

# ACTIVITY

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## LABOR DAY: AT SUMMER'S END



Image by [Bruno /Germany](#) from [Pixabay](#)

### THE SUNFLOWER

Is there a cheerier flower than a sunflower? For me, the sunflower is a beautiful reminder of hot summer days. The flower's yellow petals are like rays of sunshine and I love how they stretch towards the sun. I think the sunflower is the perfect bloom to help commemorate **Labor Day**.

The first Monday in September is celebrated as “Labor Day” in the United States and “Labour Day” in Canada. Similarly, many other countries celebrate International Workers’ Day on May 1. Regardless of when it is celebrated, **this special day is intended to honor workers** and acknowledge trade unions and labor movements that sought to protect workers and promote their rights. But, what does this have to do with the sunflower?

For many, Labor Day marks the unofficial end of summer. Many families take a final summer vacation that ends on Labor Day. Many employees have a holiday from work on Labor Day and enjoy this time with family and friends at barbecues and beaches. The weather gradually starts to cool down after Labor Day and schools commence their new academic terms. **It’s a time of transition.** Sunflowers are generally still in bloom and they are a gentle reminder of summer’s beauty coming to an end as we move towards crisp fall days. Moreover, sunflowers are considered symbols of optimism and happiness. They represent good fortune and good luck, including career and employment ambitions. **Doesn’t that fit with a day that aims to honor workers?**

## ACKNOWLEDGE & CELEBRATE THE DAY

How can you and your family acknowledge and celebrate this special day? Here’s five suggestions to try.

1. **Learn about Frances Perkins**, the first woman U.S. Secretary of Labor. Listen to [\*The Only Woman in the Photo: Frances Perkins and Her New Deal for America\*](#) by Kathleen Krull. You can also visit the [Frances Perkins Center](#) website to learn more about her courageous commitment to improving the lives of ordinary Americans.
2. **Participate in local Labor Day activities.** Many communities hold special events to honor this federal holiday. Scan your local newspaper or do a web search to find programming in your area. Look for festivals, parades, and other kinds of family fun.
3. **Thank workers.** Do something special to thank workers with whom you interact. Leave a flower for the mail or newspaper carrier. Show your

appreciation to bus drivers, delivery workers, or store clerks by having your child create and deliver handmade thank you cards.

4. **Relax.** Labor Day is the perfect day to take some time off from work and focus on your family and friends. Plan some togetherness time by playing a game, taking a walk, hosting a picnic, or baking cookies together.
5. **Enjoy sunflower seeds.** Snack on sunflower seeds while you sit outside and enjoy the beautiful weather and bright sunshine. Use this time to talk to your children about laborers in your region who you depend upon to get the goods and services that you need.

**Grade Levels:**

- PreK through High School

**Age Levels:**

- PreK 3-5 yrs (preschool)
- 5-6 yrs (kindergarten)
- 6-8 yrs (primary)
- 9-11 yrs (elementary)
- 11-14 yrs (middle school)
- 14-18 yrs (high school)

**Tags:**

- Current events
- Health & wellness
- Parent-led activity
- Social-emotional learning

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**Credit:**



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**Credit:** ConnectionSpot.org on 09/01/2021