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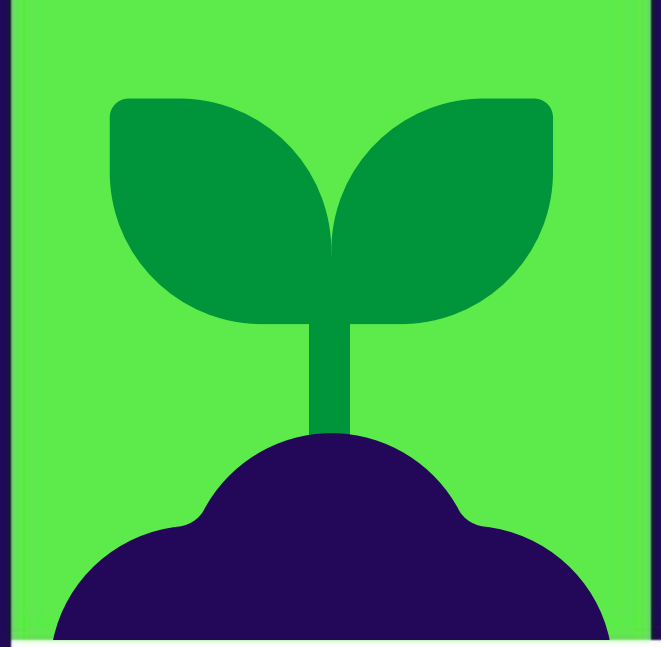
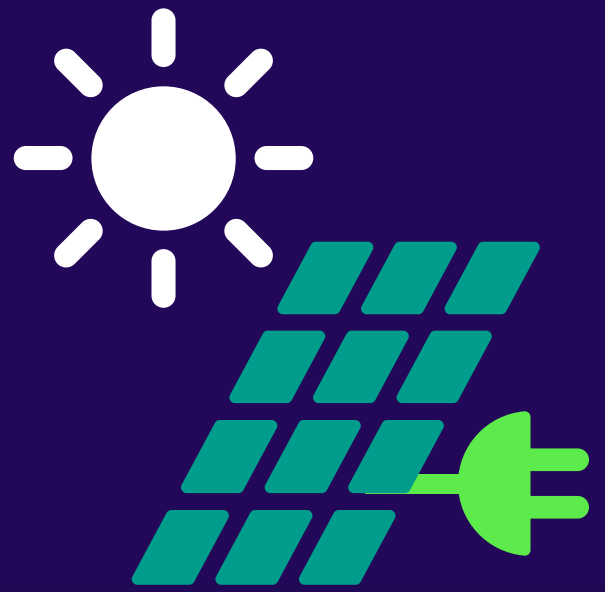
The Climate Connection





21st-century jobs

The future of work and its impact on the environment

Classroom presentation

Learning outcomes

During and after the lesson, learners will be able to demonstrate they can:

- work collaboratively to analyse and discuss the future of work and its environmental impacts by using 21st-century skills
- use a selection of modal verbs as required
- write a short analytical paragraph on a collaborative basis.

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Three kinds of jobs

1. Existing jobs, that will continue into the future with some small changes, such as doctors or teachers
2. New jobs that have only recently arrived and that will continue into the future, such as cyber security
3. Jobs that don't exist yet, but that you think will appear in the future

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Impacts and differences

1. What are some of the environmental impacts of the workplace?

2. How might jobs in the 21st century be different from ‘older’ jobs?

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Environment

- Driving to work adds to global warming.
- Heating or cooling in large offices adds to global warming.
- People might work from home more often.
- Will working weeks become longer or shorter?

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Worksheet 1 section 1

1. What types of jobs will we have in the rest of the century?

Work in your group collaboratively and make a list of at least four 21st-century jobs. Add a few words about what responsibilities the job has and what you think its environmental impact is, if any. These may be: a) jobs we have now that will not be replaced by technology; b) new jobs that have just appeared in our societies; c) jobs that don't exist yet, but that you predict we will need. E.g.:

Job title	Responsibilities	Environmental impact (if any)
Cyber security specialist	Working with organisations to protect their electronic data from hackers and viruses.	Can work from home – less travel. Use a lot of data – that has an environmental impact

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Worksheet 1 section 2

2. What will be the structure and characteristics of work in the rest of the century?

Work together with your group to use the table below to describe the nature of 21st-century work, and the benefits (environmental and other) of and challenges to your ideas. You will need to be creative and think critically.

These may be:

a) issues that already exist in work

b) ideas that you predict, or hope, will become common. E.g.:

Structure and characterisitics	Benefits and challenges
Working from home	Less travel – environmental benefits. Good connectivity is not universal – some communities can't work from home.

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Worksheet 2A

What types of jobs will we have in the rest of the century?

Artificial intelligence (AI) developers

Big data analyst – specialists who look at data from different sources to find trends and patterns

Caring and health sector jobs – we have an ageing population

Environmental jobs – scientists or coaches

Nanotechnologists – specialists in small tech devices

Robotic experts

SEO (search engine optimisation) or social media specialists

Transport planning or urban planning jobs – more and more people are now living in cities

Waste management engineers – experts in how we dispose of things we no longer need

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Worksheet 2B

Worksheet 2B

The world of work in the rest of the century

- Will we see more good-quality jobs, with repetitive and hard physical jobs done by machine?
- Can we hope for more sustainable jobs that build the local economy?
- Will workplaces be more environmentally aware?
- Will there be more equal opportunities for people to be recruited?
- Will we see tax-paying jobs that contribute to the local economy and reduce poverty?
- As skills now become out of date quickly, are long-term careers now finished?
- The UN says 50 per cent of jobs will be automated in the next 15 years. What are the implications of this?
- We will become more aware of our 'transferable skills' as the jobs market changes very quickly. What are some examples of this?
- Will a guaranteed minimum income become common? Some countries are trying it already.
- Will we see fewer people needing to travel abroad for jobs?

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Worksheet 3 – example sentences

You are going to write at least four ideas of at least three sentences each about 21st-century jobs and the world of work in the 21st century. Here are three examples.

1. Working from home is becoming more and more common around the world, and this should be reducing the impact on the climate of travelling to work. The problem is that many of the most polluted locations are in countries where the 'work from home' culture is not common. Will we see a change in the near future?

2. There should be many more jobs in the health sector as we are living longer now. The demand for these jobs will continue to grow over the years as the population ages. Unfortunately, many of these jobs are usually poorly paid, and low-income economies often suffer most from the results of climate change.

3. We may never see the return of jobs in heavy industry in the most developed countries in the world, and this should have a positive impact on their environments. However, the jobs will continue to exist in developing countries. This brings money to the economies, but at a huge environmental cost. There ought to be stronger environmental protection laws in these locations.

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Worksheet 3 – modal verbs

Should is often used to describe the ideal or best thing to do. **There should be many more green jobs.**

There ought to be is used to describe something we want to happen. You can add 'really' for emphasis. **Governments really ought to tax the big polluters.**

Must is used to describe something we see as necessary. **There must be global action on climate change now.**

Can is used to talk about general truths. **As a nation we can provide better jobs for younger people.**

Should be plus '-ing' is used to describe something we expect to happen. **Global temperatures should be falling in the next 15 years.**

May' can be used with a selection of adverbs such as 'never', 'just' or 'only'. **We may only see the results of our climate change initiatives in 20 years.**

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21st-century jobs

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