

Elevator Operators

Reading Worksheet — Level C | tahricteaches.com

Long ago, many tall buildings had **elevator operators**. These **workers** stood in elevators all day. They helped people go up and down in buildings. The elevators were not **automatic** like today. Someone had to **control** them by hand.

Elevator operators worked in **department stores**, **hotels**, and office buildings. They wore nice **uniforms** and white gloves. They had to **push** and pull levers to make the elevator move. They also had to **announce** which floor the elevator was on. 'Second floor, ladies' shoes!' they would say.

This was a **working class** job. The pay was not very high, but it was steady work. Many operators worked from morning until night. They stood for many hours every day. The job needed no special training, but workers had to be polite and neat.

Elevator operators were most common from the 1920s to the 1950s. During this time, many new tall buildings were built. All of these buildings needed operators. There were thousands of these jobs in big cities like New York and Chicago.

In the 1950s, new elevators started to have **buttons**. People could press buttons to choose their floor. These automatic elevators did not need operators. Slowly, the job disappeared. Today, only a few luxury hotels still have elevator operators.



A. Vocabulary

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|----------------------------|---|
| 1. operators _____ | a. to say something in a loud, clear voice |
| 2. workers _____ | b. special clothes worn at work |
| 3. automatic _____ | c. to press against something with force |
| 4. control _____ | d. working by itself without a person |
| 5. department stores _____ | e. big shops that sell many different things |
| 6. hotels _____ | f. small round things you press to make machines work |
| 7. uniforms _____ | g. people who work with machines |
| 8. push _____ | h. people who have jobs |
| 9. announce _____ | i. to make something work the way you want |
| 10. buttons _____ | j. places where people pay to sleep when traveling |

B. True or False

1. Elevator operators worked sitting down all day. ____
2. Operators had to wear uniforms and white gloves. ____
3. The job required many years of special training. ____
4. Operators used their hands to control old elevators. ____
5. This job was most common in the 1920s to 1950s. ____
6. Elevator operators worked only in department stores. ____
7. The job disappeared when automatic elevators were invented. ____
8. Operators had to announce what floor they were on. ____
9. Today, all hotels still have elevator operators. ____

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: operators, uniforms, control, buttons, announce, automatic, department

1. Elevator _____ stood in elevators all day to help people.
2. They wore nice _____ and white gloves to work.
3. Workers had to _____ levers to make the elevator move up and down.
4. When automatic elevators got _____, people did not need operators anymore.
5. The operators would _____ which floor the elevator was stopping at.

D. Comprehension Questions

1. What did elevator operators do all day?
2. Where did elevator operators work?
3. What clothes did operators wear?
4. Why did the job of elevator operator disappear?
5. When were elevator operators most common?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Would you like to work as an elevator operator? Why or why not?
2. What other old jobs do you think don't exist anymore?
3. Do you think it's sad when jobs disappear? Explain your answer.

Answer Key

Elevator Operators — Teacher Reference Only

A. Vocabulary: 1-g, 2-h, 3-d, 4-i, 5-e, 6-j, 7-b, 8-c, 9-a, 10-f

B. True/False: 1-F, 2-T, 3-F, 4-T, 5-T, 6-F, 7-T, 8-T, 9-F

C. Fill Blanks: 1-operators, 2-uniforms, 3-control, 4-buttons, 5-announce

D. Comprehension:

1. They stood in elevators and helped people go up and down in buildings.
2. They worked in department stores, hotels, and office buildings.
3. They wore nice uniforms and white gloves.
4. Automatic elevators with buttons were invented, so people didn't need operators.
5. From the 1920s to the 1950s.