

'No two days are the same and you can make a real difference': four social workers reflect on their careers

Level 1: Elementary

Article summary: This article outlines the career paths of four people and the different ways they became social workers.

Time: 60 minutes

Language focus: Reported speech

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about the skills and abilities that people need in order to become social workers. 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 match the words in bold in the article with the definitions. Allow a few minutes for students to check answers in pairs or groups before checking answers with the whole class.

Key:

1. *independent*
2. *qualified*
3. *hesitate*
4. *young offenders*
5. *trains*
6. *social worker*
7. *guidelines*
8. *regrets*

- 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.

Key:

1. *regrets*
2. *independent*
3. *social worker*
4. *guidelines*
5. *training*
6. *qualified*
7. *hesitate*
8. *young offenders*

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students can work individually or in pairs to do this activity. Encourage students to write complete sentences when they answer the questions and to use their own words where possible rather than simply copying information from the article.

Key:

1. *She felt happy because she helped someone live a better life.*
2. *She helped her move into a flat where there were people to look after her.*
3. *She says they often call themselves 'fixers' because they like to help people.*
4. *An apprenticeship is when a person works and trains for a job at the same time.*
5. *Social workers can help young offenders and people with health problems.*
6. *He thinks it's a good idea because children and families don't want to tell their story again and again.*

4. Key language

- a. Ask students to think about the rules of reported speech and fill in the rules.

Key:

1. *was*
2. *tense*
3. *pronouns*
4. *time*
5. *past simple*
6. *would*
7. *could*

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- b. Students work individually to rewrite the direct quotes to indirect speech using the reporting verbs from the box. You may want to do a quick revision of the ways different tenses change from direct to indirect speech, e.g. *present simple* → *past simple*.

Key (Suggested answers):

1. *She explained (that) she had helped her move into a flat where she had people to help her.*
2. *She said (that) a lot of people who went into social work would describe themselves as 'fixers'.*
3. *He admitted (that) there were so many more career paths compared to when he qualified.*
4. *He noted (that) children and families didn't want to have to tell their stories again and again.*

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 get students to elaborate on their opinions about becoming a social worker that they discussed in the first activity. Remind them to support their opinion with reasons and examples where necessary.
- b. Students can share their personal statements with the class. When they have done this, ask students to identify whether becoming a social worker is a popular career choice for people of their age and why or why not.