in the height line up, each group will facilitate the line-ups they’ve developed for the full group.

* * * * *

Activity: Energizers

Description: Quick activities to perk up energy levels on the line.

Time Frame: 5 minutes each

of participants: 2 - 100+

Method:

Here are three quick energizers:

Oh Ah: Divide participants into two groups - one group becomes the “Ah” group and the other is the “Oh” group. The facilitator is a “conductor”, guiding the groups with hand movements.

With the facilitator’s “Ah” hand, point to the “Ah” group. Follow with the same movement with the other hand for the “Oh” group.

Each group then modifies its sound according to the hand movements. For example, raising the hand creates a “scale” from a low to a high note, a quick punching movement results in a quick “staccato-like” sound. Various hand and facial movements from the conductor can alter pitch and volume and introduce other variations.

Partner Observation: Form pairs. Everyone then forms two lines (facing in) shoulder to shoulder, with partners facing each other. Participants should be given approximately 30 seconds to discuss a particular issue. Then, instruct the two lines to turn and face away from the centre.

Members in one or both lines have 15-20 seconds to change something about their appearance (e.g., change a watch to a different wrist, unbutton a button, remove a belt, part their hair on the other side, remove shoes, etc.). The change must be discreet, but visible to the partner.

The participants again turn in to face each other and have 30 seconds to discover the physical changes that have been made.

A variation is to have everyone engage in conversation with a partner. Then, form a circle with each pair standing next to each other. Conduct a round, calling on everyone (without looking at his/her partner) to name the colour of the partner's eyes.

Pat on the Back: Ask everyone to stand and invite picketers to mirror your actions as you move your right hand down the outside of your left arm in patting move-



ments, giving directions as you go i.e.

“... continue by patting up the inside of your left arm; now, change and pat down the outside of your right arm. Now, pat the top of your head with your right hand and”

The idea is that the group finishes by patting themselves on the back for a great picket line!



More activities to try...

This offer is peanuts!:

Let the employer know what you think about their offer by making up picket signs (*i.e. Warning: the employer's wage offer is peanuts; may or may not contain minute traces of benefit improvements; continued exposure will cause allergic reaction*) and distributing peanuts to passersby. Making or renting a Planter's Peanuts costume will add to the event.

1% (or 2%) is for milk!:

This slogan is great for picket signs when faced with a low wage offer from the employer. Any cow symbols, such as giant cow costumes, puppets, stickers, black and white balloons, noise-makers that say “moo” add to the fun and will draw attention to your line.

Candlelight vigils:

Candlelight vigils are held in the evening, just after dark. Participants light candles and usually sing songs or listen to music, followed by a moment of silence. To avoid hot wax on fingers and wind extinguishing flames, insert a taper candle through a small hold made in the bottom of a paper coffee cup. Participants could also wear glow-in-the-dark jewelry or stickers, and tea candles can be used to light a path or stage. NOTE: Please ask picketers to use caution around open flames.

Dine on the Line for \$1.99:

A CUPE picket line in Wadena, Saskatchewan invited supporters, friends and family to join picketers for lunch on the line over the noon hour. They provided burgers and drinks for \$1.99 (the local Co-op store had charged \$2 the week before so it was a real deal!)

Organize a shelter warming party:

For this variation on a traditional house-warming party, make a picket shelter of appropriate materials (plastic tarps, large appliance boxes, duct tape, etc.) and invite supporters to bring shelter warming gifts such as “surround sound stereo systems” and “in ground heating systems”.

Organize a Requiem Mass:

A “Requiem Mass” (special mass for the repose of the souls of the dead) can be held to mark the loss of something significant to workers, such as an end to free collective bargaining, the imposition of a contract, or being legislated back to work. During the PSAC WP strike organizers set up a large burn barrel and, as the mass was being said, picketers filed by and very solemnly deposited their copy of the employer’s Mission Statement in the burn barrel.

A variation of this activity is the Grim Reaper – the collective agreement is placed in a “coffin” and carried in a picket line procession with picketers dressed as the Grim Reaper.

Christmas Carols:

If you are on strike during the holiday season, re-write some of the traditional Christmas carols to reflect your



issues and sing them on the line or go caroling. The Labor Heritage Foundation's website has a special section devoted to holiday solidarity and includes titles like I'm Dreaming of a New Contract, God Rest Ye Merry Union Workers, Rudolph the Union Reindeer and many more.

See <http://www.laborheritage.org/Holidaysongs.html> for more information.

And finally...

PROPS and COSTUMES

Creative visual symbols and props on the picket line can make members, the public and the media sit up and take notice. Making the props and costumes yourselves is fun, less expensive, and a great opportunity for members to work together and unleash their inner artist! Prop and costume materials can be found at home (newspaper, felt markers, wire, cardboard boxes, old clothing, dried beans or rice, tin cans, plastic bags, tin foil, tape, glue, paint, etc.), at your neighbourhood "dollar" store, and at second hand and resale stores.

Props:

Cardboard coffins or gravestones symbolizing "the death of workplace justice";

A giant "Union Busting" subpoena delivered to the boss;

A huge greeting card containing an appropriate message for management and signed by employees;

Oversized band aids with a message such as "your contract offer makes us sick" (bandages, slings and other

medical items can be similarly used);

A skeleton symbolizing the “bare bones” benefits package;

A “Justice-Mobile” (also known as the “Wheels of Justice”) made from a huge cardboard box cut into the shape of a car;

A block of ice to protest a wage freeze;

home-made blocks of ice (use old plastic containers and coloured water then pop in the freezer) to make a “brick” wall - most effective in the winter!;

Bags of dirt left outside the office of a CEO who treated his employees “like dirt”;

An inflatable plastic dinosaur denoting Neanderthal management policies;

Kites instructing the boss to “Go fly a kite”;

gummy worms in a “Survivor” skit;

Police crime scene tape wrapped around an area where an outrageous offense against workers has taken place;

Red capes and devil horns worn by employees as they welcome co-workers to “the gates of Hell”;

Costumes:

Costumes for the picket line can be as simple as everyone wearing black on a particular day, to designing elaborate outfits for skits and songs written by picketers. Early November is a great time for finding inexpensive costumes, and your closet or the local second-hand store provide year-round possibilities. The web also has

numerous sites where props and costumes can be purchased.

Puppets:

Here's how to make a puppet in 10 easy steps (check out the web address below for an illustrated version of these instructions):

NOTE: Poster board (from the dollar store), duct tape and fabric

strips are good materials. If using glue, allow drying time after each layer.

Cut 2 shoulder girdle templates out of cardboard - approximately 24" x 36";

Glue the 2 templates together to form a double layer. Cut out a hole in the centre for the head.

Bend the cardboard template into an arc. Attach a tab or tie at each corner of the cardboard (for tying it on).

Time for the head! Cut out a face template (~26" wide x 20" high piece of cardboard), form a tube, and tape/glue the edges together.

Attach the head and shoulders with fabric strips and trim the head to fit.

Cut out the mouth - have fun! (big, small, happy, angry...)

Form the chin with darts (folds in the cardboard) and glue/tape into place.

Make the facial features from newspaper; use lots of masking tape and be creative! (moustache, lip ring, wart...). Attach features to the face. Make hair from cardboard, yarn, fabric strips, etc.

Plaster everything with brown paper and glue thinned with water (like those paper machier projects from school). Allow for drying after each layer.

Paint your puppet, and enjoy!!!

Source: *“An Action A Day Keeps Global Capitalism Away”*
by Mike

Hudema; www.btlbooks.com/Links/puppet_making.htm

RESOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

between the lines www.btlbooks.com

“Many of our readers have told us that they look to BTL for challenging ideas, concepts, and analysis not readily found in the mainstream. At BTL we strive to embrace critical perspectives on culture, economics, and society. Our timely and evocative books acknowledge the complexity of living on the brink of the 21st century.”

Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM)
www.calm.ca

“The Canadian Association of Labour Media is a network of union publications and editors, founded in 1976 by the major affiliates of the Canadian Labour Congress.

Catalyst Centre www.catalystcentre.ca

“The Catalyst Centre celebrates and promotes innova-

tive learning, popular education, research and community development to advance positive social change.”

Labor Heritage Foundation (USA)
www.laborheritage.org

“The Labor Heritage Foundation) works to strengthen the labor movement through the use of music and the arts.”

“An Action A Day Keeps Global Capitalism Away” by Mike Hudema, published by between the lines, 2004

“Education for Changing Unions” by Bev Burke, Jojo Geronimo, D’Arcy Martin, Barb Thomas and Carol Wall, published by Between the Lines, Toronto 2002



“Facilitators’ Handbook” and *“Adult and Popular Education Exercises”* prepared by the Education Section of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)

“Good Chants for a Lively Picket Line” by Ruth Goldbaum, produced by the Greater Hartford Labor Council.

Beth Smillie, CUPE, Saskatchewan

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