Title: Kentucky Coal, Reclamation and Subsidence

Background Information:

Every day, Kentuckians benefit from one of the coal industry’s most notable, Environmentally significant achievements – the successful reclamation of mined lands. And chances are, they do not even know it. That is because most of the reclamation achieved by the coal industry is "invisible." Reclamation means returning the land to its original condition or other productive use. Unless there is a sign or other form of identification nearby, it is difficult to tell that a reclaimed site was once an active coal mine.

Careful mining of our land benefits people in two ways: as a source of plentiful and reasonably priced coal and as reclaimed, productive, attractive and useful areas. Whether turned into a state park, a housing development, wildlife preserves or simply returned to productive farmland, reclaimed sites represent the coal industry’s commitment to a sound environment. Even though coal production has increased substantially over the past decade, the impact of this activity on the environment has been minimal.

In Kentucky, coal is mined by one of two methods– surface mining or underground mining. Surface mining is the extraction of coal by first removing the soil, rock and other materials lying above the natural deposits. Underground mining is the extraction of coal by underground excavation of the coal deposits.

For underground mining, special effort is devoted to constructing the mine and the mining plan in such a way that undesirable surface effect are minimized. Attention is focused on the age-old problem of subsidence – the gradual movement or sometimes abrupt collapse of the rock and soil layers into an underground coal mine – which can disturb the surface above the mine.

Some of the subsidence that takes place today is the consequence of mining practices of a bygone era. These abandoned deep mines were constructed using the room-and-pillar mining methods, a traditional technique in which "rooms" of coal were extracted and "pillars" of coal were left to support the roof. The occasional collapse of these pillars years later results in random and sometimes serious subsidence.

The room-and-pillar technique is still used in most underground mines today. Modern machinery and an improved understanding of rock and soil layers allow the coal operators to minimize surface subsidence.

Many coal companies today are mining coal by the longwall method. This method utilizes roof support equipment to advance mining equipment through a large area of coal. The roof support equipment holds up the rock and soil over the deposit while the coal is removed. As the mining advances through the coal deposit, the roof supports are advanced as well, allowing the overlying rock and soil to collapse.
The attractiveness of this method allows for nearly complete removal of the coal without the use of support pillars. When this method is employed, subsidence effects on the surface of the area to be mined can be predetermined. If subsidence is to occur, it occurs quickly under the observation of the coal company operators. Any surface effects can then be mitigated as part of on going mining activities.

Since it is now possible to predict subsidence events during mining operations, steps can be taken by coal operators to lessen potential damage. Most coal companies work with neighboring landowners and homeowners to prepare for mining activities in order to minimize effects of subsidence.

Each day, companies are working hard to mine coal needed to supply electricity to Kentucky’s homes and industries. In addition, these same companies are applying an equal effort to restore the land they have disturbed, leaving an important environmental legacy for generations to come.

Community Concerns About Coal Mining

Subsidence: Mine subsidence is the depressions, sags and cracks in the surface above an underground mine. Subsidence happens after the coal is removed and the ceiling or roof of the mine collapses, allowing the surface to crack, sag or collapse.

Efforts have been made to prevent subsidence by drilling deep holes in the soil, rock and mine voids and filling them with different types of materials such as sand, fly ash and mine refuse material to stabilize the surface. Roof-bolting is a method that helps support the roof of the mine by inserting long steel bolts into holes bored into the earth that makes up the roof. Roof-bolting protects the miners and may reduce subsidence.

Advanced planning is the key to minimizing damage. Subsidence in urban areas may cause damage to electric, gas, water and sewer lines. Roads and sidewalks may require some type of flexible couplings or joints. In longwall mining applications, planned subsidence and surface repairs are an integral part of the mining operation.

Reclamation: Mine reclamation is the restoration of mined land to its original state or some type of equally useful, productive alternative after mining is completed. Reclamation begins once it has been decided to mine the area. Soil, vegetation, water, wildlife and layers of the earth at the mine site are all examined prior to any mining. All of this information is evaluated to determine how the land will be reclaimed or for what use it will be reclaimed.

Kentucky is considered a national leader in the area of mined land reclamation. For many years, our state has had laws regulating the reclamation process. As a result, mined lands have been successfully reclaimed for ball diamonds, parks, lakes, trails, golf courses, pasture and productive farmland.
Both surface and underground mining operations require reclamation. In a surface mine operation, reclamation is an integral part of coal extraction. The valuable topsoil is removed first during mining and replaced last during reclamation. The rock and subsoils (overburden) are carefully replaced after the coal is removed to ensure that the best materials end up on top and the original contour of the land is maintained. Finally, mine operators are required to meet certain standards for plant growth and crop production on the site to ensure that the land will be as productive after reclamation as it was before mining.

Surface areas affected by an underground mine, such as coarse and fine refuse disposal sites, processing facilities, hoisting shafts, ventilation shafts, and storage facilities must be covered and stabilized when the mine closes. In addition, mine operators must address any damage from subsidence.

Government Programs Regulating the Kentucky Coal Industry

There are approximately 16 federal regulatory acts (laws) and numerous state laws to regulate the coal industry. The Kentucky Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement is responsible for enforcing the state’s mining regulations. The two main laws governing coal mining in Kentucky are described below.

Kentucky Surface Mining Law (KRS Chapter 350) and Laws Governing the Mining of Coal and Clay (KRS 351-352) Conservation and Reclamation Act

Regulation of the coal mining industry in Kentucky is by the Kentucky Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. Mining regulations have been developed to ensure that mining is conducted in a way that protects the environment, the public and the land. Permits must be obtained by mining companies prior to any mining activities to ensure that the mining will follow proper rules. Performance bonds hold the mine operator responsible if the mining standards are not met. Inspection and enforcement allow the government inspectors to check for any violations during mining activities.

The Kentucky Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement may declare some lands as "unsuitable for mining" due to possible damage to unique cultural areas or natural resources. This program ensures that coal mining is safe and productive.

Abandoned Mined Lands Reclamation Program

The purpose of this program is to reclaim abandoned mines that were closed prior to the existence of state and federal laws governing reclamation standards and not restored properly. The Abandoned Mined Lands Reclamation Program is a state program managed under the Kentucky Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. Coal companies pay fees on all active mines. This money is then used to help pay reclamation costs of previously mined lands.
Emergency project are another part of the program. This ensure that any dangerous situations encountered at abandoned mines are taken care of as quickly as possible. High priority projects are those that potentially threaten the public health, safety, general welfare and property.

Activity 2 – Kentucky Coal, Reclamation and Subsidence (Discussion worksheet)

1. What is subsidence?

2. What can be done to prevent subsidence?

3. What is reclamation?

4. Name three uses of reclaimed land:
   a.
   b.
   c.

5. What natural resources must be considered when mining and reclamation are considered?
Video Game Recreates Abandoned Kentucky Coal Town

What started as an assignment to create in interactive environment in a computer science class at Eastern Kentucky University has grown into a game called Mine 18, where characters uncover old mining communities and learn the history of Appalachians in the early 1900s.

Author: Grant Robinson
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It's been more than 56 years since miners lived in Blue Heron in McCreary County, Kentucky. But now a group of students are recreating the abandoned coal town.

What started as an assignment to create in interactive environment in a computer science class at Eastern Kentucky University has grown into a game called Mine 18, where characters uncover old mining communities and learn the history of Appalachians in the early 1900s.

"We really wanted to do something in Appalachia because most of us are from this area and it's not something you see a lot in the media, in a positive light, anyway," lead developer Lacey Lansaw said. "It was also really accessible to us. We could go outside and take pictures or get audio or anything. It's just right out the window."

Though the town of Blue Heron was abandoned in the 1950s, it is now within the boundaries of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area and has been partially restored to give visitors an up-close look at what life in the coal town was like.

Miners with the Stearns Coal and Lumber Company pose for a photo at Mine 18 Blue Heron.

"We've had people from McCreary County play it an be like, 'I got drunk on that river! I've been there, I've run across that bridge,'" Lansaw said.

The game is narrative-driven and Lansaw says it will focus on personal stories of miners and their families.

"We were thinking about going into the mine wars a bit, having this struggle between your laborers and the business owners and the history behind that and unions, but we also want to tell more personal stories," Lansaw said.
NTI Day 7

The team from EKU took their game to the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles and received positive feedback from industry professionals. Locals also seem drawn to the game.

"My favorite part is recreating a place that means so much to people," Lansaw said. "The messages that I've gotten have been like 'I'm so excited that you're doing this, I didn't know anyone would be interested in my history or my town.'"

Lansaw said the co-developers are forming a gaming business with Mine 18 as its debut product. However, they don't plan to relocate to any big city tech hub to continue their work.

"The thing about game design is that it is so accessible," Lansaw said. "So we're going to build a company and we want to stay in Appalachia. We want to help people learn about technology and create jobs for anyone who wants to learn."

Mine 18 still needs about a year for further development before it is released for PC. The team will post updates on Twitter @Mine18Game.
Read the article, “Video Game Recreates Abandoned Kentucky Coal Town,” and answer the following reflective questions:

1. According to gamedesigning.org, “The best games usually have great levels that serve to complement the game’s main game mechanics. Well-planned levels will help push the story forward while keeping players engaged as they face new challenges. The art of good level design takes a lot of practice and planning so that players are encouraged to explore and continue but are never forced or frustrated. Each world had its own unique challenges and art style that get progressively more challenging while remaining fun to play.”

Describe 5 elements that the game Mine 18 could incorporate to make its players engaged.

2. Also, according to gamedesigning.org, “Whether your game is heavy on narrative or not, you want to have characters that are not boring and forgettable. This means designing characters that are visually interesting, well-written, and that the player can relate to. Most storytellers would even argue that its the characters, not plot or setting, that separates a good story from a great one.”

Create 3 characters that could be in Mine 18. You should name them, describe various features about them (including talents/limitations), and a brief description of their background.

3. Lastly, according to gamedesigning.org, “Another challenge that all game designers face is finding the perfect balance of difficulty and reward. If you make a game too hard then no one will play it due to frustration, but at the same time having a game be too easy can bore players as well. The best games are fine-tuned to provide a good escalation of difficulty so players continue feeling challenged and rewarded.”

Name 3 challenges that players could face in this game and 3 rewards that could be given when those challenges are accomplished.
In 1902, Justus S. Stearns of Ludington, Michigan bought 30,000 acres of virgin timberland in southern Kentucky. When coal was discovered soon afterwards, the Stearns Coal & Lumber Company was established. The company built the town of Stearns to serve as the hub of a logging and mining empire that would control over 200 square miles of land, build the Kentucky & Tennessee Railway, erect the first all electric sawmill in the U.S. and employ over 2,200 people living and working in 18 coal and lumber camps.

Most of the buildings in the Stearns business district were painted in company colors – sage green with white trim. The Company office headquarters building and surrounding Company houses were painted white with dark green trim. Residents enjoyed services provided by the Company, such as water and sewage, electricity, and steam heat for their homes. Recreation amenities included a golf course, tennis courts, pool hall, and baseball field for their leisure time.

The Kentucky & Tennessee Railway once stretched over 25 miles into the Big South Fork River valley and operated 12 steam locomotives. It served as the primary passage not only for timber and coal, but also for workers and supplies going to camps along its line. The K&T, like many shortline railroads operated steam locomotives several years after the mainline railroads had switched to diesel power. One of the more notable steam locomotives, Southern Railway No. 4501 was purchased by the K&T, re-lettered K&T No. 12, and operated until 1964. The only original K&T steam engine still in existence today is the K&T No. 10. Both No. 4501 and No. 10 are now located at Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum in Chattanooga.

In the 1950’s, the Stearns Company closed several coal mines and the K&T discontinued passenger service. By 1976, the Stearns Coal & Lumber Company had sold its mining operations to Blue Diamond Coal Company. The Company’s vast land holdings transferred to the National Forest, the Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area, and private ownership. Coal mining ceased along the K&T in 1987. Today, the McCreary County Heritage Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization, has taken on the task to preserve, protect, and interpret the rich history of one of the few company towns in America still surrounded by its coal, lumber, and railroad roots. The National Historic District of Stearns, McCreary County Museum, and Big South Fork Scenic Railway provide the venues necessary for the Heritage Foundation to keep this thriving history alive.

BLUE HERON MINE

The Stearns Coal & Lumber Company used species of birds as a way to advertise their grades of coal. Each mine produced a different grade, with names like Golden Pheasant and Scarlet Tanager. The newest mine and tipple the company owned in 1938 was Blue Heron. This mine, tipple, and surrounding camp houses were abandoned in 1962.
Stearns KY emerges out of the Big Survey

Posted by Dave Tabler | May 22, 2017

Louis Bryant and Justus Stearns needed each other, and it’s surely no accident that their worlds finally intersected. Bryant, a bright young mining engineer, had moved into what is today McCreary County, KY at the beginning of the 1890s to consolidate mineral and land holdings acquired there by his father.

But while the Bryant family had mining expertise and raw land, they lacked the financial depth to develop the surrounding regional infrastructure they needed to grow their business. And so Louis hit the road to do a little selling. In 1893, he took a one-ton, thirty-six-cubic-foot block of bituminous coal from his family’s Worley mine to the Chicago World’s Fair.

Justus Stearns by this time had made a fortune in the lumber business from his base in Ludington, MI. But virgin timber resources in that region were becoming depleted as the upper Midwest grew in population.

And so Stearns hired field agents scattered around the country looking for business opportunities. He had expanded the already extensive holdings of Stearns Salt & Lumber Co. in the Midwest to include properties in the Pacific Northwest, the Great Lakes, New Orleans and Florida.

Kentucky was experiencing a lumber boom in the late 1890s, and Justus Stearns heard reports of vast tracts of virgin timber in the southern Kentucky counties of Pulaski, Wayne, and Whitley and Scott County just over the border in Tennessee.

In 1900, Stearns sent Michigan surveyor William Alfred Kinne to Kentucky to secure tracts to add to his timber holdings. Al Kinne traveled extensively through Kentucky and Tennessee, meeting up finally with Louis Bryant.

The two became friends, and Bryant later became a valuable associate of the Stearns Company, teaching them a great deal about coal mining.

Photo caption reads: “Stearns; the Sheriff’s Daughter, 1900 – 1915”

By 1901, Kinne had negotiated a twenty-five-year lease with Bryant that called for the construction of a railroad and the opening up of mines in the area, and gave Stearns the right to harvest the timber in the area. Kinne secured 50,000 acres in what became known as “The Big Survey,” an area that included lands from the Kentucky & Tennessee counties mentioned earlier.
The Stearns Coal and Lumber Company, later called the Stearns Company, built the town of Stearns to serve as the hub of a logging and mining empire that would, in its heyday in the 1920's, control over 200 square miles of land, build the Kentucky and Tennessee Railway as well as the world's first all - electric sawmill, and employ over 2,200 people living and working in at least 18 coal camps. Most all of the buildings in Stearns were painted the company's colors of white with green trim, and included residences, a freight depot, office building, pool hall, theater, the renowned Stearns hotel, and company store where all the residents could purchase nearly anything they needed with company issued money called scrip. The company also provided water, electricity, steam heat, tennis courts, a golf course, and a baseball field.

Beginning in the 1950's the coal mines one by one played out and closed and the coal camps were abandoned. By 1976, the Stearns Coal & Lumber Co. had sold most of its holdings to the Blue Diamond Coal Co. and in 1987 the last railcar of coal left the Blue Diamond mines. A grand era had come to an end but another had begun - manufacturing.

The original 1902 Stearns Coal and Lumber Company Office Building was leased by Dr. Frank Thomas, President of the Stearns Company, now a current Outdoor Venture Director, rent free for two years to JC Egnew and John Moore in 1972. The two founded a company and that location became the first home of Outdoor Venture Corporation, a tent producer and one of the first manufacturing plants in McCreary County.

Later, Outdoor Venture purchased the old office building and depot and donated it to the McCreary Heritage Foundation. Today, this building has been restored to its original condition and is the home of the Big South Fork Scenic Railway.
History of Stearns Coal and Lumber Company

1. Why was the town of Stearns built?

2. How many people would the company employ?

3. How many coal and lumber camps would the company control?

4. Describe the buildings in the Stearns business district.
   A.
   B.

5. What services were provided to residents?
   A.
   B.

6. What types of recreation amenities were included for residents?
   A.
   B.

7. How were birds used by the Company?

8. The Company built the 1st ___________ ___________ in the world.

9. What two people founded the Outdoor Venture Corporation?

10. What does the Outdoor Venture Corporation produce?

11. When did Kentucky experience a lumber boom?

12. Today, McCreary County Museum is located in the 1907 ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ office building.
State’s most popular specialty license plate is Friends of Coal.

The coal industry has long played a major role in Kentucky’s economy and politics, and it’s making its way to the back of many of our cars.

Kentucky is the third-largest coal producing state in the country, falling only behind Wyoming and West Virginia. To help show support for coal mining in the state, organizations including the Kentucky Coal Association, Coal Operators and Associates and Western Kentucky Coal Association worked to create the “Friends of Coal” license plate.

It has become the fastest selling of more than 100 specialty plates available in Kentucky. First offered on March 12, 2009, the Friends of Coal plate had accounted for 40,018 sales as of June 27.

In its first year, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet sold 16,383 Friends of Coal plates, compared to 11,171 Veteran plates and 4,720 University of Kentucky plates, which are two of the other popular specialty plates. In 2011, only the 8,631 Cumberland Falls specialty plates sold so far have surpassed the 8,117 Friends of Coal plates – with half a year to go.

Specialty plates must be sponsored by a 5013C corporation, said Chuck Wolfe, public affairs director for the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. All proceeds from the plates have “to be used for some sort of educational or other philanthropic purpose,” Wolfe said.

Purchasing a Friends of Coal plate is a way for individuals to show their support, said Dave Moss, president of Friends of Coal Kentucky.

Friends of Coal is an advocacy group which asks members to help promote the industry. Membership is free.

Since 2010, people who purchase or renew the plate have had the option of donating an additional $10 for coal-related scholarships in the state.

Half of each $10 donation goes towards scholarships for mining engineering programs at UK or any other coal-related college program in the state.

The other 50 percent goes towards public education campaigns to increase awareness of the economic benefits of the coal industry in Kentucky. According to the Friends of Coal website, no political messages or candidate endorsements are involved in this campaign.

West Virginia and Virginia officially issued similar license plates in 2011, Moss said.

Friends of Coal also recently received 300 signatures to approve the sale of a motorcycle plate, which can now be purchased from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

For a complete list of specialty license plates available in Kentucky, visit the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s website.
1. Why would you purchase a Friends of coal license plate?

2. What does half of each donation of $10 help support?

3. What does the other half go to support?

4. Who worked to create the friends of coal license plate?

5. Kentucky is the ______-largest coal producing state in the country.
When a worldwide shipping and logistics company wants to expand its operation, a dedicated workforce and workforce development system are necessities—especially when you are looking to add 6,000 employees. Through a unique public/private workforce, education and economic development partnership, UPS has been able to create a steady and stable workforce not just for itself, but for several key business partners as well.

The Story

Since 1980, UPS has had an operations hub in Louisville, Kentucky. However, when the company announced in 1997 that it was looking to expand its operations, the most important question was how it would secure and train an additional 6,000 employees. The answer, it turns out, was literally next door.

In December 1997, a summit meeting was held with then-Governor Paul Patton and Louisville Metro Government officials to discuss how the state was going to help support the workforce needs of one of its largest employers. The result was Metropolitan College, a unique partnership that involves UPS, the University of Louisville, Jefferson Community and Technical College, and the Louisville Metro and Commonwealth of Kentucky governments.
How It Works

Metropolitan College is a program that allows employees working the night shift at UPS to complete postsecondary education. The goal of this program is to develop a responsive and educated workforce for the region and the state.

Metropolitan College students receive half of their tuition and book reimbursement from UPS and the other half from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In addition, UPS provides academic bonuses. While there are no restrictions on what the participants study, each student is required to sign a student agreement that outlines UPS’s expectations.

Individuals who are interested in Metropolitan College can enter the program in two ways. The first is through UPS's School-to-Work program, an opportunity open to all high school seniors at UPS partner schools. In this program, students attend their high school in the morning, work at UPS from approximately 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and take a Jefferson Community and Technical College course twice a week. The tuition and books for these courses are funded by UPS. Students who wish to participate in the School-to-Work program must go through the UPS interview and hiring process, are required to maintain at least a 2.5 GPA, have good attendance and get a letter of recommendation from their high school counselor.

Students receive high school elective credit, valuable work experience, can earn up to six college credit hours by their high school graduation and then receive automatic transition into Metropolitan College. According to UPS, approximately 40 to 50 percent of students in the School-to-Work program transfer to the night shift so they can take full advantage of Metropolitan College.

The second way to participate in Metropolitan College is through direct enrollment. In essence, there are only two requirements: You must be a UPS employee on the night shift with a start time between 9:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m.; and you must be enrolled in either the University of Louisville or Jefferson Community and Technical College and sign a student agreement each semester.

Regardless of how individuals enter Metropolitan College, participants receive a number of additional benefits. One is career planning assistance. Each semester, Metropolitan College students are required to meet with a student development counselor to complete requirements of the Career and Academic Planning Program. This program is designed to help students succeed in school and move into a rewarding career by helping them clarify career and life goals and develop an effective and meaningful academic plan.

STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

David McDaris

David McDaris of Mt. Washington, Kentucky, began his career at UPS in July 2006. He came to UPS for the benefits of the Metropolitan College program. David explained that his parents already had two kids in college, and he did not want to saddle them with the burden of paying for a third.

A Metropolitan College student from the beginning, David did his first semester at the University of Louisville. After that first semester, however, David felt he would do better in a smaller, more personal setting, so he transferred to Jefferson Community and Technical College. This proved to be a great move; in 2010, David completed the aviation maintenance program at JCTC.

Currently, David is enrolled in the aircraft maintenance management program at Embry-Riddle University while he continues to work in the Fleet Operations Group at UPS as an A300 maintenance program analyst.

“Without this unique program through UPS, I don’t know if I would be where I am today,” said McDaris. “The Metropolitan College program has given me both the technical skills and the employment I needed and now I am taking that to the next level.”

Syeria Roberts

Ashland, Kentucky’s Syeria Roberts moved to Louisville in July 1999 to participate in the Metropolitan College program after her father learned about it through a friend. She started at Jefferson Community and Technical College.

While working at UPS and participating in the Metropolitan College program, she earned her associate degree from JCTC and her bachelor’s degree from the University of Louisville. She now works for UPS Airlines as a flight crew scheduler.

She says the Metropolitan College program gave her the opportunity to complete her postsecondary education without debt. The benefits of the program have also allowed her to pursue her master’s degree.

There are many ways that students can receive technical training and earn postsecondary degrees. For Syeria, UPS’s program was the best option. Not only did this program help her achieve her academic goals, but it also provided employment.
Another benefit is CREW (Connecting Resources, Education and Workforce), a collaborative initiative that helps Metropolitan College students in their career exploration, preparation and placement. CREW helps students with resume writing, effective interviewing skills, networking, understanding the job market, and even which major to choose.

The Business Case

UPS began this project with the goal of securing additional employees for a planned expansion. Due to its unique staffing needs (approximately 53 percent of UPS’s Worldport workforce is part-time), UPS knew that the only way to reach its workforce goals was to work with the education community. Creating a unique partnership that aligns secondary education, postsecondary education and the workforce, UPS has certainly succeeded.

By working with the education community, UPS was able to successfully solve its workforce dilemma. Although not a goal at the outset of the project, UPS has also been able to use this program to help other Kentucky-based businesses.

Since a healthy percentage of UPS employees are part-time, the company knows it will lose them as they seek full-time employment. To help these individuals remain in the state and find work, UPS has launched the Metropolitan College Ambassadors program, by which it works with other local businesses, called the Workforce Advisory Board, to match their needs with UPS employees who might be interested in full-time employment.

“The Workforce Advisory Board and the Metropolitan College Ambassadors initiative can be an economic driver for the Commonwealth of Kentucky by increasing the number of credentials earned by Metropolitan College students and by placing them in high-demand jobs in the community,” said Tom Volta, Vice President Human Resources, UPS Airlines.

LEARN MORE

Metropolitan College: www.metro-college.com/ups
UPS: www.ups.com
Summarize the article for the importance of work-based learning.