When Work Stalls

Trace a repeating pattern from personal barriers to community effects.

S.5.5 "Analyze patterns of behavior found within social problems and their implications for society (e.g., juvenile crime, long-term unemployment)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two experiences that repeat during a long job search. Number the steps of one cycle, then circle two possible effects beyond the job seeker.

The Long Search for Work

1. At a neighborhood job center, a counselor notices a recurring situation among people who have been out of work for many months. Some send applications each week but hear nothing back. As months pass, they may take short, irregular jobs to cover bills, leaving less time for interviews or training. Employers sometimes treat a long gap in steady employment as a warning sign, even when an applicant has useful skills. The counselor records these repeated experiences, rather than assuming every unemployed person follows the same path. A pattern describes what happens often, not what must happen to anyone.

2. One resident, Elena, cannot afford reliable child care while she searches for steady work. When an interview is offered on short notice, she sometimes has to cancel. Each cancellation reduces her chances of being hired, and without a steady paycheck, paying for child care remains difficult. Other residents face different barriers, such as limited bus service or a lack of nearby openings. These barriers can reinforce a cycle: obstacles slow the job search, and a longer search can make those obstacles harder to overcome. The cycle is a possible explanation for the pattern, not proof that every missed interview has the same cause.

3. When many residents face long searches, the effects can extend beyond individual households. Families may delay medical visits or cut spending at local shops, and lower sales can strain those businesses. A city that collects sales tax may also receive less revenue, leaving fewer resources for shared services. These outcomes are possible, not guaranteed: savings, family support, and local policies can change what happens. The job center responds by offering evening training and interview appointments that fit more schedules. To judge whether these changes help, the counselor would compare employment outcomes over time and ask residents which barriers still remain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How can taking short, irregular jobs become part of a longer pattern of unemployment?

2. Trace the cycle between Elena's child care barrier and her search for steady work.

3. If many households cut spending during long job searches, how could the effects spread through the community?

4. Why should the counselor ask residents about barriers as well as compare employment outcomes after changing the job center's schedule?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a school where students repeatedly miss the first class because buses arrive late. In three or four sentences, trace a possible cycle involving attendance, explain one effect on the wider school community, and name evidence that could test your explanation.

ANSWER KEY

When Work Stalls

HIGH SCHOOL · S.5.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two experiences that repeat during a long job search. Number the steps of one cycle, then circle two possible effects beyond the job seeker. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How can taking short, irregular jobs become part of a longer pattern of unemployment?	**Short jobs help cover bills but can leave less time for interviews or training, making a search for steady work harder.**
2	Trace the cycle between Elena's child care barrier and her search for steady work.	**Without reliable child care, Elena sometimes cancels interviews. Cancellations reduce her chances of getting a steady paycheck, which makes child care harder to afford.**
3	If many households cut spending during long job searches, how could the effects spread through the community?	**Local shops could lose sales. In a city that collects sales tax, lower sales could also mean less revenue for shared services.**
4	Why should the counselor ask residents about barriers as well as compare employment outcomes after changing the job center's schedule?	**Employment outcomes could show whether results change over time, while residents could identify barriers that remain. Both help the counselor avoid assuming the new schedule solves every problem.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When buses arrive late, some students repeatedly miss the start of class and fall behind on lessons. Falling behind might make attending that class feel less useful, increasing absences even on days the buses arrive on time. Teachers may spend more class time reviewing missed material, reducing time for the whole class. Comparing bus arrival logs, first-class attendance, and students' accounts over several weeks could test this explanation.

Accept other plausible cycles and community effects when students connect each step to the passage or the school scenario. Responses should treat possible effects as possibilities, not certain outcomes.