

## Purpose

In this lesson, students work in groups and participate in role plays to develop a greater understanding of the concept of “rights and responsibilities” for both employers and workers.

## British Columbia Planning 10 Curriculum Connections

Prescribed Learning Outcomes	Suggested Achievement Indicators
<i>It is expected that students will:</i>	<i>Students who have fully met the prescribed learning outcome are able to:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an awareness of the legal rights and responsibilities of employers and employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurately identify the legal rights and responsibilities of employees</li> <li>Accurately identify where information related to the legal rights and responsibilities of employers and employees can be found (e.g., employment centres, school or community career centres, Workers' Compensation Board, public library)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse practices associated with work-related risk reduction and injury prevention (e.g., safety training, hazard recognition, risk management, communication)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe and discuss standard guidelines and procedures for reducing risk and injury in the workplace (e.g., following established safety guidelines such as those set out by the Workers' Compensation Board, knowing own abilities and limits, using safety and personal protective equipment, knowing where to go to address a problem)</li> <li>List and discuss primary causes of injury to young workers (e.g., inability to recognize and respond appropriately to hazards, lack of training) propose strategies to minimize workplace hazards</li> </ul>

## Teaching Strategies

- Small-group work
- Class discussion
- Role play

## Suggested Time

- 1 hour

## Materials and Resources

- *Student Handout 3: Rights and Responsibilities T-Chart*
- *Student Handout 4: Workers' Health and Safety Rights and Responsibilities in the Workplace*
- *Student Handout 5: Employers' Health and Safety Responsibilities in the Workplace*
- *Teacher Resource 1: Rights and Responsibilities T-Chart Answer Key*
- *Student Handout 6: Refusing Unsafe Work*
- *Teacher Resource 2: Rights and Responsibilities Role Play*

## Assessment Strategy

- *Assessment Tool 2: Rights and Responsibilities Assessment*

## Preparation

- Print copies of the student handouts and teacher resources and review them before teaching the lesson.
- Cut out the roles included in the *Teacher Resource 2: Rights and Responsibilities Role Play* for easier distribution to students.

1. **Introduce** the subject by having students define rights and responsibilities. Have them generate a list of the rights and responsibilities that students have at school. Responses could include:

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safe environment</li> <li>• Capable teachers</li> <li>• Respectful treatment by teachers and fellow students</li> <li>• Protection from verbal and physical aggression</li> <li>• Access to a counsellor</li> <li>• Access to equipment that is well maintained and properly functioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To respect teachers and fellow students</li> <li>• Not to interfere with the learning of others</li> <li>• To listen when others are speaking</li> <li>• To do homework</li> <li>• Not to be verbally or physically aggressive with other students</li> <li>• To put litter in containers</li> <li>• To report unsafe equipment</li> <li>• To report spills</li> <li>• To wear protective clothing when required (e.g., in PE, lab, shop)</li> </ul>



2. **Ask** students to consider how the concept of rights and responsibilities applies to the workplace. Elicit some responses and discuss briefly. Ask students where they might be able to go to find out more information about workplace rights and responsibilities. Responses should include: employment centres, school or community career centres, WorkSafeBC, their supervisor and/or health and safety committee/safety representative, the public library, and online sources of work safety information (such as the WorkSafeBC web site and others that focus on the subject of worker safety). Write student responses on the board. Fill in any responses that students may have missed.
3. **Organize** students into small working groups of three to five. Distribute *Student Handout 3: Rights and Responsibilities T-Chart*. Have students work together to fill in the four quadrants of the chart.
4. **Involve** students in the creation of a class T-chart. Have volunteers read out their responses. Record all answers on the board in the form of a T-chart similar to the one on the handout. Instruct students to fill in any answers they did not already have.
5. **Distribute** *Student Handout 4: Workers' Health and Safety Rights and Responsibilities in the Workplace* and *Student Handout 5: Employers' Health and Safety Responsibilities in the Workplace*. Instruct students to fill in any additional rights and responsibilities not yet recorded on their T-charts. (You may want to refer to the information provided in *Teacher Resource 1: Rights and Responsibilities T-Chart Answer Key*.) Discuss briefly. Ask the class if there were any rights or responsibilities that surprised them.

6. **Inform** students that WorkSafeBC’s Occupational Health and Safety Regulation outlines specific rights and responsibilities in the workplace. The Regulation:
- States that workers must receive adequate direction and instruction
  - Lays out supervisor responsibilities
  - Describes the procedure a worker should follow in refusing unsafe work
  - States that workers should not be subject to discipline for refusing unsafe work

Further, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation was amended in July 2007 (sections 3.22 to 3.25) to ensure that before young or new workers begin work in a workplace, they are given health and safety orientation and training specific to their workplace. The revised Regulation also requires that the employer provide additional training if requested by the young worker, or if the worker is unable to perform work tasks safely. An employer must keep records of all orientation and training provided under sections 3.23 and 3.24.

7. **Ask** students to consider what they would do if they were asked to perform unsafe work. Would they agree to do it or refuse? What reasons do they have for their answer? (The most common response for students to give for refusing to do a task is “I might lose my job.”) Ask them how they could refuse effectively. Inform students that the Regulation states:

*(1) A worker must not be subject to disciplinary action because the worker has acted in compliance with the Regulation or with an order made by an officer.*

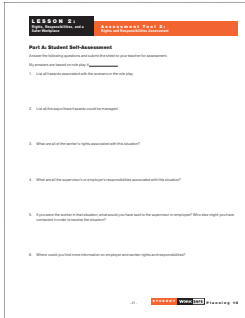
*(2) Temporary assignment to alternative work at no loss in pay to the worker until the matter is resolved is deemed not to constitute disciplinary action.*

These regulations are based on **the worker’s perception** of the hazardous situation, **not the employer’s**.

8. **Distribute** *Student Handout 6: Refusing Unsafe Work*. Review with students what the Regulation says regarding the refusal of unsafe work. Discuss briefly.
9. **Invite** eight students to volunteer to participate in four role plays, two students in each one. Using *Teacher Resource 2: Rights and Responsibilities Role Play*, distribute the roles to each pair. **Ask them not to discuss their roles with the other person in their pair.**

Have each pair briefly prepare and then perform their role play for the class. After each role play, invite the class to comment on how effective the worker was in conveying his or her safety concerns to the employer’s or supervisor’s attention. Ask how responsive the employer or supervisor was to the worker’s concerns. Also ask the students what they would do if faced with such a response from their supervisor or employer.





## Assessment

- Collect all student written work and then distribute *Assessment Tool 2: Rights and Responsibilities Assessment*. Instruct students to use one of the role plays as the basis for their answers to the questions in Part A. Collect these self-assessments and, in Part B, record your assessment of each student's work in this lesson.

## Extensions

- Have students write their own role plays on the subject of workplace rights and responsibilities. Invite them to act out their role plays for the rest of the class.
- Ask students to interview their parents or guardians about worker rights and responsibilities in their workplaces. Have their parents or guardians ever been involved in, or witnessed, an unsafe situation or workplace accident that resulted in injury? What were the consequences? You may want to have students work individually or as a class to compose the list of interview questions.
- Work with the class to compose a list of classroom rights and responsibilities for both students and the teacher.



**LESSON 2:**  
Rights, Responsibilities, and a  
Safer Workplace

**Student Handout 3:**  
Rights and Responsibilities T-Chart

<p><b>Worker Rights</b></p>	<p><b>Worker Responsibilities</b></p>
<p><b>Employer Rights</b></p>	<p><b>Employer Responsibilities</b></p>

**Workers have the right to:**

- Information, instruction, and training about safe work procedures and how to recognize hazards on the job
- Supervision to make sure they work without undue risk
- Equipment and safety gear required to do the job safely (workers are responsible for providing their own clothing to protect themselves against the natural elements, general purpose work gloves, safety footwear, and safety headgear)
- Refuse to do tasks and to work in conditions they think are unsafe, without being fired or disciplined for refusing
- Participate in workplace health and safety committees and activities

**As a worker, you are responsible** for working without undue risk to yourself or others. To keep safe on the job:

- Don't assume you can do something you've never done before. Ask your supervisor to show you how to do it safely before you begin work. Ask your employer for job safety training.
- Use all safety gear and protective clothing when and where required.
- Always follow safe work procedures and encourage your co-workers to do the same.
- Immediately correct unsafe conditions or report them right away to your supervisor.
- Know how to handle any hazardous materials or chemicals you use on the job.
- If you have any doubts about your safety, talk to your supervisor.
- Tell your supervisor of any physical or mental conditions that may make you unable to work safely.

One of the most important responsibilities of the employer is to ensure that workers are adequately trained in safe work procedures and properly supervised when carrying out their duties. Under the *Workers Compensation Act*, the employer has the legal responsibility to ensure that every worker receives adequate training. The employer must also follow-up to see that the supervisor is carrying out all required training.

Employers are responsible for ensuring that all workers can do their jobs without unnecessary risk. Young and new workers in particular are often inexperienced and unable to recognize hazards. Many won't ask questions about workplace safety for fear of looking incompetent or simply because they don't know what to ask. The procedures employers have in place for workplace health and safety should take account of these and other facts about young and new workers.

**Employers should:**

- Know and comply with workplace health and safety regulations that apply to their workplace.
- Create a workplace culture that encourages young and new workers to ask questions about any health and safety concerns they may have.
- Involve supervisors and experienced workers in identifying potential health and safety problems and in developing prevention programs to eliminate these hazards.
- Give supervisors and young and new workers all the training they need to do their jobs and to recognize hazards.
- Provide the required safety gear and protective clothing (workers are responsible for providing their own clothing to protect them against the natural elements, general purpose work gloves, safety footwear and safety headgear).
- Evaluate equipment that young workers might be required to operate to ensure that it is safe for their use. Make sure they know how to use any equipment safely.
- Make sure that young workers are appropriately supervised to prevent injuries and exposure to hazardous materials. Create an environment where "safe" behaviour is rewarded and recognized in the workplace.
- Provide managers and supervisors with knowledge of how to train new and young workers. Check back with them frequently to ensure they are following up with new staff to ensure that questions are being answered and to observe if the work is being done safely.

Specific requirements for new and young workers state that employers should provide orientation and training that includes:

- The name and contact information for the young or new worker's supervisor
- The employer's and young or new worker's rights and responsibilities under the *Workers Compensation Act*
- Workplace health and safety rules
- Specific hazards to which the young or new worker may be exposed, including risks from robbery, assault, or confrontation
- Working alone or in isolation
- Violence in the workplace
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Location of first aid facilities
- Emergency procedures, including how to access first aid and to report injuries
- Instruction and demonstration of the young or new worker's work tasks
- The employer's health and safety program, where applicable
- WHMIS information requirements, where applicable
- Contact information for the occupational health and safety committee or the worker health and safety representative, where applicable to the workplace



## LESSON 2:

Rights, Responsibilities, and a Safer Workplace

## Teacher Resource 1:

Rights and Responsibilities T-Chart Answer Key

### Worker Rights

- A safe working environment
- Proper health and safety information, instruction, and training
- Supervision to make sure the job is done safely
- Well-maintained and functioning personal protective equipment
- Right to refuse to do work that may endanger a worker's safety or put a worker's health at risk
- Right to participate in workplace health and safety committees and activities

### Worker Responsibilities

- Must pay attention to health and safety training
- Must follow all health and safety procedures
- Must ask questions when information is unclear
- Must always wear personal protective equipment and keep it in good condition
- Must use machinery and equipment properly
- Must familiarize himself or herself with emergency procedures, location of fire extinguishers, emergency exits, etc.
- Must report any perceived hazards on the job
- **Must refuse to do any work that might create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person**

### Employer Rights

- Can expect workers to pay attention during health and safety training
- Can expect workers to remember their training and follow health and safety principles at all times
- Can expect workers to report any perceived hazards in the workplace
- Can expect workers to wear their personal protective equipment at all times
- Can expect workers to inform them about any physical or mental conditions that may impair their ability to perform their jobs safely

### Employer Responsibilities

- Must provide health and safety training to all workers for general and specific tasks
- Must provide specific health and safety orientation and training to all new and young workers
- Must develop a workplace health and safety policy (e.g., what to do in emergency situations)
- Must display health and safety information where all workers can see it
- Must provide well-maintained and properly functioning personal protective equipment for all workers
- Must alert workers to any hazards in the workplace and provide information on how to minimize the risks associated with those hazards

According to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation:

1. *A person must not carry out or cause to be carried out any work process or operate or cause to be operated any tool, appliance or equipment if that person has reasonable cause to believe that to do so would create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person.*
2. *A worker who refuses to carry out a work process or operate a tool, appliance or equipment pursuant to subsection (1) must immediately report the circumstances of the unsafe condition to his or her supervisor or employer.*
3. *A supervisor or employer receiving a report made under subsection (2) must immediately investigate the matter and*
  - *Ensure that any unsafe condition is remedied without delay, or*
  - *If in his or her opinion the report is not valid, must so inform the person who made the report.*
4. *If the procedure under the Regulation does not resolve the matter and the worker continues to refuse to carry out the work process or operate the tool, appliance or equipment, the supervisor or employer must investigate the matter in the presence of the worker who made the report and in the presence of:*
  - *A worker member of the occupational health and safety committee,*
  - *A worker who is selected by a trade union representing the worker, or*
  - *If there is no occupational health and safety committee or the worker is not represented by a trade union, any other reasonably available worker selected by the worker.*
5. *If the investigator under the Regulation does not resolve the matter and the worker continues to refuse to carry out the work process or operate the tool, appliance or equipment, both the supervisor or the employer, and the worker must immediately notify an officer, who must investigate the matter without undue delay and issue whatever orders are deemed necessary.*

You have the right to refuse work if you (a) have reasonable cause and (b) follow all procedures in the Regulation. If you refuse to do work you consider unsafe, you must follow the steps below:

1. You must discuss the situation with your supervisor or employer.
2. If the matter is not resolved, then a worker representative must be involved.
3. If the matter is still unresolved, a WorkSafeBC field officer is called in by both worker and management representatives.
4. While the matter is being resolved, you will be temporarily reassigned to another job.

If you feel you must refuse work, be sure to follow the procedures in the regulations and any other policies that the employer may have. **Don't just stop work and go home!** If you don't follow the procedures, you may be subject to disciplinary action by your employer.



### **Case One: Worker's Role**

You are a part-time worker at a fast food restaurant. You have only been working at your job for a few weeks. You like your job very much and don't want to do anything that might jeopardize it.

One of your duties is to empty all garbage bins at the end of the night and carry the full garbage bags out to the main garbage bin at the back of the restaurant. You're still a bit slow performing your closing duties, and don't get around to dealing with the garbage until after the mopping has been done. The garbage bags are heavy and the mopped floor is slippery. You're worried that you may slip and injure yourself performing this task. You don't want to complain because you don't want to get fired. But at the same time, you don't want to injure yourself. After a lot of thought, you decide to tell your supervisor that you think carrying the heavy garbage bags across the wet floor is dangerous. You want to ask the supervisor to arrange for someone to give you a hand with the garbage or to delay the mopping until after the garbage has been taken out.



### **Case One: Supervisor's Role**

You are the supervising manager at a fast food restaurant. You like your job and the workers you supervise. You're always looking out for them and working to improve conditions so that the workplace is as safe as possible.



### **Case Two: Worker's Role**

You are a full-time worker in a small, family-owned delicatessen. One of your tasks is to use a large meat slicer to slice meat for customers. Recently, you noticed that the safety guard on the slicer was broken. You brought the matter to the owner's attention and assumed the slicer would get repaired right away. But it's been a whole week now and the guard is still broken. Although you've been very careful while using the machine, you worry that if the deli gets busy, you might lose your concentration and cut yourself, or that another worker might get cut. You've decided to bring the matter up with the owner again. He can be grouchy and abrupt at times, but you think he will listen to reason about the dangers involved in using machinery with a broken safety guard.



### **Case Two: Employer's Role**

You are the owner of a small, family-owned delicatessen. The shop was founded by your grandfather and is very important to you. Recently, business hasn't been good. A large chain grocery store has opened up in your area and is drawing away a lot of your customers. You're struggling to stay afloat and don't have any extra money to put back into the business.

A couple of weeks ago, one of your workers pointed out that a safety guard on one of the meat slicers had broken. You plan to get it fixed soon, but just haven't gotten around to it with all the work you have. You've warned the employees to be careful when using that slicer and so far there hasn't been a problem. Besides, you think injuries are the fault of careless employees, not the machinery. When you were young, none of the meat slicers had safety guards on them, and you still have all your fingers.





### **Case Three: Worker's Role**

You are a part-time worker at a local retail store. You work in the store's automotive department.

On a recent trip to the stockroom, you pulled a back muscle while standing on a ladder retrieving a case of motor oil from a high shelf. The cases of motor oil are heavy and have to be carried several steps down the ladder. Your back wasn't sore for very long, but you're worried that either you or someone else is going to be injured carrying the cases of motor oil down from that shelf. You think the cases should be moved to a lower shelf.

You decide to tell your supervisor about the problem.



### **Case Three: Supervisor's Role**

You are a 20-year-old supervisor working at a local retail store. You are big and strong. You played on your school's football team and now lift weights in your spare time.

You are generally a nice person, but sometimes tease people for being smaller or weaker than you are. You tease other workers for not being able to perform the same physical tasks that you can.

And, although you don't like to admit it, you know you're also a bit lazy and don't like being given extra work to do.



### **Case Four: Worker's Role**

You are a part-time worker at a small neighbourhood grocery store. You've been working in the store for only a few days, but already you know you like the job and your employer. It's close to your home, so it's very convenient. However, you're worried about security because you often work alone. There is a security camera, but it doesn't look like it's working. Posters and flyers completely fill the windows, making it impossible to see in or out. And the street lights outside the store aren't very bright. You decide to talk about your concerns with the store owner.



### **Case Four: Employer's Role**

You are the owner of a small neighbourhood grocery store that is attached to your own home. You are very proud of your business and enjoy the work, but you're worried that it isn't making a lot of profit. You installed a security camera years ago, but since it stopped working you haven't been able to afford to replace it. As well, most of your windows are covered with posters from your suppliers, who require that you place this material in a prominent position.





**Part B: Teacher Assessment**

Use the following chart to assess student work during this lesson.

<b>The student is able to identify:</b>	<b>Does not meet expectations</b>	<b>Meets expectations</b>	<b>Fully meets expectations</b>	<b>Exceeds expectations</b>
Hazards associated with workplace situations	Student isn't able to identify the relevant hazard	Student identifies the relevant hazard	Student identifies and describes the context in which the relevant hazard occurs	Student identifies other scenarios where the hazard may occur
Ways in which to limit the risks associated with a hazardous workplace situation	Student isn't able to identify any ways to limit the risks of the relevant workplace hazards	Student identifies some ways to limit the risks of the relevant workplace hazard	Student identifies all ways to limit the risks of workplace hazards covered during class discussion	Student identifies more ways to limit the risks of workplace hazards than were covered during class discussion
Worker rights associated with workplace health and safety	Student isn't able to identify any worker rights	Student identifies some worker rights	Student identifies all worker rights covered during class discussion	Student identifies more worker rights than were covered during class discussion
Employer or supervisor responsibilities associated with workplace health and safety	Student isn't able to identify any employer or supervisor responsibilities	Student identifies some employer or supervisor responsibilities	Student identifies all employer or supervisor responsibilities covered during class discussion	Student identifies more employer or supervisor responsibilities than were covered during class discussion
Effective ways to communicate concern about a hazardous workplace situation	Student isn't able to identify any effective ways to communicate concerns	Student identifies some effective ways to communicate concerns	Student identifies all effective ways to communicate concerns covered during class discussion	Student identifies more effective ways to communicate concerns than were covered during class discussion
Places to get information on employer and worker rights and responsibilities	Student isn't able to identify any places to get information on employer and worker rights and responsibilities	Student identifies some places to get information on employer and worker rights and responsibilities	Student identifies all places to get information on employer and worker rights and responsibilities covered during class discussion	Student identifies more places to get information on employer and worker rights and responsibilities than were covered during class discussion

**Teacher's comments:**