



READY FOR ANYTHING: PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE

SECONDARY RESOURCES



Complex problem solving activities help students develop the skills they will need for the future. (Photo credit: Getty Images, Gideon Mendel)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- As of April 2017, Canada’s “labour force”—the number of people eligible to work in jobs in Canada—was 19.6 million. 18.3 million of these were employed in a job, and 1.3 million were unemployed. ([Statistics Canada](#))
- The majority of working Canadians—14 million people—work in the service sector. That includes a wide range of jobs like retail salespeople in stores, people in the food and restaurant industry, the health care sector, financial services like banks and insurance, and information and cultural jobs. Only 3.8 million Canadians work in the goods producing sector—farming, construction, manufacturing, or resource extraction like mining. ([Statistics Canada](#))
- As of 2015, 864,000 Canadians were employed in high tech industries like information technology, aerospace or scientific research. ([Brookfield Institute](#))
- 6.1 percent of all Canadian businesses are in the high tech sector. ([Brookfield Institute](#))
- Out of the 29 developed member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Canada ranks 18th for the number of people in its labour force who are employed in information and communications technology. ([Brookfield Institute](#))
- It is estimated that 65 percent of children who have just started primary school will, as adults, end up working in jobs that don’t even exist yet. ([World Economic Forum](#))
- The U.S. Department of Labour estimates that the growing need for businesses and organizations to communicate with the public through social media like Facebook and Twitter will increase the number of jobs in public relations by 12 percent in the next six years.. ([Enveritas Group](#))
- The development of non-military drone aircraft could create at least 100,000 new jobs by 2025. ([The Atlantic](#))

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets:



These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.WE.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

KEY TERMS

Job market—A general term for the amount, and different types, of job opportunities and requirements in a country’s economy.

Critical thinking—The ability to analyze information and opinions and judge how accurate they are.

Emotional intelligence—One’s ability to control and express his or her emotions, and handle interpersonal relationships with empathy.

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- **Themes:** Education, Employment, Local Issues, Global Issues
- **Course Connections:** Career Studies

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Paper and writing utensils
- Computer/tablet with Internet access

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Develop an awareness of their unique skills, talents and interests
- Investigate different career paths and the skills required for success

DISCUSS

1. How would you define “self-directed” learning?
2. What do you think the authors mean when they refer to skills that are “easily adapted to changing times?”
3. Besides “social media manager” and “mobile app developer,” what other jobs can you think of that didn’t exist ten years ago?
4. Why do you think “complex problem solving” will be the most important job skill in 2020?
5. What are the differences between the purpose of schools during the Industrial Revolution and the purpose of schools now? What could the purpose of schools be in the future?

DIVE DEEPER

Ask students to sit in a circle. Hold up a common classroom object (a pencil, a ruler, an eraser etc.) and ask students “What is this?” When students respond, tell them “Actually, it’s a _____” and demonstrate an alternative way to use the object. For example, if using a pencil, tell students “Actually, it’s a drumstick” and demonstrate how it could be used as a drumstick. Pass the object to the next person in the circle and ask them to complete the phrase, “Actually, it’s a _____.” Encourage each student to take a turn thinking of a creative, alternative use for the object. Once each student has had a turn, tell students that creativity and complex problem solving are two of the top ten skills researchers believe will be needed in the workplace by 2020.

As a class, read the *Global Voices* article and discuss the questions in the Discuss section.

Watch “These are the 10 skills you’ll need in the workplace by 2020” www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssH70sK07AI (0:37), analyze each skill and discuss why these skills could be important for future careers.

Ask students to divide a piece of paper in half and label one side of the paper “My Skills and Talents” and the other side “My Passions and Interests”. Students will brainstorm and complete both sides of the paper and then discuss with a partner.

Ask students, “If you had a chance to do any job in the world, even a job that doesn’t exist yet, what would it be?” Tell students they will create a proposal for why they should be considered for this real or imagined job. The proposal should address the following questions:

- If this is an existing job, what will it look like in ten years?
- If this is an imagined job, why will this job be necessary in ten years?
- Why will this job be necessary in ten years? (if this is an imagined job)
- Why do you want this job? Does it align with your passions and interests?
- What skills or talents do you have that make you the best candidate for this job?

EXTENSION

- Invite members of the community into the class to discuss the sector they work in and what they imagine their jobs might look like in the future.
- Encourage students to investigate leading figures in the fields they are interested in and create profiles of the skills and attributes that are necessary to be successful in that field.