
The role of workers' representation in English language teaching

Webinar handout

Kevin Thomson & Stuart Anderson

Introduction

We believe that staff representation in English Language Teaching environments is positive for both teachers and teaching institutions.

To get some background on this topic, we recommend watching this 2 minute 38 second video on YouTube called *What have the unions ever done for us?* by **Trades Union Congress**, a UK organisation. It gives a brief explanation of some of the advances that unions have made in the workplace. <https://youtu.be/1P4BX-5fPDA>

The US Department of Labor agrees that unionisation is positive for workers and states:

“Labor unions improve wages and working conditions for all workers, whether they are union members or not. Unions help reduce wage gaps for women workers and workers of color. Union members have better job safety protections and better paid leave than non-union workers, and are more secure exercising their rights in the workplace.”

<https://www.dol.gov/general/workcenter/union-advantage>

Classroom resources

These are a few classroom resources on Trade Union and Trade Union related topics that you might like to try out with your students:

- <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/general-english/magazine-zone/international-workers-day> (Written by Kevin)
- https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/we_need_unions_-_radical_read_teacher_notes_and_worksheets.pdf
- https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/we_need_unions_slides_-_radical_read_supporting_slides.pdf
- <https://teflworkersunion.org/labour-english/>
- <https://esl-voices.com/lesson-plan-labor-day-and-unions-from-pbs/>

Trade Unions and you

We encourage all teachers to join trade unions and the list below includes unions that represent English teachers in a number of countries. The list is not definitive and in many countries there are several unions which English teachers can join. Use this table to find out more and record what you find.

Country	Union	Link
Spain	CCOO	http://ccoo.es/
France	CFDT	https://www.cfdt.fr/
Italy	CGIL	https://www.cgil.it/
Japan	General Workers Union	http://www.nugw.org/
Republic of Ireland	ELTUnite	https://eltunite.com/
UK	TEFL workers union	https://teflworkersunion.org/
International	IWW	https://www.iww.org/

 A recording of Stuart and Kevin's webinar can be watched here:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/news-and-events/webinars/webinars-teachers/policies-and-practices-elt-classroom-mini-event>