

Dyslexic children and young people can be anxious about what they will do for a living when they grow up, especially if school is a struggle. So, how can we nurture their career interests without fostering unrealistic expectations or self-limiting beliefs?



A template for a light-touch talk

We have little idea what jobs of the future are – or aren't – so we can't begin to imagine whether jobs of today will still be around, or what other new occupations today's young people can expect to fulfil as adults. They're not likely to have just one job, but a suite of jobs, and roles that change throughout their career. Their career prospects are being shaped every day by global issues beyond anyone's control. Think back just 15 years ago. Did you ever dream that jobs like Social Media Manager, Data Miner, 3D Print Technician or Driverless Car Engineers would exist, let alone be the norm? Fast forward 15 years from now, can you begin to imagine what industries and roles might exist that dyslexic young people and their differing abilities will excel in?

The good news is that, according to Ernst & Young's report *The Value of Dyslexia*, the jobs of the future will need dyslexic thinking skills, and the young dyslexic people of today represent the talent solution of the future, providing their natural skills in problem solving and collaboration and their character strengths and values are well nurtured. Farai Chideya, author of *The Episodic Career*, predicts that the next generation are unlikely to have the same job for life, as their parents and grandparents expected; so adaptation to change, full understanding of themselves and awareness of the changing job market are key to putting their talents to best use.

So, instead of the dreaded 'what do you want to do when you grow up?' question, this exercise provides a more helpful way to open a career conversation and when it is appropriate, identify some sectors or roles that 'fit' the values and interests the young person expresses through the activity as possible paths to meaningful work.

Your career can be about something that matters to you, and you can use your strengths to make it enjoyable.

Use these questions to interview yourself or a partner.

Invent a job role based on the answers you get.

- What type of person do you want to be?
- What problems do you want to solve?
- What difference do you want to make to the world?
- What strengths can you use to do that?
- If all of that was a job, what would you call it?
- What would that job involve doing?
- How would you describe it to others?
- What would you wear in that job?
- Is there anything else you can imagine about that job?

Add a title and some descriptions about what the job involves that you invented.

Job title

Job description

Draw the job role you invented.

