



SUNDAY LESSONS

This Month's Topic:
Spiritual and Temporal
Self-Reliance

Super

TEENS

on the

JOB

By David Dickson
Church Magazines



Every job has something amazing to offer. These six youth talk about why hard work offers so much more than income.

It's a sad fact that in this day and age one can spend months searching help-wanted ads without finding a single one asking for a professional candy taster. Likewise, it's amazing just how few positions are available for part-time race-car testers.

The good news is that any job can be exciting and rewarding, even though it may not seem like it at first.

For the Strength of Youth teaches, "Work is honorable. Developing the capacity to work will help you contribute to the world in which you live" ([2011], 40).

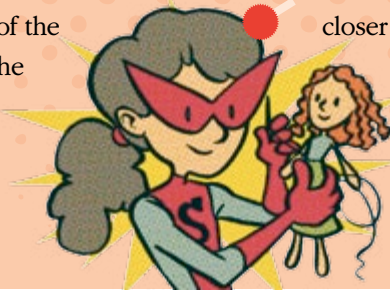
Work can provide needed income, life experience, and valuable skills. Every job has something to offer. Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "Whether one is a neurosurgeon, forest ranger, mechanic, farmer, or teacher is a matter of preference not of principle" ("Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel," *Ensign*, May 1998, 38).

So the type of work you do in your youth, whether as a paid employee or as service for your family or community, may not matter so much as learning the value of working and contributing to the world. Here, several youth whose lives have been blessed through hard work share a few tips about what they've learned.

STITCHING TOGETHER A BUSINESS

Not many teenagers get a chance to launch a small business with one of their parents. But when 15-year-old Blythe G. and her mom made a one-of-a-kind cloth doll for Blythe's younger sister, they had so much fun that they decided to keep going. "We started selling them," Blythe says. They also donate one doll a month to a sick child.

Blythe, an artist, loves her part of the process. "My main job is to paint the dolls' faces," she says. In addition, she's acquired other talents along the way. "I've learned a lot about marketing," Blythe says.



She's also learned how to sew. "That's been really fun," she says. "Now I can make all sorts of things." In fact, Blythe has already put those sewing skills to good use. As she and her mom sold more dolls, they added stuffed animals to their lineup. Blythe personally designed several of the stuffed animals they now sell.

Running this business has brought Blythe and her mom closer together. "I love doing it with my mom," she says. "My mom is my best friend."

To other youth thinking about starting a job, Blythe says, "Go for it! There are a lot of things you can't learn in school that you can learn only from going out there and doing stuff."

TAKING THE PLUNGE

Seventeen-year-old Amy J. lives in a part of Alabama, USA, that is popular among tourists. As a result, many businesses stay open seven days a week. And yet, Amy has been fortunate enough to find a job that doesn't require her to work on Sunday—something very important to her.

Amy works year-round as a lifeguard and swim instructor at the local recreation center. She enjoys her job, especially teaching swimming lessons. "I like working with the kids," Amy says.

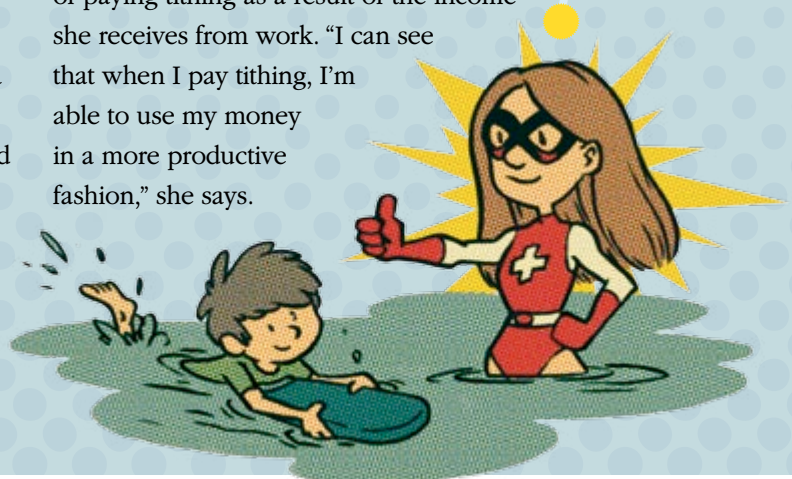
The job also provides valuable income. "Last summer I was able to save up money and buy a car. That has been a tremendous blessing," she says.

In short, she says it's a fantastic job. So how did she land it? By first joining the swim team. "My swim coach texted me about a job she knew of," Amy says. Amy believes she never would have found this opportunity if she hadn't been putting herself out there and meeting people. She advises all youth to become involved in activities and to network.

Amy, too, has picked up useful life skills from her job. In her case, some of them may prove extremely helpful. "I want to go into the medical field," she explains. The CPR and first-aid training she received as part of her lifeguard duties are excellent foundational skills.

She's learned about balancing work and school schedules too. "Time management skills definitely come from having a job," she says.

Last, but certainly not least, Amy has gained a testimony of paying tithing as a result of the income she receives from work. "I can see that when I pay tithing, I'm able to use my money in a more productive fashion," she says.



SUPER BABYSITTER

At age 12, Emma L. is a babysitting force to be reckoned with. She has a résumé and business cards. She's certified by the American Red Cross as a babysitter. She has a well-stocked prize box for the kids she babysits. And she has enough clients to keep her babysitting as often as she wants.

"It's a really enjoyable job," Emma says. "I've always liked little children."

Before starting as a babysitter, Emma saved up and used her own money to attend a two-day babysitting class taught by the Red Cross. Her philosophy to develop her skills before starting the actual work was simple: "If you do a sloppy job, they won't call you back."

On the other hand, Emma believes that if you do a great job, then you'll not only be asked back, but you'll also get

referrals. That's how Emma keeps picking up more clients. "It's easy if you start with one person and you're a good babysitter," she says. "Start small, and work your way up."

Because of her babysitting experience, Emma has gained other abilities, such as how to be a problem-solver when young kids aren't getting along. "Patience is something good I've learned," she says.

She's learned to enjoy her work—a great skill to pick up at any age. "I like being around the kids and seeing them happy," says Emma. "I like helping them out."



THE CUTTER OF GRASS AND SLAYER OF WEEDS

If an obnoxious weed tucked deep in a flower bed seems to heave a smug sigh of relief when the *local teenager* shows up to mow the grass—because, hey, a teenager coming to do a quick job is no big threat to its existence, right?—then that moment of satisfaction is going to be short-lived if 13-year-old

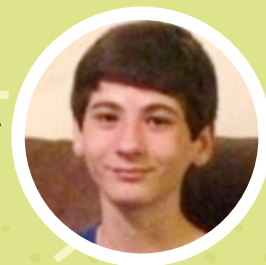
Nathan D. is the one behind the mower.

Nathan started mowing lawns for his neighbors in 2012. He knows how to keep customers happy, in part because he believes in not merely doing the job right but also in doing a bit more than is required.

Once he turns off the mower at a job, he double-checks the lawn. "Make sure everything is done right and that you haven't missed any spots," he advises to others interested in lawn care.

After that, it's time for the little something extra. "Before leaving the job you've done," Nathan says, "look for some extra things that wouldn't take much time to do." Pulling stray weeds is one of his favorites.

As a result of his income, Nathan has also learned great budgeting skills. Now in his second year of mowing lawns, Nathan has been able to buy school clothes and save for a mission.



MUSIC, MONEY, AND MISSION PREP

For the past four years, Brandon R., 17, has been able to earn spending money and save for a mission all while doing something he loves: teaching piano lessons. “I love influencing others to enjoy the wonderful gift of making music,” Brandon says.

Brandon has been taking lessons himself since he was only two years old. He currently has students ranging from ages 6 to 15. He loves watching their progress as they learn to enjoy playing.

“When I started teaching one student,” Brandon says, “he would run away. But then he started liking it more and more.”

Now in his senior year, Brandon is seeking additional students so he can save money even faster for his mission.

Brandon believes that from teaching piano, his teaching techniques in other areas have improved. “I think, for example, it’s easier to teach my brother something in math or to teach somebody something in a class,” he says. “There’s no better way to improve your teaching skills than to practice.”



SHE DOES THAT TOO

If having a variety of skills and work experience on a résumé is a good thing—and it is—then 16-year-old Sarah K. is off to an awesome start. She has worked at babysitting, house cleaning, and doing yard work. She’s done photography shoots at weddings and receptions. And for the past nine months, Sarah has been working part-time at a restaurant as a hostess and a busser.

“I believe in a strong work ethic,” Sarah says. She believes firmly that every job she’s had has taught her something useful.

Sarah got started in her work-for-hire jobs the same way many Latter-day Saint youth do: by checking first with people in her ward. “The Church members started hiring me, and they would tell their friends,” she says.

It’s also been a family effort with her siblings.

Sarah is the second-oldest of nine children.

Her younger brothers know how to network and find yard-work jobs. “Whenever they had a gig, I would tag along,” she explains.

Her work plans are only getting started. “My goal is to be a cosmetologist and to have a business degree so I can build on that skill,” Sarah says. **NE**



JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Throughout November, your Sunday lessons will focus on spiritual and temporal self-reliance. As part of temporal self-reliance, developing a solid work ethic prepares us for service at home—with our current *and* future families—on missions, in careers, and with every other part of our lives. The talent and capacity to work hard will never stop being useful. Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught, “Work is always a spiritual necessity even if, for some, work is not an economic necessity” (“Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel,” 38).

In what ways does work bless your life? How are you learning to be self-reliant? Consider writing down your feelings and sharing them with your family, at church on Sunday, on social media, or with other youth at [lds.org/go/113Work](https://www.lds.org/go/113Work).