



## ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

**Level:** Intermediate (A2–B1)

**Age:** Teenagers / Adults

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Language summary:** Expressions related to work; language of description/comparison; language of speculation

**Image work:** Looking at an image from different perspectives; using an image as a stimulus for discussion

### PROCEDURE:

**1** Ask students to discuss this question in pairs then take class feedback. The meaning is 'an activity which is not very special, an everyday activity'.

**2** The man's clothes would usually be associated with a manual job. This is obvious from the overalls, gloves and yellow fluorescent jacket (so he will be easily spotted). Perhaps he works as a road sweeper or in an airport, or perhaps building or repairing roads or railways. Accept any reasonable answer.

**3** Students will probably say that people in offices usually wear suits and dress smartly. Encourage them to develop this idea in as much detail as possible and use it as an opportunity to revise the vocabulary of clothes. Consider the differences in male/female options in office dress codes.

**4** The man's expression is ambiguous. He could be bored and tired, he could have a cold and be about to sneeze, or be in discomfort (as a result of doing a physical job). Accept any reasonable answer. Allow students time to discuss if they would like to do this kind of job and spend time taking feedback.

### **5 Key**

*a work horse = a hard-working person*

*a job for life = a career you can stay in all your working life*

*dirty work = something unpleasant or difficult to do*

*to get worked up = to become very upset about something*

*to work like a dog = to work very hard*

All except *get worked up* could be associated with the picture. NB. Manual work tends not to be a job for life in some countries and is often thought of as being poorly paid with long hours and little job security.

**6** A blue collar job is often thought of as one that involves getting the hands dirty. It is the opposite for white collar jobs. The names come from the colour of shirt that each worker traditionally wears. Examples of blue collar include: builder, appliance repairer, mechanic, lorry driver, fire fighter, painter, roofer. Examples for white collar include: salesperson, administrator, manager, CEO, lawyer, teacher, stock trader.

Discuss where doctors and nurses fit in as this is often thought of as a 'grey area'. The man in the picture appears to be a blue collar worker. Allow students ample time to discuss which jobs they would like / not like to do.

**7** Encourage students to discuss this in relation to the categories outlined and also to develop other categories of their own. It might be popularly thought that more qualifications are required for white collar jobs but it could also be argued that blue collar jobs require education via training and are just as skilled, if not more so. Manual jobs are greatly respected in many countries and cultures.

**8** Give students time to read the short text and to digest it. Help with any unknown words. Check that everyone understands the meaning of *bonus*. Encourage discussion about the meaning of *hard work* and *effort*. Take class feedback and extend the discussion by asking students to talk about their knowledge of real world examples of bonuses.

**9** On the whole, blue collar workers earn less than white collar workers. Encourage students to think about why this is (referring back to question 7). However, there are exceptions within each strand. For example, receptionists tend to earn low salaries. Oil rig workers often earn high salaries. CEOs and those working in the stock exchange are likely to earn the highest. Ask students to speculate why this is.



**ALL IN A DAY'S WORK**

**1** What do you think the expression *all in a day's work* means? With a partner, write a definition and find out if you have a similar expression in your language. Is the meaning the same?

**2** Look at the picture with your partner. Describe the clothes this person is wearing. What kind of job do you think he does? Give reasons for your answer.

**3** Now imagine how someone working in an office would dress. What are the differences?

**4** Look at the picture again. How do you think this man is feeling? Do you think he enjoys his job? Why/Why not? Would you like to do a job like his? What do you think his typical working day would include?

**5** Do you know what these expressions associated with work mean? In pairs, find the definitions. Use a dictionary to help you if necessary. Which ones would you associate with the picture?

- a work horse
- a job for life
- dirty work
- to get worked up
- to work like a dog

**6** Do you know the difference between the term blue collar worker and white collar worker? What kind of job does the man in the photograph do? In groups of three, think of as many jobs as you can in each category. Which job would you prefer to do? Why?

blue collar	white collar
<i>factory worker</i>	<i>bank manager</i>

**7** Do you think different qualities are required for blue and white collar jobs? In your groups discuss this in terms of age, qualifications and gender (and any other areas you think are important).

**8** In a different group, read the following extract from a newspaper. Do you think the bonus is justified? Why do you think the blue collar workers didn't get a bonus? Who do you think works harder?

The Managing Director of Oxtron-x, the famous technology multinational, was in the news today as her bonus for the year was in the region of £200,000. This is on top of a salary of £800,000 per year. An Oxtron-x spokesperson said, 'The managing director works really long hours under very difficult circumstances. Her salary and bonus reflect the importance of her job and how hard she works.' Some critics believe this kind of bonus is too high and say it's not fair that none of the Oxtron-x blue collar workers (cooks, cleaners and other staff) were awarded any bonuses this year.

**9** Go back to the list you made in question 6. Who do you think earns the most and who the least? Talk to each other about the reasons for these differences and say whether you agree with them.