NASUWT THE TEACHERS' UNION

F IS FOR... FIXING.

ECT FUTURES

Podcast Companion Toolkit

FIX OUR FUTURE. FUND EDUCATION

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EPISODE 2 PODCAST TOOLKIT

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PODCAST EP2: DISCUSSION GUIDE

Use this discussion guide to stimulate conversation around issues raised in the podcast that are also occurring in your school and local area. You could do this in a formal setting, during a podcast screening, or informally if a colleague or friend mentions listening to the podcast.

Some questions are specifically for Early Career Teachers (ECTs). Some questions can also be adapted to involve more experienced teachers, school staff and community groups.

1. What made you decide to become a teacher, and which route did you take into teaching?

2. What has surprised you the most so far about becoming a teacher?

3. What has been your biggest challenge so far during training or induction?

4. Sometimes it can be hard to say 'no' to an unreasonable request as a new teacher (like decorating your classroom). Is there a time when this has happened to you? How did you handle it?

5. Jack, Kira and Sam discuss experiences with their mentors. If you could say one thing to your mentor right now, what would it be?

6. F is For... is set in a 'dream staff room', where the chairs are comfy, refreshments are plentiful, and teachers have time to connect and rest. What would be in your dream staff room, and why?

7. ECTs are entitled to a reduced teaching timetable with 10% fewer lessons in the first year of induction and 5% fewer lessons in the second year. Do you know if your timetable is appropriately reduced?

8. Do you have a directed time calendar?

9. You are now the Education Secretary, and you have the chance to make an improvement to teacher training. What would you add, remove, or change?

10. Can any of the issues surfaced in your discussion be resolved through the Union? (If in doubt, speak to your workplace rep or local union office).

WHAT ARE TRADE UNIONS, AND WHAT DO THEY DO FOR TEACHERS?

In this section, you can:

- test your knowledge on what trade unions do in our quiz;
- learn more about what trade unions do specifically for teachers; and
- learn more about your NASUWT community.

How to play the quiz: what can teachers do in a trade union?

- Print out the cards on page 5 and 7.
- Work through the cards in pairs or groups, sorting them into piles for things teachers can do in a union, things teachers can't do in a union, and unsure.
- Choose someone to go through the answers, leading a discussion where development of understanding is needed.



THE BIGGEST BARRIER TO GETTING INVOLVED IN YOUR TRADE UNION?

KNOWING WHAT A TRADE UNION DOES!

TAKE INDUSTRIAL ACTION AS A SCHOOL OR COLLEGE	GET SPECIALIST TRAINING ON TEACHERS' RIGHTS AT WORK	BUILD LEADERSHIP SKILLS
REORGANISE THE STAFF ROOM	FIND A NEW LOCAL COMMUNITY	DECIDE WHICH BISCUITS TO HAVE AT A UNION MEETING
OBTAIN YOUR DIRECTED TIME CALENDAR	TAKE INDUSTRIAL ACTION AS AN ACADEMY TRUST	INCREASE GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR EDUCATION
DEVELOP AND CAMPAIGN FOR NEW LAWS AND POLICIES	REFUSE TO TEACH A SPECIFIC PUPIL	ACCESS CPD
CAMPAIGN FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE	INCREASE TEACHERS' PAY	CAMPAIGN FOR FAJITA FRIDAYS IN THE SCHOOL CANTEEN
GO TO SPECIALIST CONFERENCES AND EVENTS	CHALLENGE THE MARKING SYSTEM IN YOUR WORKPLACE	TAKE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL ACTION


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TAKE PART IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH EMPLOYERS	INCREASE SUPPORT STAFF PAY	CHALLENGE REDUNDANCIES IN YOUR WORKPLACE
MEET WITH TEACHERS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES	GO TO FESTIVALS	CHANGE THE CURRICULUM
FIND SUPPORT IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING AT WORK	ACCESS FINANCIAL SUPPORT DURING TIMES OF HARDSHIP	MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR YOUR PUPILS
ACCESS LEGAL SUPPORT	DECIDE ON THE UNION'S PRIORITIES	MEET MPS AND MINISTERS
DANCE TO A FULL BRASS BAND	BECOME A WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVE	REFUSE TO DECORATE YOUR CLASSROOM


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GAME ANSWERS

Now you've taken the quiz, it's time to find out how much teachers can do in a trade union!

Get specialist training on teachers' working rights

Yes – you can access formal training to become a workplace rep, or learn more about your rights at our friendly events.

Build leadership skills

Yes – members tell us that getting active has built their confidence at work and taught them valuable skills in prioritisation and decision-making.

Reorganise the staff room

Yes – if your staff room layout presents issues with health and safety or accessibility, union members can work to change it.

Find a new local community

Yes – unions are built on community. By attending local and national meetings and events, you can meet like-minded people and forge friendships that last a lifetime.

Decide which biscuits to have at a union meeting

Yes – sustenance is an important part of any union meeting! A Local Association meeting often involves dinner.

Obtain your directed time calendar

Yes – if you don't have a directed time calendar, you can work to get one through your union. If your employer follows the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), you are entitled to a directed time calendar.

Take industrial action as a school or college

Yes – you can use collective action at a local level to push back against unreasonable employer decisions.

Take industrial action as an academy trust

Yes – you can use collective action at a trust level to push back against unreasonable employer decisions.

Increase government funding for education

Yes – unions hold the Government accountable for the consequences of their funding decisions. As a member, you can take part in campaigns like Fix Our Future, Fund Education to help put pressure on ministers and policymakers to make the right decisions for teachers and pupils.

Develop and campaign for new laws and policies

Yes – trade unions have built and amended many laws and policies, including the new Employment Rights Act. NASUWT teachers campaigned successfully for the new salary cap for academy CEOs in England and the new law against upskirting in Northern Ireland, just to name a few achievements.

Refuse to teach a specific pupil

Yes – as part of an industrial dispute, teachers can initiate a 'refusal to teach' action if they feel certain pupils pose a threat to the safety of staff and/or other pupils. You have a right to a safe workplace.

Access CPD

Yes – NASUWT has CPD webinars and in-person events for teachers at all levels of experience. We have everything from webinars to help you secure your first job to expert-led workshops on behaviour management.

Campaign for social justice

Yes – trade unions play an essential role in fighting against racism, sexism, homophobia and all forms of injustice and discrimination, International solidarity is an important part of our work too.

Increase teachers' pay

Yes – whether we are submitting complex evidence to the national School Teachers' Pay Review Board (STRB) every year, taking legal action, or taking industrial action, trade unions play a huge role in protecting and improving teachers' pay and benefits (such as pensions).

Campaign for Fajita Fridays in the school canteen

Maybe! You can't open an industrial dispute to campaign specifically for fajitas, but changing a canteen menu is possible through our remit to improve teacher wellbeing and workplace culture.

Go to specialist conferences and events

Yes – as a qualified teacher, you can access exclusive NASUWT conferences and events as part of your membership. We have everything from New Teacher Development Days to regional gatherings and conferences for specialist teacher groups. Accommodation and travel expenses are usually included in your membership.

Challenge the marking system in your workplace

Yes – a problematic marking system can be representative of issues in workplace governance or culture, and you can challenge these issues by negotiating with your employer or even using industrial action.

Take national industrial action

Yes – you can use collective action at a national level to push back against unreasonable government decisions regarding aspects of teachers' pay, workload, and working conditions.

Take part in negotiations with employers

Yes – have you ever wondered what happens 'behind the scenes' during a strike, or wanted to play a bigger part in decisions made in your workplace? As a workplace rep or local activist, you'll be involved at a higher level.

Increase support staff pay

Not directly – while there are no trade unions in England with the legal right to negotiate for both teachers and support staff, teacher and support staff unions have the ability to work together during disputes.

Challenge redundancies in your workplace

Yes – if redundancies would cause issues in your workplace, you may be able to challenge the decision by negotiating with your employer or even using industrial action.

Meet with teachers from other countries

Yes – as an NASUWT activist, occasional opportunities may come up to meet with fellow trade unions across the globe, especially as you become a more established activist.

Go to festivals

Yes – we have a regular presence at events like Pride and trade union festivals like the Durham Miners' Gala and Tolpuddle. We love to celebrate equality and union strength!

Change the curriculum

Yes – teachers in a trade union can campaign and even negotiate with the Government to change the curriculum. NASUWT teachers in Wales recently won a one-year delay to a new GCSE curriculum to prevent a rushed rollout.

Find support if you're struggling at work

Yes – if something at work doesn't feel right, reach out to your workplace rep, regional centre or our Member Support and Advice Team as soon as possible. In a trade union, you are never alone.

Access financial support during times of hardship

Yes – NASUWT members and their dependents may be able to access short-term support in times of unexpected financial hardship through our Benevolent Fund.

Make life better for your pupils

Yes. Remember that looking after the wellbeing of teachers is essential for pupil wellbeing!

Access legal support

Yes – as part of your NASUWT membership, if needed, you can access legal support.

Decide on the Union's priorities

Yes – from setting the local agenda as a region or voting on national policy at Annual Conference, NASUWT members decide on the Union's direction and priorities every year.

Meet MPs and ministers

Yes – as an NASUWT member, you may get the opportunity to engage with MPs and ministers at trade union events, trips and meetings.

Dance to a full brass band

Yes – did you know that NASUWT is home to one of the most famous brass bands in the UK, the NASUWT Riverside Band? Maybe you'll see them at a Conference or festival!

Become a workplace representative

Yes – workplace representatives are the foundation of our union. You'll get expert training from NASUWT to build a strong union presence in your workplace in order to keep your colleagues and pupils safe, well and supported.

Refuse to decorate your classroom

Yes – did you know that teachers don't have to do this? It is not something which specifically requires a teacher's skills, and often ends up costing teachers money. You don't have to be in a union to say no, but saying no is often a challenge and your union can offer crucial support.

NOW YOU KNOW WHAT TEACHERS CAN DO IN A TRADE UNION SO...WHAT IS A TRADE UNION?

Put simply: a trade union is a group of workers who form a community to protect and progress their rights and working conditions. By joining together, they are stronger than if they were to act alone.

Community is the engine of a trade union. We are governed by our members, who set our policies and our strategic direction every year. As the only trade union exclusively for teachers, NASUWT is home to some of the strongest communities of teachers and leaders across the UK.

Trade unions are often known for strike action (which is one form of industrial action). While industrial action is an important tool for trade unions, it is just part of what we do.



Why are trade unions so important?

Throughout history, trade unions have used collective action to push back against unscrupulous employers and governments. Trade unions are the reason we have two-day weekends, sick pay, and equality protections in the workplace. But the fight to maintain these conditions is never finished – and that's why trade unions are as relevant today as they have ever been.

Teachers' working rights and working conditions are set by the Government and by their employers. As a trade union, we are recognised as being able to legally negotiate those rights and working conditions with governments and employers.

If you have ever wished to change something about the education system or teaching in general, chances are you could work towards it through your union.

QUICK GUIDE TO TRADE UNION TERMINOLOGY

Solidarity	As union members, we express 'solidarity' – a feeling of strength, empathy and union resilience – with those going through injustice.
Union rep/workplace rep	At NASUWT, a union rep is a teacher who volunteers to be the Union's representative and spokesperson in their workplace. They hold union meetings for colleagues and are able to negotiate with leaders to raise issues and make improvements.
Local Association/Branch	Your Local Association is your local union community and where you can meet your Local Secretary, Caseworker and National Executive. They usually meet once a month and new faces are always welcome!
National Executive	The NASUWT National Executive is a group of teachers from across the UK who have been elected to lead the Union. They meet once a month to address urgent issues and progress the Union's agenda. They also lead union activity at a regional level. They are led by the National President.
General Secretary	A General Secretary is responsible for the running and operation of a trade union, and leading the union staff. They work with National Executive to implement union policy and often act as a spokesperson to the press.
Annual Conference	Every year, NASUWT holds an Annual Conference where members vote on policy and direction for the next year. It's also a great place to meet and learn from union members across the UK.
Trade dispute	This is what happens when a union concern with an employer or government becomes official. We issue legal letters, enter formal negotiations, and move to strike action if negotiations are unsuccessful.
Strike action	When a teacher goes on strike, they withdraw their labour and do not go into work.
Action short of strike	This is industrial action taken in the workplace and involves 'working to rule'. This means you only perform the duties in your contract and no more – something that constitutes a significant withdrawal of labour for most teachers.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

NASUWT events for New Teachers – come along to one of our New Teacher Development Days, or **check out our other conferences and events for teachers**.

Find out more about your Local Association – fill in this form to receive details of your Local Association, go along, and meet your local NASUWT community.

FURTHER READING FOR ECTS

NASUWT's guide to the Early Career Teacher Entitlement – learn more about the support you are entitled to during your induction years.

Early Career Teachers and the Teachers' Standards – learn more about what Teachers' Standards mean for you.

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN THE PETITION!

As part of the Fix Our Future, Fund Education campaign, we're asking the Government to raise education funding to 6% of GDP. You can support this goal by signing the petition.

Please share this petition with colleagues, friends and family. **TOGETHER, WE CAN FIX OUR FUTURE**.

SIGN THE PETITION
FIXOURFUTURE.CO.UK


STRONG WHEN IT MATTERS
TRUSTED SUPPORT
PROUD TO BE NASUWT
CONNECTED
MEMBER-LED
THE VOICE OF TEACHERS
PROUD


THE TEACHERS UNION


HONK!


NASUWT
The Teachers' Union


IX OUR FUTURE.
FUND EDUCATION


NASUWT
STAFF WELLBEING MATTERS!
CORFE HILLS SCHOOL
SCHOOL FUNDS BELONG IN THE CLASSROOM
KIDS NEED TEACHERS NOT EXECS
EDUCATION NEEDS EDUCATORS
AUTONOMY for SCHOOLS
SAVE OUR TEACHERS & QE POOL
SAVE OUR TAs SUPPORT PUPILS' WELLBEING
NO STAFF NO SUPPORT NO CHANCE
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