

Who is 'working class' and why does it matter in the arts?

Level 1: Elementary

Article summary: This article discusses why working-class representation in the arts is important.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Word forms

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about social class and how one's background might make it more difficult to achieve success in the arts. Ask students to work in pairs to discuss the questions. Get feedback from one or two pairs on what they discussed.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to find the words in the article and then complete the sentences. Allow a few minutes for students to check answers in pairs or in groups before checking answers with the whole class.

Key:

1. *stereotypes*
2. *playwright*
3. *private schools*
4. *auditions*
5. *population*
6. *the arts*
7. *creative*
8. *working class*

- b. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences using words from the previous activity in the correct form. Encourage students to read complete sentences to you when they give answers, so you can check their pronunciation of the key words. To extend the activity, ask students to tell you what the key differences are between public and private schools.

Key:

1. *private schools*
2. *audition*
3. *working class*
4. *the arts*
5. *population*
6. *stereotypes*
7. *playwright*
8. *creative*

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students can work individually or in pairs. Encourage students to underline the section in the article where they found the answer.

Key:

1. *c*
2. *a*
3. *b*
4. *c*
5. *b*

4. Key language

- a. Students work individually or find forms of the words in the article. Remind them to identify the root or base form of the word (in most cases the verb) to help them find the words in the article. To extend the activity, ask students to tell you any other forms of the words they know, e.g. *elite*, *elitist*, *elitism*, etc.

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Key:

1. *creative*
2. *real*
3. *culture*
4. *art / artistic*
5. *twice*
6. *help*

- b. Ask students to complete the sentences using a word from either task a or from the article. Remind them to read the sentence first and to identify the form of the word (e.g. noun, verb, adjective, etc) they need. Encourage them to read the sentence once they have completed it to check if it makes sense.

Key:

1. *help*
2. *twice*
3. *artist*
4. *cultural*
5. *create*
6. *unrealistic*

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Ask them to justify their opinions, referring to their own experiences whenever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. The aim of this task is to help students think about a working-class character (historical, fictional or contemporary) and to identify the obstacles they may have faced because of their social status. You may want to give students key search terms that they can use in their online research, such as *working-class hero / heroine*, *social status*, *success story*, etc.
- b. Students can share any relevant or interesting information they found with the class. To extend the activity, ask students to write a short biography of the person they researched and present it to the class.