

Role Play One-on-One Examples

Group A

Character 1A

Christy/Carlos Valderrama is the elementary art teacher who moved to the area for their first teaching job. She/He attended a local community college in St. Louis. She/He and her/his family and their three small children are sharing a two bedroom apartment, due largely to the fact that Christy's/Carlos' husband/wife hasn't yet found steady work since they moved here. Christy/Carlos is worried that a de-emphasis of elective courses and uncertainty about school funding might place her/his position in jeopardy, especially since she/he isn't certified in anything but art. She's/He's very politically minded and would like to work to help increase funding for schools, but family obligations and picking up extra duties to make a little extra money keep her/him too busy to get involved in much of anything. Janice Woodward has been encouraging her/him to become a member and she'd/he'd really like to, since she/he loves Janice and she's been very helpful and supportive to her/him since she/he arrived in the building, but money is tight, so she/he hasn't yet made the decision to belong to the union but knows it's important. She/He is a 2 on the membership assessment scale.

Character 2A

Larry/Linda Kowalski is about to start his/her 23rd year of elementary school teaching, mostly in fourth grade (though he's/she's taught second, fifth and sixth, too). He/She was a member prior to Act 10, but has since dropped his/her membership. He/She feels like the local doesn't do anything. Even though he/she considers himself/herself to be pretty conservative. Larry/Linda prides himself/herself on running a tight ship in his/her classroom and feels that schools nowadays coddle kids and families too much. He/She prefers the days from earlier in his/her career when, as he/she sees it, families and

students were expected to take more responsibility. He/She doesn't really have any other issues or concerns and prefers to keep to himself/herself because he's/she's a friend with the principal and his/her life is easy as long as he/she doesn't make waves. He/She is a 5 on the membership assessment scale.

Character 3A

Cindy/Craig Dierking has been teaching 5th grade here for 11 years and, even though she/he LOVES teaching, she's/he's pondering a career change. (Her/His partner's father owns a car dealership and has offered her/him a job, since Cindy's/Craig's eleven years of teaching have afforded her/him a lot of good connections in the community.) She/He believes she/he does a great job in the classroom with students but she/he likes the idea that she/he might someday have a better work-life balance and not have to take home so much work. She/He estimates that she/he spends 15 hours per week on planning and grading and the stress on her/his schedule and on her/his peace of mind are considerable. Because the principal calls so many extra meetings and assigns extra duties, many of which she/he feels are a waste of time, she/he only gets her/his designated planning time once a week at the most. On the occasions that she's/he's tried to stand up for her/his planning time, the principal has brushed off her/his concerns. Larry/Linda Kowalski gave her/him some tips, which she/he pretty much ignored, and she's/he's going to ask for help from Janice Woodward instead, since she/he thinks Janice is more like the kind of teacher that she/he strives to be. She's/He's a member, but lately she's/he's begun thinking about dropping her/his membership.

Group B

Character 1B

Jerry/Jessica Johnson teaches third grade and is entering his/her 15th year, all of them at this same school. For the sixth time in his/her career, he'll/she'll have a student teacher again this year. He/She enjoys mentoring and coaching new educators and wishes that the district would do more to provide mentoring and induction for new teachers so that they can be more successful and stay in the district for as long as they want. He's/She's frustrated when he/she sees the most challenging teaching assignments and largest classes going to brand new teachers who then don't get any support and get no accommodations or allowance for the difficulty of their placement. As a union member, he'd/she'd love to see her Local take the lead on formalizing a stronger peer mentoring and support system, especially since it doesn't look like the district is going to move on it anytime soon. He's/She's working on enlisting his/her friend, confidant and third grade teaching partner, Janice Woodward, to help him/her in drafting a plan and offering to run the program if the Local will fund and support it.

Character 2B

Alexa/Alex Henderson, the school secretary, has been around for 28 years and has served under six different principals. She's/He's seen a lot of good teachers come and go due to the environment in the school and she'd/he'd really like to see the overall morale and climate improve. It seems like there are factions of staff that are pitted against each other, something that the principal seems to foment and even enjoy. She's/He's proud to be able to take care of staff and support staff in providing a good learning environment for kids. She's/He's particularly proud and fond of Janice Woodward and the way she's tried to make the whole staff as successful and energetic as they can be, sharing good teaching ideas and trying to keep people's spirits up. She's/He's been a union member since his second year on the job, but she's/he's not comfortable being an activist or even talking about her/his membership since she's/he's

right under the nose of the principal and doesn't want to give her a reason to turn against him.

Character 3B

Ryan/Rachael Sullivan is a new 5th grade teacher at the school. He/She attended the local state university where he/she got their Degree in Elementary Education. Dave/Debbie comes from a family of educators who were deeply involved in their union and he/she has always wanted to be a teacher. One of his/her earliest memories is walking a union picket line with his/her Mom and Dad. He/she wants to become a union member because he/she knows how important it is to have a voice (and his/her Mom will kill him/her if he/she doesn't join). While he's/she's very excited about his/her first couple of weeks on the job, he/she hasn't felt very supported by the district. Specifically, he/she would have liked more training on the online grading system and more guidance on developing strategies to manage students that have a habit of acting up in class, especially because he/she has 32 students in his/her classroom. He/She hasn't had the chance to connect with very many of his/her colleagues yet because he's/she's been so busy. However, Janice Woodward did stop by his/her room after school a few weeks ago to say hello and offer a helping hand if he/she ever needs one. He/she really appreciated that. He/she really wants to become a union member and is a 1 on the membership assessment scale.