

Leveraging Xello to Support Future Readiness in Special Education



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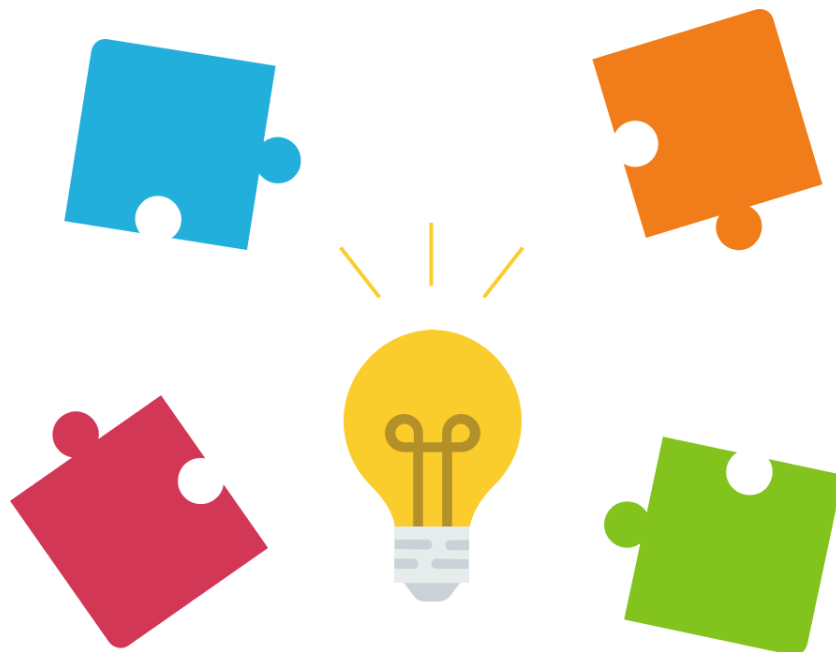
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EVERY Student, Future Ready!

All students need support to find their pathways to a fulfilling and successful life after school or college. No matter what their abilities are, students need access to high-quality education and should be 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 with special educational needs (SEN) deserve no less than their general education peers, and may require additional support along the way.

Whether it is considered part of an education, health, and care (EHC) plan, or broader post-education readiness initiatives, future planning for students with SEN must be student-centred, giving them a voice in the process.



Common Themes in Future Planning

In speaking with teachers, careers advisers, and SEN coordinators (SENCOs) who provide SEN services, several common themes emerged related to supporting future planning with their students.



Time & Attention

For a myriad of reasons, students with SEN 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.



Personalisation

Providing personalised 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 with SEN, 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 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.

[About Me](#) [Lessons](#) [Career Exploration](#) [CV 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
- Colour 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 1 or 2 activities at a time, rather than a full lesson

Xello lessons consist of 5 to 7 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.

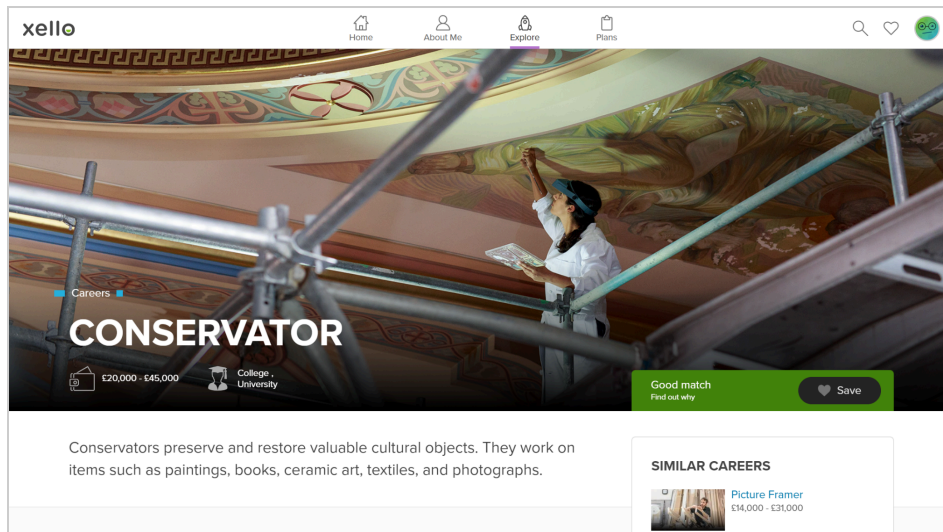
The screenshot shows a lesson interface with a dark red header containing a progress bar at 2%, the title 'WORKPLACE SKILLS AND ATTITUDES', and a 'Done' button. The main content area features an illustration of a woman in a red dress and cap pointing to icons for communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. The text explains that employers value specific skills and that workplace skills are also called soft or transferable skills. It lists Communication, Teamwork, and Problem solving as common examples. A prompt asks the user to find 3 examples of how to use each skill in the workplace, followed by a 'Start Activity' button.

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 2-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 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 is written to reading age 11.

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 CV 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 for videos to show in class to introduce concepts and areas of Xello:

[Xello Student Experience Videos](#)

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.

Biases & Career Choices

In this lesson, students will identify biases of gender, ethnicity, ability, and class in the workplace and explore how biases can influence career choices.

Estimated Time: 20 to 30 mins

Prerequisites

- None

Discussion Prompts

- How do people form their opinions about careers? Where do you learn or hear about different careers?
- Can you think of any jobs people might have biases about?
- What is a blue-collar job? Do you think some people think of blue collar jobs in a negative way?
- What jobs do people often consider to be "men's" jobs? What about "women's" jobs? Why do you think people think of these jobs this way?
- Do you know anybody who is in a job that's not traditional for their gender?

Vocabulary

- Bias
- Race
- Class
- Ability
- Gender

Downloadables

[Biases and Career Choices - Lesson Plan](#)

Resource packages are available for Xello lessons.

Lessons

Use supplemental activities in the Lesson Resources

Each lesson has a lesson plan ([England](#) | [Northern Ireland](#)) 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.



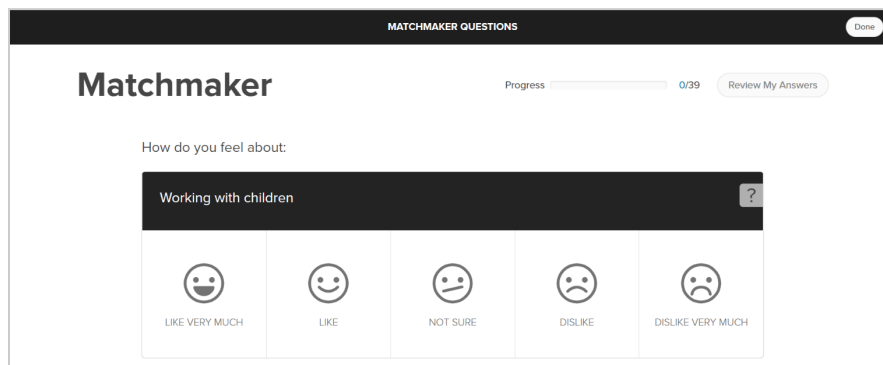
Individual Adaptation

Providing personalised 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.



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 with SEN are often working with many different professionals within the school or college 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 an EHC plan

Xello can be used to help form part of an EHC plan, and to set realistic outcomes for a student. Section E of the EHC plan covers the outcomes that are being targeted for the student.

For example:

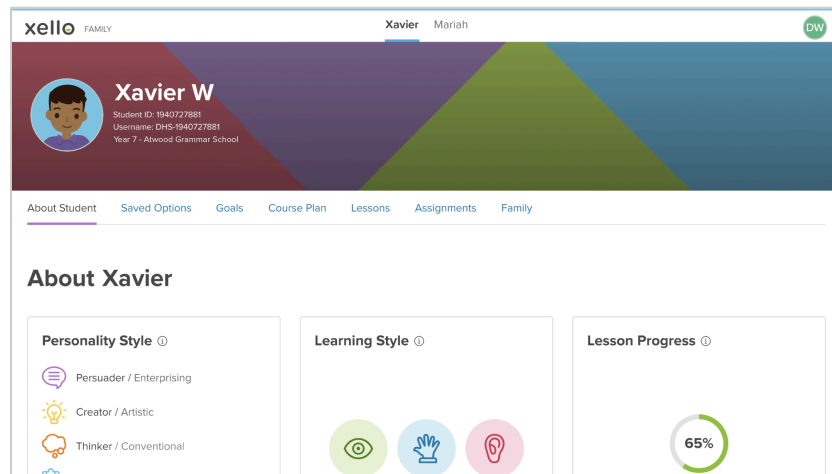
[student name] will be able to work through Xello, completing activities and lessons, recognising their skills, interests, and experiences; identifying career and education options they may want to pursue

In section F you will need to state the technology required for the student to use Xello, for example a laptop or tablet.

Student Support

Shared access to student profiles

Careers advisers, SENCo, 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.



Families

Engage parents and guardians with Xello Family

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



Self-Esteem

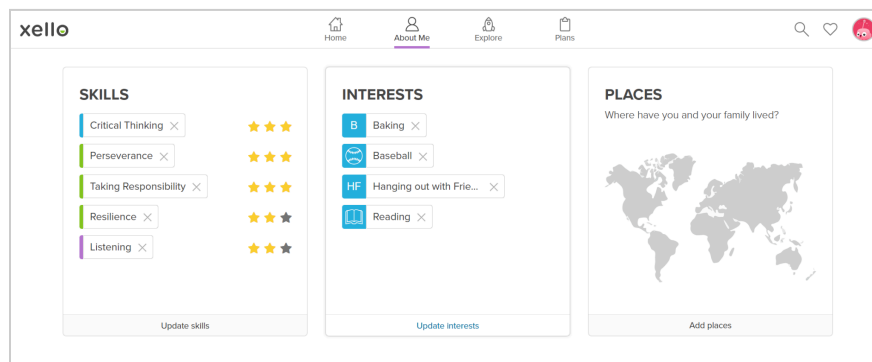
Keeping career conversations positive and strengths-focused is imperative for students who may have low self-esteem or struggle to see the possibilities for their future. Students need to see and feel how career development is relevant to them and to be decision makers in their own futures to the greatest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



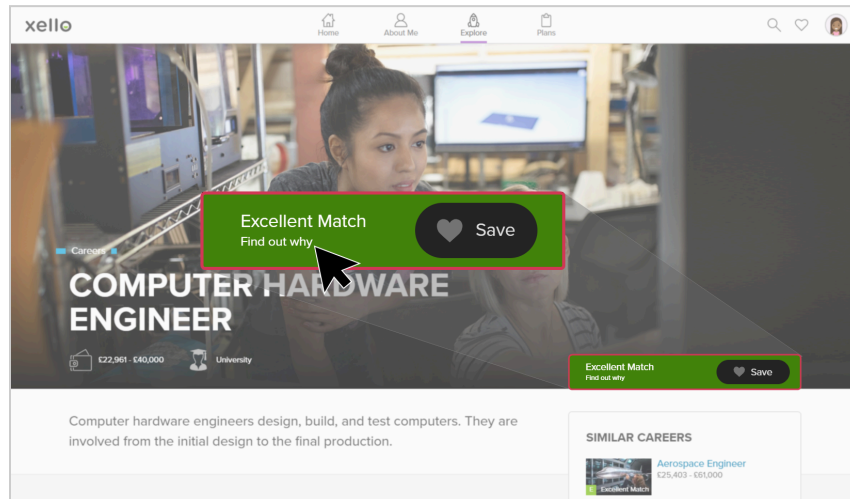
Assessments

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

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** (underneath Good Match) 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 SEN coordinator, careers adviser, 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 site, Xello Support, 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 [Xello Support](#) to find teaching resources, training options, and answers to all your questions.