

## **GMB / TUC “Trade Union Education Programme”**

### **Intro – Runaway Inequality**

Hi I'm Gareth  
I'm Joe,

We're both trade unionists. We're going to tell you a bit about what a trade union is and does but first we want to ask you a few questions.

First, what do you guys want to do when you finish school here or when you finish university?

How many of you want a full-time job? None of this part-time zero-hours stuff?

How many of you are planning to do apprenticeships or internships?

And how many of you want to be rich? - As rich as Jeff Bezos? How many know who Jeff Bezos is? (If no answer: How many have heard of Amazon?)

Jeff Bezos is the richest man in the world. Every hour he makes £10,000,000. Do you know how much the average UK warehouse worker at an Amazon makes? We'll give you a hint its not £10,000,000 an hour.

- The average warehouse worker makes: £8.76per hour
- The average operations supervisor makes: £10.73per hour
- The average HR administrator makes: £13.71per hour

These are the people who make the company work, they're the ones making sure your online purchase is sent to you. So how many thinks that its fair that the pays above?

Think about: how high do your wages have to be to afford to 'live' a decent life? (£17,500 per year by Living Wage Foundation calculations – food, rent, health, holiday, leisure)

So, how big do you think this wage gap should be? **(hand out the activity sheet)**

\*Segway into workplace conditions. “Let's talk again about how people like Jeff Bezos get rich, and runaway inequality”

Q: How many of you want to get rich the same way Jeff Bezos gets rich?

A: no? Why – it's not fair? Not right? Why? (ask them to explain their ideas)

### **Q&A - Who can stop Poor Pay and Conditions?**

Who can stop Amazon or other businesses from exploiting workers? (Prompt government, police, individuals, trade unions).

### **What is a trade Union?**

Trade unions are organisations set up by people in work doing exactly that. By coming together people in work stand a better chance of improving their conditions and pay. We've been doing that for the last 150 years, and today there are six million of us across the UK.

(JW) So why are we here telling you all this, the answer is most people in employment don't know about trade unions. They don't know their rights and they don't feel comfortable or confident standing up to their boss and demanding better pay and conditions.

(GL) Following on from that, how many of you know what your rights are?

### Interactive Rights Questions – Show of hands (5min)

- How many of you currently work? (GL)
- How many you who work took paid holiday? How many of you know how much paid holiday you can legally get a year? (JW)
- Who has ever used holiday when you were sick? (GL)
- How many of you earn £4.20 per hour (under 18)? 5.90 per hour (18-20)? How many earn £7.38? (21-24)? Anyone here earn £7.83 per hour (25 +)? (JW)
- Does anyone not know what they earn an hour? Does anyone know why there is a different wages for different ages (and is this right?)? (GL) (explain difference between NMW & RLW – also talk about how its not just about pay)
- Does anyone know what other rights they have in the workplace? (JW)
- And finally, how many of you have ever stood up to your boss and asked for or demanded better pay and conditions? (GL)

### What are your basic rights at work?

You've got a right to:

- (JW) ***What is the minimum wage?***
  - Be paid the minimum wage
- (GL) ***How long of a break do you get during your shift?***
  - A 20 minute rest break every 6 hours (or if you're 16-17 a 30 minute break every 4.5 hours)
- (GL) ***Show of hands for anyone who has finished a late shift at work then had to go for a morning shift the next day?***
  - 11 hours break in between the end of your last shift and the start of your next (or if you're 16-17 a 12 hour break & 48 hours rest every week)
- (JW) ***Who used their paid holiday recently?***
  - Paid holiday based on days worked
- (JW) ***Redefine bullying for a school audience (not just what they expect)***
  - Be protected from bullying
- (JW) ***Mental health at work. Who's been contacted by their manager out of hours, or via facebook?***
  - Work in a safe & healthy environment
- (GL) ***Who works in warehouse, shop, supermarket, with food, restaurant..?***
  - Training to do your job properly

NO CONTRACT YOU SIGN CAN REMOVE YOUR BASIC RIGHTS

### Lunch Hour - Group Exercise

- What's happened? (Lunch hour halved)
- Why are you upset? (Less time to chat to friends, etc)
- Are others upset? (Who are they? Are lots upset)
- Who has the power to change this? (Headmaster)
- How will you convince them to change this?
- How will you build support for your campaign / What will your campaign look like (petition, class disruption, identify allies)

\*Could teachers be allies?

## **Case Examples - Non-Unionised work environments vs Unionised work environments (5-10 min)**

- McDonalds
    - Unsafe, fast-paced working conditions
    - Sexual harassment and bullying from the management
    - Bullying and harassment in the workplace
  - Uber
    - Bogus employers
    - Workers rights (minimum wage, holiday pay, etc)
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- Some of you here will have heard of unions, some won't.
  - Those who have may have only heard bad things, 'Strikes' etc.
  - But what is a strike? Is it bad?
  - We want to finish with a short video that tells you a little bit about who we really are, what union organizing looks like, and what strikes can do to help ordinary people.
  - This is a story about the McDonalds' strike last year

### **[Show video]**

As well as what they mentioned in the video, McDonalds then agreed to give a pay rise to all restaurant workers directly employed by McDonalds, the biggest pay rise in McDonalds' history.

## **Questions**