

Labor Day

Pre-reading

Questions:

- What do you know about Labor Day?
- What would you like to know about it?

Definitions:

- Recognize – to acknowledge or accept
- Declare – to announce or make known in a formal way



Reading

18 Labor Day is a national holiday to honor the workers of America. It is a way of saying
37 “thank you” to all who labor. This day is for everyone who works whether they work in or outside
51 the home, union or non-union, big company or small company, government or non-government. In
58 fact, some call it the “workingman’s holiday”.

58 Labor Day is over one hundred years old. The first Labor Day was held in New York on
76 Tuesday, September 5, 1882. Over 10,000 New York workers **participated** in the first Labor Day
91 parade. Workers and their families enjoyed the day off from work. They picnicked in the park and
108 listened to concerts and speeches.

113 In 1884, Labor Day was moved to the first Monday in September, where it is celebrated
129 today. Some believe a September date was chosen in order to provide workers a break during the
146 long stretch between the Independence Day and Thanksgiving holidays.

155 Labor groups throughout the U.S. **lobbied** for their states to recognize Labor Day as an
170 official state holiday. The first states to declare it a state holiday in 1887 were Oregon, New York,
188 Colorado, Massachusetts, and New Jersey. In 1894, Congress passed a law declaring Labor Day a
203 national holiday.

205 Over the years, Labor Day has evolved into an end of the summer celebration. Summer
220 vacationers enjoy a Labor Day weekend of fun before the cooler fall temperatures arrive. They
235 take advantage of one last warm weekend at the lake, or enjoy other outdoor activities.

250 Labor Day marks the unofficial end of summer. Many schools begin classes after Labor
264 Day. State parks, campgrounds, and swimming pools get ready to close and boats are prepared for
280 storage. People say farewell to the summer season.

Understanding

1. How is the current Labor Day holiday different from the first Labor Day? _____

2. How is the current Labor Day similar to the first Labor Day? _____

3. What does the word **lobby/lobbied** mean in this reading? _____

4. Why is Labor Day in September? _____

5. Why do some refer to Labor Day as the “unofficial” end of summer? _____

6. What does the word **participate** mean? _____

7. Who has the power to declare national holidays? _____

8. When is Labor Day? _____
9. What is another word for Labor Day? _____

Writing

Option A: Write a summary of the reading.

Option B: Write about how you celebrate Labor Day.
