

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Railways and the people who work on them have a language of their own. Which of these train-related jobs are real and which do you think we made up?

NAVY >>

This title is sometimes used to refer to the people who cleared trees and rocks away from the place the tracks would go. Sometimes it refers to the people who actually laid the wooden ties and pounded in the metal rails. Either way, they did unbelievably hard work, day after day.



<< COOLER

This person made sure a steam engine ran at the right temperature. If the engine got too hot, the cooler would close the air intake pipes and throw water on the coals.



WIPER >>

This job was often done by teenage boys. While a locomotive was out of service, wipers cleaned it and kept a fire going in its engine.



GANDY DANCERS >>

These workers, also known as sectionmen, kept the railway in good shape, packing down gravel and fixing damaged rails. The name comes from the tools they used, which were made by the Gandy Manufacturing Company.



<< PUNCHER

Although this sounds like kind of a violent job, it's actually just the name for the person who took passengers' tickets. Punchers were also sometimes called clickers, after the sound their little handheld tools made when they punched a hole in the tickets.

HOGGER >>

Also called a hoghead or hog jockey, this is a term for an engineer. It comes from the word hog, which means engine or locomotive.



Answer on p. 34