

Leveraging Xello to Support College & Career Readiness in Special Education



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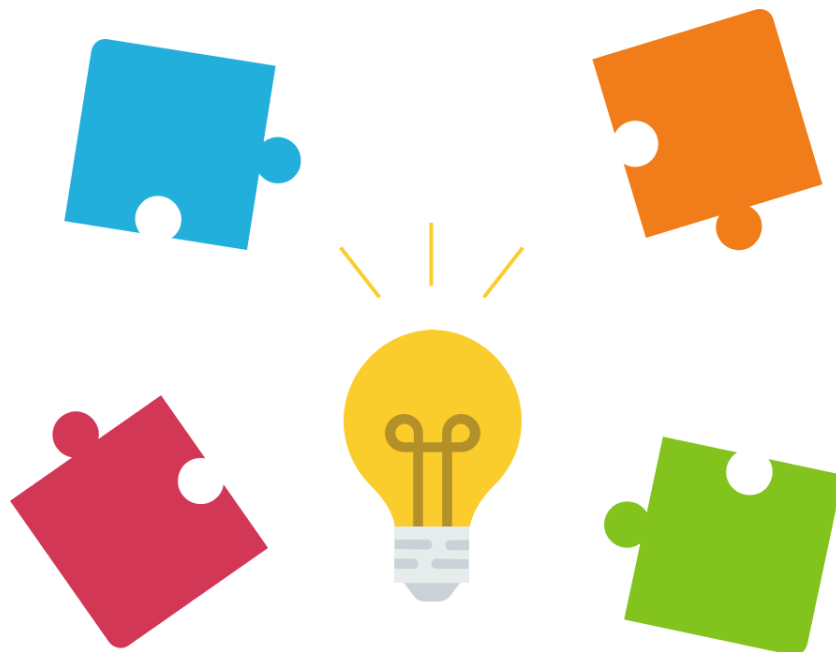
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EVERY Student, Future Ready!

All students need support to find their pathways to a fulfilling and successful life after high school. No matter what their abilities are, students need access to high-quality education and should graduate prepared for the best future that awaits them. In addition to core academics, students need to develop the attitudes, skills, and knowledge to be prepared for their futures.

Students who are receiving Special Education services deserve no less than their general education peers, and may require additional support along the way.

Whether it is considered part of IEP transition planning or broader college and career readiness initiatives, future planning for students in Special Education must be student-centered, giving them a voice in the process.



Common Themes in Future Planning

In speaking with teachers, counselors, and coordinators who provide Special Education services, several common themes emerged related to supporting future planning with their students.



Time & Attention

For myriad reasons, students in Special Education may require more time to complete activities than their general education peers.



Additional Context

Students often require additional information, repetition, and reinforcement of ideas to achieve their learning goals.



Personalization

Providing personalized experiences and instruction is critical to meet students' unique needs and work with their strengths.



Network of Support

Individuals need a shared understanding of students' interests, strengths, and goals to support them, including positive and realistic involvement from parents and guardians.



Self-Esteem

Keeping career conversations positive and strengths-focused is imperative for students receiving Special Education services, as they may struggle to see the possibilities for their future.

This guide demonstrates how Xello and its supplemental resources support each theme, with ideas for adaptation.

Strategies for Success

We have assembled some ideas and resources that can help when using Xello 6 - 12 within a Special Education context with students and their families. Of course, no strategy is universal. Please adapt, adopt, or ignore these strategies based on your needs as an educator and the needs of your students.

Many of these strategies focus on three core areas of Xello: Assessments, Career Exploration, and Lessons. You'll also find information on Xello Family, Assignments, and general strategies. Look for these tags to find the most relevant points for you.

[Assessments](#) [Lessons](#) [Career Exploration](#) [Resume Builder](#) [More...](#)

If you have other practices that you are using with your students, we would love to hear from you!



Good to know!

Xello is compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards for accessibility. This includes:

- Full keyboard accessibility
- Color contrast standards
- Skip links for repetitive navigation
- Captioning for embedded videos and transcripts for audio clips



Time & Attention

Due to the need for assistive technology, challenges with reading, or any number of other factors, students may require extra time to complete activities in Xello. For students who struggle with stamina with respect to reading, writing, or working with screens, breaking activities down into smaller, more manageable chunks can set better expectations for students and improve learning experiences.

Lessons

Approach one or two activities at a time, rather than a full lesson

Xello lessons consist of five to seven individual, self-contained activities, with each activity building on the learning in the previous ones. In order to focus on specific learning objectives and to help students feel a sense of accomplishment, you can deliver the lessons in chunks, using the natural activity breakpoints.

2% WORKPLACE SKILLS AND ATTITUDES Done

What are Workplace Skills?

Employers want to hire people who have the specific skills for the job. But the best employees have a little something extra. They use certain skills that can help them in many (if not most) workplaces.

Workplace skills are not specific to one career. They are also called **soft skills** or **transferable skills**. Common examples include:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Problem solving

Soft skills can help you succeed in the workplace. Ready to check out some of these skills in action?

Find 3 examples of how to use each skill in the workplace.

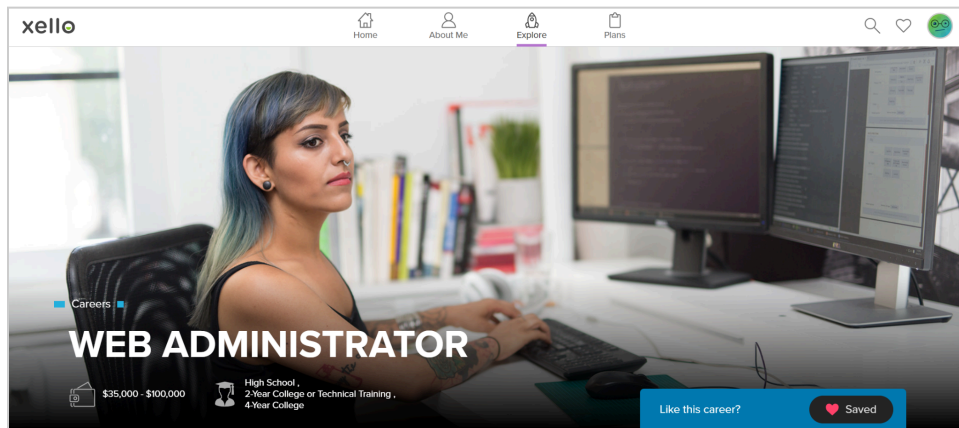
Start Activity

Career Exploration

Focus on more visual and scannable portions of career profiles


Xello's career profiles are comprehensive, but potentially overwhelming for students who struggle with a lot of text. To support these learners, focus on less text-heavy portions of profiles when exploring career options.

- Each profile begins with an image of someone on the job and a two-sentence description to give a sense of what the career is all about.



- Core Tasks and Workplace are presented as lists.
- Sample Career Path offers an at-a-glance view of the earnings, requirements, and responsibilities someone in that occupation could have throughout their career.
- Each profile contains interviews with audio clips from real people in that career speaking to their likes, dislikes, and advice for someone considering that career.
- Interviews also include a visual Breakdown of Activities and A Day in the Life timeline.



 **Good to know:** All content in Xello 6-12 is written to a maximum 6th grade reading level.

Assessments

Complete assessments across multiple periods

While we strive to keep our assessments short, it may still be better for students to try to answer 10-15 questions per sitting. Students can exit all the assessments at any time and pick up right where they left off. This can allow time for more conversation about what each question means and students can be intentional about their answers without feeling rushed.



Good to know: Here's how many questions are in each assessment:

- Matchmaker has 39 questions
- Personality Styles has 28 questions
- Mission Complete has 49 questions
- Skills Lab has 35 questions
- Learning Styles has 20 questions



Additional Context

Students often require additional information, repetition, and reinforcement of ideas to achieve their learning goals. Xello offers many resources to support educators with in-class activities and learning supplements.

Assessments Resume Builder More...

Use videos to introduce Xello and supporting features

Short video introductions are available for several areas of the program. See the following playlist (US and Canadian options) for videos to show in class to introduce concepts and areas of Xello:

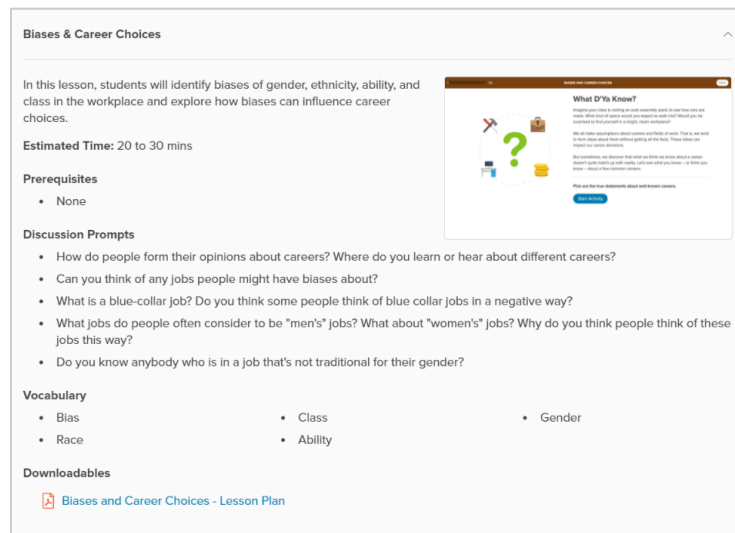
- [Xello 6-12 Student Playlist \(US\)](#)
- [Xello 6-12 Student Playlist \(CA\)](#)

Lessons

Leverage the discussion prompts and vocabulary lists available for each lesson

Discussion questions and key vocabulary are included as part of the resources for each Xello lesson.

- Set the stage before students interact with Xello, introducing the key concepts and vocabulary for that activity.
- Have students pause on a particular screen to check comprehension and reiterate learning objectives.
- Reinforce learning through follow-up conversations, asking students to reflect on what they’ve learned and what they think and feel about their experience.



Resource packages are available for every Xello lesson.

Lessons

Use supplemental activities in the Lesson Resources

Each lesson has a [lesson plan](#) that expands on the concepts in the lesson itself to reiterate and reinforce those concepts. These pre- and post-activities provide variety in content delivery and offer different ways for students to demonstrate their learning.



Individual Adaptation

Providing personalized experiences and instruction is critical to meet students' unique needs and work with their strengths.

Assessments

Adapt assessment presentation based on students' needs

Some educators read the questions aloud to students to aid with comprehension, which can include using the additional information available from the “?” icon.

The screenshot shows a 'MATCHMAKER QUESTIONS' interface. At the top right, there is a 'Done' button. Below the title 'Matchmaker', there is a progress indicator showing '0/39' and a 'Review My Answers' button. The main question is 'How do you feel about: Working with children'. Below the question, there are five response options, each with a smiley face icon: 'LIKE VERY MUCH' (happy face), 'LIKE' (neutral smile), 'NOT SURE' (neutral face), 'DISLIKE' (neutral frown), and 'DISLIKE VERY MUCH' (sad face). A question mark icon is located to the right of the question text.

If completing assessments directly in the application is a challenge, paper-based versions of the assessments are available on request.



Note: In order for students to get results, the assessment still needs to be entered in the student's account in Xello.

Assignments

Use assignments to track students' work

For any assignment, students can submit a written response or upload almost any file format. Students can submit scanned artwork, audio or video clips, photographs of physical objects, or other content that fulfills the assignment.

Lessons

Adapt and modify supplementary activities

Supplementary activities are available for all of Xello's lessons. These activities are intended to expand on the concepts covered in the lesson and provide ready-made options for additional instruction. These activities can be adapted or modified to meet individual student needs.



Network of Support

Students in special education are often working with many different professionals within the school system who all benefit from insights into the students' interests, goals, and plans. At the same time, positive and realistic involvement from parents and guardians is especially critical for these students. Shared insights into students' interests, goals, and plans is a key input for successful collaboration.

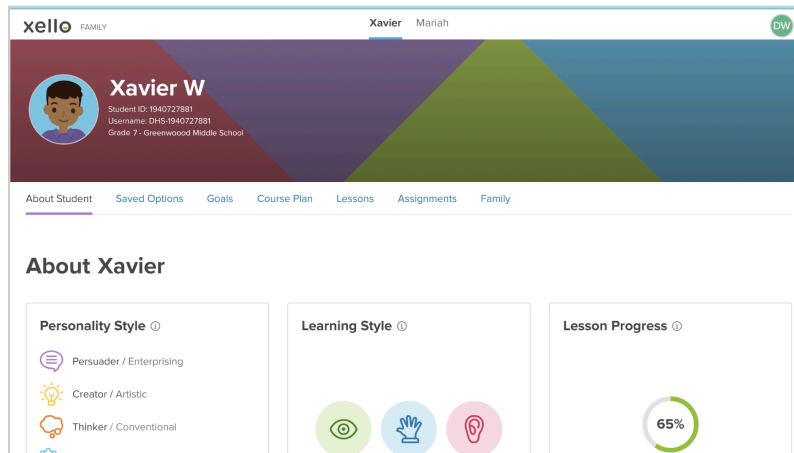
[Assessments](#)[Career Exploration](#)[More...](#)**Include Xello as part of IEP transition planning**

Xello provides student-centered inputs for IEPs. As students work through Xello, completing activities and lessons, recognizing their skills, interests, and experiences; identifying career and education options they may want to pursue, they're building their own profile.

Student Support

Shared access to student profiles

Counselors, teachers, and other school staff have access to student profiles through the Xello Educator Tools. These profiles can inform transition planning and deepen relationships with students. Make reviewing a student's Xello profile part of meetings with and about the student.



Xello Family gives parents, guardians - or whoever may be part of a student's support system - access to see and discuss their student's future goals and plans.

Families

Engage parents and guardians with Xello Family

Xello Family provides parents and other caring and concerned adults with insights into their child's activity in Xello. This can help facilitate positive and realistic conversations among parents, educators, and students.



Self-Esteem

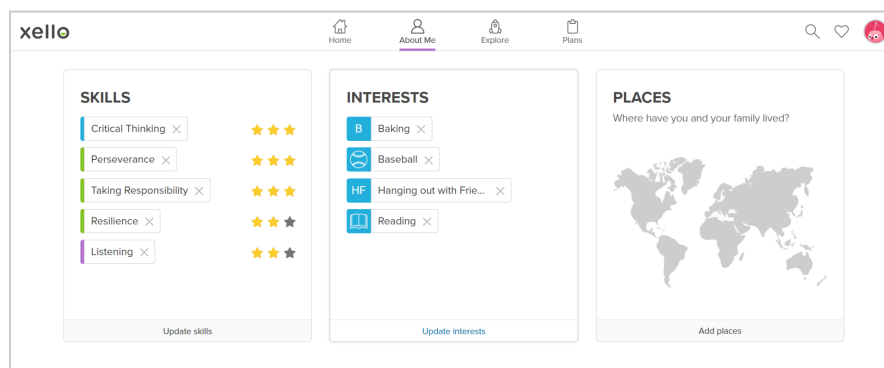
Keeping career conversations positive and strengths-focused is imperative for students who may have low self-esteem or struggle to see the possibilities for their future. Students need to see and feel how career development is relevant to them and to be decision makers in their own futures to the greatest extent possible.

Expectations for students are critical in shaping their goals and outcomes. It's important that students be setting achievable but ambitious goals for themselves that reflect their capabilities, strengths, and interests.

About Me

Start by adding Interests and Skills in the About Me profile

These activities are straightforward and incredibly engaging. Students can use the predefined lists to explore different areas and find what speaks to them. Leading with self-identified interests and skills rather than diving in with assessments lowers the stakes and allows students to just focus on themselves.



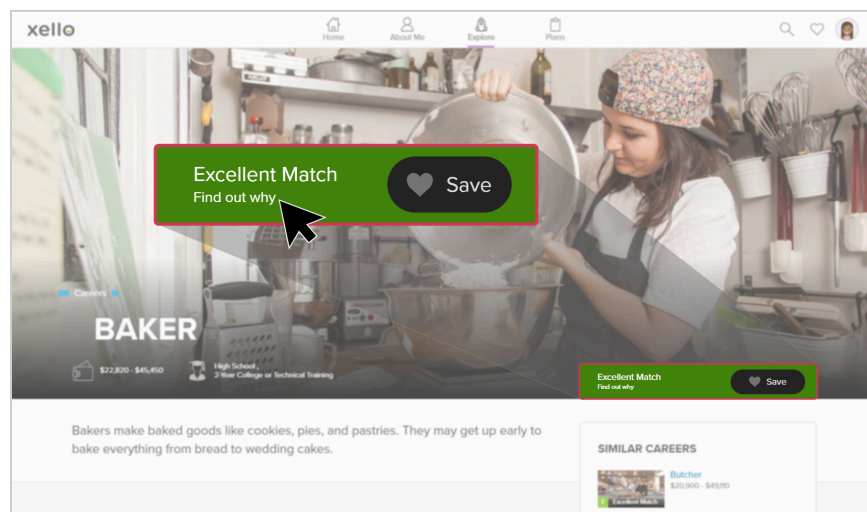
Assessments

Set the stage with discussions before students take Matchmaker

Let them know that it's about possibilities. Their results aren't telling them what to do or what they should be. If students see results they don't expect or that don't match their expectations, it can be a difficult moment. See the video below to help students contextualize what the Matchmaker assessment is and how they can take ownership of their results:

- [Understanding Your Career Matches \(US\)](#)
- [Understanding Your Career Matches \(CA\)](#)
- [Inicia tu aventura en el mundo de las profesiones con Xello \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Explore ton avenir avec Xello \(French\)](#)

On the career profiles, students can see exactly how their answers match up with the aspects of a career. If there's an option they don't like in their results, they can hide that career.



Students can click **Find out why** to see exactly how their interests match up with that career.

Lessons

Lessons focus on personal relevance

Most of Xello's lessons embed the careers, interests, or experiences students have saved. Students apply the skills and knowledge they encounter in the early activities directly to themselves and what interests them. This establishes greater relevancy and allows students to see how what they're learning relates to themselves and their future.

Have questions? Have feedback?



Whether you're a counselor or a teacher, we hope these strategies can prove useful to you in your school or classroom.

We're here to help you every step of the way. Our online Help section anticipates just about every scenario imaginable and offers clear instructions to guide you through. Additionally, your Xello Success Manager is always available to support you.

Together, we can help all students, regardless of ability, find their individual pathway towards their future.



Visit [the Xello Support Center](#) to find teaching resources, training options, and answers to all your questions.