

Reading comprehension: Jayson's story

(Note: Jayson uses American spelling: color, neighbor, labor) instead of British spelling colour, neighbour, labour).

1. Read each section of the text and answer the questions below it.

Part I – The Philippines

My name is Jayson.

While I was working in the construction industry in the Philippines, my uncle received a phone call from a woman asking for a guy that could work for her. My uncle recommended me and passed me the phone.



She seemed very nice and professional towards all her employees in the Philippines. I already knew her, since I had worked at her house before, which is why I trusted her and took her offer.

EASY QUESTIONS:

a) What was Jayson's work? He worked ...

building houses at a factory at a phone company

b) What did the woman want?

She wanted to hire Jayson.

She wanted Jayson to find her a job.

She wanted to work with Jayson's company.

c) How did Jayson meet the woman?

She came to his home.

He had worked for her previously.

They arranged to meet after her phone call.

Part II – America

After she left the Philippines, she paid a recruiter to work with me to arrange the visa. The recruiter told me what to say and do. He said that I would come to the U.S. on a P-1 visa for athletes and that it would be easy to get a legal work visa once I had arrived. I believed his lies.

When I got to the U.S., I was met by the same woman I'd been introduced to working in construction. She slowly showed her true colors and became my trafficker. I did not really speak English or understand my rights, so I did everything that my trafficker told me to do. First, she took my passport for safekeeping. Then, she said that I owed her \$12,000 and that I would have to work for her for 10 years. I was only allowed to work for her and not anyone else. She said that because she had been the one who brought me to the U.S., she owned me.

HARD QUESTIONS:

d) What did the man do for Jayson?

He found him a job.

He taught him to speak English.

He got him permission to enter the USA.

e) What did the woman do then?

She lent him a lot of money.

She forced him to work for her.

She helped him keep his passport in a safe place.

Part III: the job

I started working for her in an elderly care facility where I met Angela. Angela had been brought to the U.S. before me, so I knew that my trafficker had done this to other workers.

At first, Angela and I did not trust each other, but we soon learned that we had been told the same lies and threats by our trafficker.

At the facility, Angela and I worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week with no days off. We basically worked all day and all night. I got very little sleep since I had to sleep on the floor next to my elderly patients, who had very serious illnesses. In addition to caring for the patients, I also worked in

construction and gardening at the facility.

I was paid only \$400 a month and my trafficker told me that the rest of my promised salary went towards paying off my debt for my visa. I was not allowed to leave the facility at night or talk with any neighbors or family members of clients.

When officials came to the facility, our trafficker made Angela and I hide from them. I was afraid all the time—she told us often that the police could arrest us. She said that if we went out and the police asked questions, she would deny that we worked for her. Since I did not have any papers, I was scared. Also, I would have no place to sleep if she did that. I was scared every day.

I worked like this for nine months. It was a horrible feeling—I felt sad and worried all the time. I thought I was stuck for 10 years, not able to go anywhere or see my family. I was trapped in a nightmare but I just kept working and working and working.

HARDER QUESTIONS:

f) How did Jayson feel about Angela at first?

He didn't think they should be friends.

He thought they could become friends.

He thought they had the same problem and could help each other.

g) What was Jayson's work? Click on all the correct options:

He became a gardener.

He looked after sick old people.

He worked as a night watchman.

He did the same work as in the Philippines.

h) How much money did he earn per hour? (The minimum wages in the USA in 2016 was between 7.25 and 11.50 dollars per hour, depending on which state.)

\$6.50 an hour

\$3.80 an hour

\$2.50 an hour

\$0.54 an hour

i) Why was Jayson scared of the police?

He would have nowhere to sleep if they took him to jail.

He had no passport or work permit, so he thought he would go to jail.
The woman had told him she would report him for stealing her money.

j) What was probably the worst thing for Jayson?

Not earning enough money.

Not being able to see his family.

Having to work all day and all night.

Thinking that his situation would not change for a long time.

Part IV – The liberation

After about nine months, a neighbor noticed that Angela and I did not have any days off. She reported this to the FBI and, later, Angela spoke with them. Angela told me she thought we might get help and that someone was watching out for us.

I finally was able to leave in the middle of the night. The FBI helped me get support from a services agency that picked me up and placed me in a shelter for men.

k) Who finally notified the police about Jayson's situation?

One of the customers in the home for elderly people.

A family member of one of the customers.

A neighbour.

l) How did Jayson leave?

Angela helped him run away.

The police came to rescue him.

When it got dark and they could not see him.

2. Rephrase these conditional sentences extracted from Jayson's story:

a) He wasn't given the right information, that's why he came to California.

If I _____ the right information, I never _____

to California.

b) He was not safe because he didn't know that he could not be charged for his visa.

I _____ safe if I _____ that I could not be charged a fee for my visa if I came to work in California.

c) He was exploited because he hadn't been provided with a contract in his own language.

I _____ if I _____ with a contract about my work and any money I would owe in my own language, Tagalog.

d) He didn't know what was going on because he didn't have enough information.

I _____ what was going on before I came here if I _____ enough information.

e) He couldn't decide what was right for him because he didn't have any legal protection.

I _____ what was right for me if I _____ some legal protection.

3. Now read the end of Jayson's story:

I did not get any of this information before I came to California. I did not have a way to know this on my own—I had no way to be safe.

That's why I'm sharing my story with Freedom United and the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) to help spread awareness about labor trafficking and the fraudulent practices of foreign labor recruiters who bring workers to California.

That's why I support amending SB 477 to cover all visa categories. It would protect workers like me and Angela from becoming victims of human trafficking. I want other workers to be able to have this knowledge to protect themselves.

Join me today in urging California to ensure all its temporary workers are

free from trafficking. Together, we can ensure ALL temporary migrant workers are protected so we can prevent them from being trafficked and coerced into forced labor like I was.

Would you like to find out what happened to Angela? Click on this link:

<https://www.freedomunited.org/speak-free/angela/>

Text adapted from: <https://www.freedomunited.org/speak-free/jayson/>

To obtain permission to use this type of information, write to:

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