It's Labor Day!

by Francine Thompson
STRATEGIES & SKILLS

Comprehension
Strategy: Reread
Skill: Author’s Purpose

Vocabulary
favorite, few, gone, nation,
surprise, unite, wonder,
young

Phonics
r-controlled vowels air,
are, ear

Content Standards
Social Studies
American History

Word count: 533**
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If it’s the first Monday of September, that means it’s Labor Day!

For a lot of grown-ups, Labor Day means getting the day off from work. It’s also the day when children say good-bye to summer and hello to a new school year.

Did you ever wonder why Americans celebrate Labor Day?

Labor Day was first celebrated in New York City in 1882.
Many workers belong to labor unions. A labor union is a group of people who make sure that all workers are treated fairly.

Labor Day is a day for Americans to honor working men and women.

Long ago, workers didn’t have it easy. They weren’t treated well or paid fairly. Their employers forced them to work very long hours, and workplaces were often unsafe. Some people worked every day without a day off.

Even young children worked in dangerous jobs! They had no time for school.
Over the years, our nation has written laws that **protect** workers. Some laws make sure that workers have safe places to work and that they can take breaks. Other laws say that employers have to pay workers fairly.

Thanks to the country’s laws, children don’t have to work anymore. Laws make sure that children go to school instead of going to work.

Because of laws, working is a lot safer today.
Labor Day is a day for Americans to unite and say thank you. We thank all the workers who help us. We thank our bus drivers and our principals. We thank our crossing guards and our teachers, too!

On Labor Day, you also get to have some fun and celebrate!

Other countries that celebrate Labor Day are Canada (September), Jamaica (May), and New Zealand (October).
Have you ever gone to a Labor Day parade? Some cities celebrate the holiday this way. You can wave a flag, hold a balloon, and cheer as the parade goes by.

Some clowns might even surprise you!

Going to a parade is a fun way to celebrate a holiday.
Strike Up the Band!

After the parade, some towns have free outdoor **concerts**. It’s nice that almost everyone has the day off. That way, the whole family can share in the fun. Some people like to just hear the music, but others like to get up and dance!
Pack Up the Picnic Basket!

Labor Day is a great day to get together for a family picnic. Some families like to meet in a park that has picnic tables and cooking grills.

Other families enjoy their lunch on a blanket. Either way is fun! What’s your favorite picnic food?

Food cooking on the grill smells good.
After lunch, family members might want to rest under a shady tree. It’s their day off, and they’ve earned the right to relax!

Maybe you’d like to play games. Toss a ball, play tag, or have a few sack races. It’s up to you!
Grab your flip-flops and bathing suit! This might be your family’s last chance to visit the beach or pool. Go for a swim, jump the waves, build a sand castle, or dig a big hole!

For most people, Labor Day marks the end of summer. Tomorrow, you’ll put away the beach toys and take out the backpack. It has been fun, but the holiday is over. It’s time to return to work and school.

Late summer is a great time to go to the beach.
Retell

Use your own words to retell *It’s Labor Day!*

Text Evidence

1. What do you think the author’s purpose was for including the photographs on pages 6 and 7?  
   **Author’s Purpose**

2. What do you think the author’s purpose was for writing this book?  
   **Author’s Purpose**

3. How do you know that *It’s Labor Day!* is nonfiction?  
   **Genre**
Compare Texts
Read about why we celebrate another national holiday.

Four Voyages
Christopher Columbus was an Italian explorer. He made four voyages, or trips, to the Americas. People in the United States celebrate Columbus Day to honor Columbus’s first voyage, in 1492.
Columbus and his crew sailed across the Atlantic Ocean and back to Spain. The map shows the routes and dates of each voyage.

**Make Connections**

Why is it important that we celebrate Labor Day and Columbus Day? *Text to Text*
Glossary

congerst (KON-surts) public music performances (page 7)

employers (em-PLOY-urz) people who hire workers (page 3)

honor (O-nur) to admire and respect (page 3)

labor (LAY-bur) work (page 2)

protect (proh-TEKT) to keep safe (page 4)

Index

beach, 10 labor laws, 4
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Purpose  To find out about workers you honor

What to Do

Step 1  Think about people you know and the jobs they do. Think about why their jobs are important to you.

Step 2  Draw a chart like the one below. Fill it in with the jobs those people do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jobs</th>
<th>I honor them because</th>
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<td></td>
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Step 3  Make a book about someone in your chart. Write about how their job helps you. Draw a cover for your book. Share your book with the class.
The Topic
What did you learn about Labor Day?
What did you learn about workers long ago?

Vocabulary
What new words did you learn in the text? What helped you understand the meanings of those words?

Make Connections
How does your family celebrate Labor Day?
Do you do any of the things you read about in this book?