

GRADE 9 EMS : TERM THREE

1. SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY- PG 84-90 EMS TEXT BOOK .ACTIVITY 1 AND 2
2. FUNCTIONS OF THE BUSINESS PG 123-138 EMS TEXT BOOK. ACTIVITY 1 AND 4
3. TRADE UNIONS PG95 .
- 4.ADDITIONAL NOTES PROVIDED.
5. ASSIGNMENT WILL BE SET ON ABOVE-MENTIONED WORK. DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

GRADE 9 NOTES

THE CONCEPT OF TRADE UNIONS

Trade Unions: an organization that is established to protect the interests of employees and safeguard their rights.

Exploit: to take selfish or unfair advantage of a person or situation

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRADE UNIONS

- Their primary focus is on what happens in the workplace
- Their main role is to protect the interests of workers
- Improve workers remuneration
- Trade unions also have a major interest in influencing the government's economic and social policies.

GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF TRADE UNIONS

- Represent members in disciplinary hearings
- Offer education and training to members
- Improve the productivity of workers
- Improve conditions of service
- Represent workers in the collective bargaining process
- Settle disagreements and differences between employers and employees
- Provide professional and legal advice to employees
- Study legislation that may affect employees, and provide union members with advice regarding this legislation.

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONS

Strikes: a form of organized industrial action in which employees stop working in order to force management to take notice of some issues.

Wildcat strike: sudden, unplanned and unofficial strike not authorized by the employees' trade union.

Privatisation: the process by which the government sells state owned enterprises and state assets to private individuals.

Deregulation: the process of dismantling laws and regulations that govern the way in which businesses are established and run.

Industrial action: collective action by workers that disrupts the normal running of the business and affects productivity

Go-slow: a form of industrial action in which workers carry out their normal working routines but at a considerably slower pace.

Globalisation: the process by which high-technology communication, low transport costs and free international trade transform the world into one big global market.

Trade restrictions: restrictions (barriers) on the free international exchange of goods and services.

Imports: goods and services brought into one country from another.

Trade unions in South Africa can be traced back to the 1880's but these were white people only. The labour movement was started in 1973 when about 100 000 workers in Durban, KZN, embarked on a strike action for higher pay. However, this strike was not led by any union since Blacks were forbidden from joining unions at that time. The 1948-1991 strikes played a huge role in South African history.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (SACTU): was formed in 1955 and was linked to the then banned ANC. SACTU played a very active political role in opposing discrimination. By 1961, there were 53 000 members in the union,

however, the union was driven underground by the government in an effort to silence black workers, maintain the political policy of apartheid, and continue the exploitation of black people. SACTU continued operating underground until it dissolved in 1990.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINeworkERS (NUM): was created in 1982 and was deeply involved, from the onset, in political conflict with ruling National party. They operated under four programmes – armed struggle, mass mobilization, international solidarity and underground operation.

CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (COSATU): was established in 1985 and became an important political force in the country. During this era, the workplace was characterised by conflict, stayaways and wildcat strikes. Through strikes and trade union action, pressure was placed on the government to change the apartheid laws and established a more democratic system of governance. COSATU is part of the three-way alliance with the ANC and SACP in the country.

The other two major unions in the country at present are:

- **FEDERATION OF UNIONS OF SA (FEDUSA)**
- **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS (NACTU)**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRADE UNIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. **Economic benefit** – most trade unions have as their primary goal the negotiation of higher wages and better benefits for their members.
2. **Job security** – or avoiding unfair dismissal is an equally important role of the union.
3. **Social Welfare** – the unions' welfare function embraces aspects such as sickness, accident, death and pension benefits as well as health and safety.
4. **Right to call workers out on a strike** – under the constitution all workers have a right to strike but there are strike procedures that have to be followed. Initially, all matters are addressed between the workers and the union and then between the union and the management. Thereafter, if no agreement can be reached, notice will be given of a strike to take place. A legal strike ensures that the rights of the workers are protected. However, the employer is not compelled to pay the workers while they are on strike.
5. **Labour and HIV/AIDS** – the trade union movement in S.A has taken on the role of trying to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in this country. The labour movement has been very involved in the roll-out of anti-retroviral drugs used in the cure of HIV/AIDS.
6. **Political aims** – the labour unions in this country, particularly those part of the COSATU alliance, are very involved in political matters. COSATU strength and support is one of the contributory reasons for the success of the ANC since it has come to power.

RIGHTS OF TRADE UNIONS

1. **Access to the workplace** – trade unions representatives can enter the business premises to meet workers/members; hold meetings outside of working hours; and conduct elections amongst the workers/members.
2. **Subscriptions** – trade union subscriptions (fees) can be deducted from workers' wages or salaries
3. **Elections** – trade union representatives (also known as shop stewards) can be elected at the workplace. These representatives can assist and represent members in grievance and disciplinary proceedings. The representatives also monitor(observe) the business proceedings to ensure they comply with labour laws.
4. **Union duties** – union representatives are entitled to time off with pay during working hours to perform their duties as representatives and to receive training as a representative.
5. **Disclosure** – unions have a right to information from the business on certain workplace issues.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WORKERS

RIGHTS

- Right to freedom of association
- Right to access to training and retraining
- Right to strike
- Right to bargain collectively
- Right to fair labour practices

- Right to fair remuneration and conditions of services
- Right to freedom from victimization
- Right to privacy
- Right to safe and healthy working conditions

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To perform his work faithfully and diligently
- To obey all lawful instructions from his employer
- To further his employer's interests
- Not to compete with the employer
- Not to disclose confidential information or trade secrets belonging to the employer
- To refrain from dishonest conduct such as theft and fraud.
- Unemployment

ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Employment
- Training and skills development
- Reconstruction and development programme
- Job creation

