

IX. Jobs in Waterbury

Subject(s):

Time Needed: 50 minute class session

Objectives:

- ✓ notice the changing views on work in Waterbury
- ✓ learn about unions in Waterbury
- ✓ recognize global geography
- ✓ understand the different levels of economic restructuring as it affects jobs
- ✓ investigate the job patterns of Waterbury today and how it relates to the global transfer of labor

Areas/Disciplines Covered:

Economics (business)
History (labor, US, local)
Labor Studies (work, unions)
Urban Studies (economic flight, urban renewal)

Materials:

- world map (dry erase map is preferable)
- chalk and chalkboard, or markers and chart paper
- information from most recent census
- stickers or pins to mark world map
- information on South End: Urban Renewal (from “Brass City Life” website)
- homework assignment

Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson on jobs/occupations. Start by asking them about the occupations on the “Brass City Life” website. Based on the website’s information, what were people’s jobs? [Some answers include: bakers, deliveryperson, and farmer.] Then ask the students “Do you still see people with those jobs in your neighborhood?” “Where do your parents or guardians work?” Take answers from the class and write them on the board. From this, decipher where most of the families work. Do their comments accurately assess the majority population in Waterbury? Distinguish which do and don’t and use that to transition into the reality of the job situation in Waterbury.

2. Breakdown the answers that you get into percentages. Compare those with the 2000 census information. Show the students how the jobs have changed in Waterbury.

Include these facts:

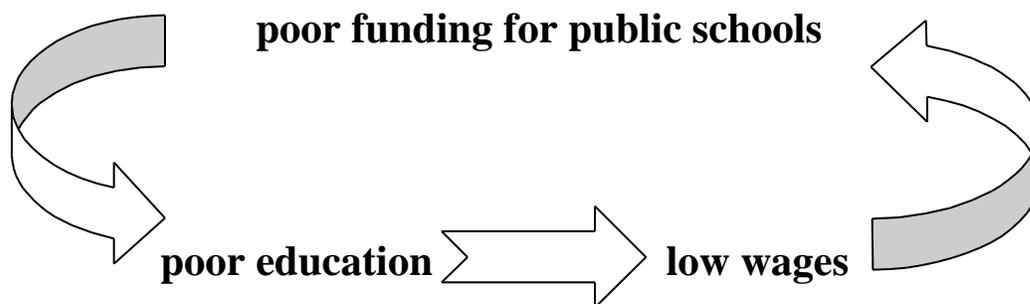
- Many manufacturing jobs in Waterbury have left the city and have been replaced by either highly professional occupations requiring advanced education or service jobs with very few requirements. In 1950, 50% or all jobs in Connecticut were manufacturing jobs and many of them were located in the Naugatuck Valley Region. In 2000, Waterbury’s production

occupations were down to 21% with an almost equal percentage of people (20%) in service sector jobs that pay less and are unstable. **Define service sector jobs:** those non-professional jobs within healthcare, food prep, building and maintenance work, retail, or personal care.

- Based on income reports and other statistics, it is largely people of color who are performing the service jobs; especially the Latino population whose per capita income is only \$10,000 a year in Waterbury--\$3,000 less than the national average.

3. There are 2 questions that arise from that information: One, where did the jobs go? And two, how does this job flight affect Waterbury? Tell the students that the answer to question one is complicated. Sometimes, jobs just close down; they don't move anywhere. But, in many cases, the jobs move. Describe to them that some of the jobs that used to happen in America have been moved to other places. [Some of those jobs include: telemarketing, car production, and textile manufacturing] **Exercise:** Ask the students to look at the tags on their clothes or shoes. Often, they will find foreign countries have made their apparel. This will offer them perspective. They then should approach the map one by one and find their country's location. While the tags may only represent a few countries, it gives the students an opportunity to name some of the places where jobs have been transferred.

4. Question 2: How does this flight affect Waterbury? Some of the affects are physical. What is being done with the old factory buildings? Are they abandoned? Encourage the students to imagine some of the poorer sections of the city. Allow them to tell you what they look like. What jobs are there? However, keep in mind what is being said. **Do not allow conversation to pathologize communities of color.** Also make sure to include repeatedly the fact that people are working in those neighborhoods, it's just that they are not making enough in the jobs to adequately support their families. Additionally emphasize the potential for the *cycle of poverty*. Diagram one for the students on the board, something similar to this:



5. Briefly discuss with the students that the impact that low wage jobs have on Waterbury is being replicated all over the world. This same cycle is producing a world underclass. Give examples: poor people's campaigns in Central America, strikes in India, etc. If possible, provide visual information from the web, video, or pictures.

6. End with a description of the homework assignment and a due date.

HOMEWORK: Part 1 of the students' assignment is to speak with family members and develop a list of jobs held within their family. This should be a comparative piece, with the immediate family as well as older generation extended family represented. Interviews are not necessary but the students will have to talk with a knowledgeable family member. Some questions to ask may include:

- Where do you work?
- Where did your mom/dad work (do for a living)?
- What types of jobs do your siblings/cousins have?

Beyond that, they should list the answers in a clear format with the names and ages of their family members attached. Part 2 requires that they write a paragraph on what they want to do as a profession. Can they imagine doing that in Waterbury or do they think that they will have to move in order to have that opportunity? [see "Jobs in Waterbury Worksheet"]

Related Resources:

Jobs in Waterbury Worksheet

Part One: Your assignment is to talk to a family member or multiple family members in order to fill in this chart that outlines where your family members work. This assignment is for relatives who currently live or previously lived in Waterbury ONLY. You must have a range of ages on your chart. For example, you may ask your adult siblings and your parents but you must also provide information on your grandparents (and older members if you can). Provide information for at least 5 family members.

FIRST NAME	AGE	RELATION TO YOU	JOB

Part Two: After finishing part one, you will write a paragraph essay (approx. 250 words) describing what you would like to do for a career after you are finished with school. Answer these questions:

- What do you want to do (occupation)?
- What do you need to do to have that occupation (more school, training)?
- Can you do that job in Waterbury? Why or why not?
- If you cannot do it in Waterbury, where will you have to move?
- Do you think that Waterbury offers you many career options? Why or why not?