

The **LADDER**

Free resource: student booklet

**Supporting students towards successful futures
and confident career choices**



**Student
activities inside**

THE LADDER: Student booklet

Introduction for teachers or parents

This booklet is designed to support your learners during National Careers Week (NCW) and takes inspiration from my book *The Ladder: Supporting students towards successful futures and confident career choices*.

National Careers Week takes place every year at the start of March, and it's the UK's biggest celebration of careers education, inspiration and guidance.

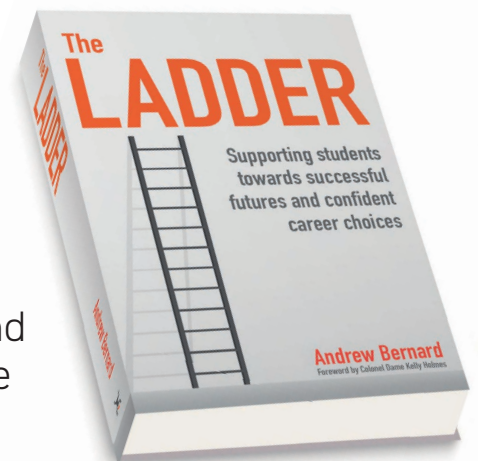
Whether you're getting involved in NCW or not, these tools from *The Ladder* will be useful for your students to reflect on themselves, their skills and how they get their message across via applications, personal statements, CVs or interviews.

Bernie



THE BOOK:

Using the mantra that 'every adult is a careers teacher', *The Ladder* aims to inspire and support educators and education leaders to explicitly link their subject area(s) to students' futures in and outside school. There are plenty of free, effective and easy-to-use ideas to help you to support them in the book and referred to or signposted throughout it.



The Ladder is available from Independent Thinking Press [here](#).

For students

Hello, I'm Bernie – well officially Andrew Bernard but I prefer to be called Bernie – and I wrote *The Ladder* to help teachers help young people like you. As a student, I wasn't very good at applying myself nor looking ahead, so I wanted to help young people appreciate your skills and abilities and see where they might lead you. To help you lift your head up a bit and think maybe 5 or 10 years ahead and see what opportunities you could benefit from NOW that will help you in the future.

I wasted a lot of time and opportunities, so I want you to learn from my mistakes, not yours.

Where are you?

As a young person, you sit within a blend of elements that make you, you.

Parents, friends, education and future employers, all of them will have an influence on you and all will want to see different sides of you. But seeing as you're just one person, what's the best way to start to understand what your skills and qualities are?

THE CAREERS CONTEXT

Young people sit within a context of influences, all of which will have a bearing on their decisions, ambitions, choices and futures. These elements will all combine to elevate or curtail ambition and career planning. This is why it cannot be left to chance.



YOUNG PERSON

Ideas, hobbies, interests, abilities, upbringing, experiences and personality.



EDUCATION

School choices, attitude and relationships, results, focus of school – academic/sporting/extracurricular, etc. – location, pathways, focus on local career aspirations, ethos and status.



EMPLOYERS

Industry sector, size of company, view of local young people, links with educational settings, approach to recruitment and training.



PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Main influence on young people and careers. Level of affluence and education, aspiration, working experiences and social mobility will all feature in their levels of support and ambition, for themselves and family members.



PEERS

A powerful influence on a young person. Whether it's behaviour, aspiration, subject choices or core beliefs, peer groups form lasting thinking patterns and friendships which have varying degrees of influence (ranging from toxic to ambitious) over a young person.



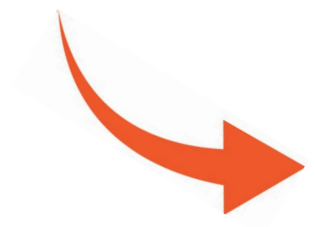
Let's start with what you know and where your skills come from

School and college are where we learn in a structured way and we're measured on how well we can understand facts and figures etc. through exams and assessments.

It's important to understand that although these measurements are important, they're not the only skills and abilities you have – we get skills from our entire lives and we often don't appreciate the power of the skills and knowledge we gain from outside education.

This map (see page 5) shows you where your skills and knowledge come from – look at the things you pick along the pathway, AND see the additional places we pick them up along the left-hand edge.

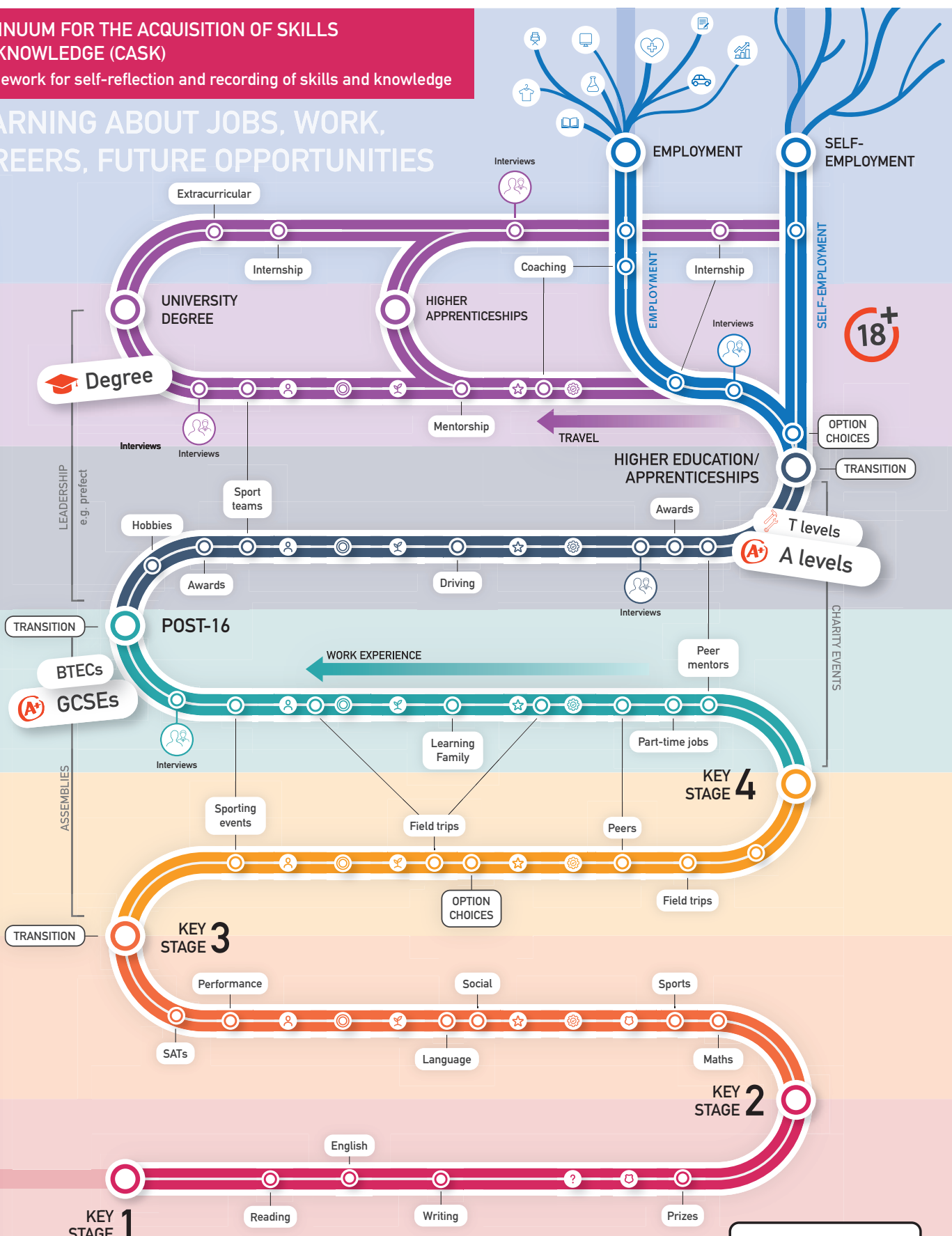
How many places have YOU gained skills from?



CONTINUUM FOR THE ACQUISITION OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE (CASK)
 A framework for self-reflection and recording of skills and knowledge

LEARNING ABOUT JOBS, WORK, CAREERS, FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

ARTS / MUSIC / DRAMA / SPORTS / HOBBIES / PART-TIME WORK / LOCATION / OPPORTUNITY



WHERE CAN YOU GO?

DOCUMENTATION

- Who Can I Help?** Primary skills sheet
- STAR Model** Positive skill and attitude development
- 7 Skills Assessment Sheet (7SAS)** Skills reflection sheet
- GROW Model** Setting and achieving your goals
- My Crest** What makes me me?
- Wheel of Life** Happiness levels and how to improve them
- Ideal Me** Visioning tools

Your skills

Your skills – yes all of them – can be considered useful in many areas of your life, both now and in the future.

How do you know which skills you've got and where they'll be useful? Well, in *The Ladder* I adapted some great research by a guy called Tony Wagner who has looked at the skills we will mostly need in the future. These change a bit now and again but these 7 are the key ones --->

Have a think about yourself and where you might use these skills – at school, in teams, in hobbies, in part-time work – and assess how well you do them AND if there is any way you could improve them by choice.

(If you're struggling, work with a friend and help each other to remember and assess yourselves).

7 Skills Assessment Sheet (7SAS)

Student Name _____

Form Group _____ Date _____

Key Skill	Recognised it today	Used it today	Improved a little	Improved to some extent	Improved considerably	How can I prove this? How could I improve this?
Critical thinking and problem solving			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
Collaboration and leading by influence			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
Agility and adaptability			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
Initiative and entrepreneurialism			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
Effective oral and written communication			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
Accessing and analysing information			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
Curiosity and imagination			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			

You're a STAR

Ok, so now you've reflected on your skills and qualities and you're starting to get a handle on what you're good at (even if you didn't think you had any skills, I hope you can see that you've got plenty).

It's now time to behave in a particularly un-British way and start to be proud of our skills and – dare I say it – show off a bit (OK, just a little bit).

“How do I manage to tell people what I'm good at without feeling like a show-off?”

I'm glad you asked – you use the STAR model.

Situation – what was the situation you were involved in? (a hockey match)

Task – what was YOUR task? (captain)

Action – what did YOU do? (got injured and substituted myself)

Result - what was the final outcome? (the fresh player scored twice and we won)

So what? This shows you're a leader, respected, take big decisions, see the team as more important than yourself and are committed and trusted enough to be captain in the first place.

Your turn – develop 4 STAR stories for yourself the grid overleaf (again, work with a friend to help).

These STARs can be used for CVs, application forms and for little 'pocket-positives' for interviews and assessments.



The STAR Model

What are you a star at?

Think of everything you've achieved in all aspects of your life – sports, hobbies, home, family, work – and present them as little stories using the STAR Model. This is a great way to see our skills and be able to tell people about them in applications and interviews. Start the habit, get your story straight!

S ituation Where were you?					
T ask What was your role?					
A ctions What did you do?					
R esults What was the outcome?					



Now what?

Ok, so you've got an idea about your skills, what you're good at and how to speak about them to other people – what are you going to do with that knowledge?

Hint: life is long but comes at you fast, so rather than just waiting for something to 'catch your eye' or 'seeing what happens', why not have a look into a few work and career areas to see what:

a. You could use your skills for

and

b. What you might enjoy

so that you can start to work towards those things. It's better to work towards something you might be good at and enjoy, instead of waiting until you have fewer, narrower choices.

Why?

Because if you work TOWARDS something you're more likely to be motivated to achieve it AND you're more likely to have a career that is fun and fulfilling (as well as probably getting paid what you're worth rather than want *someone else* thinks you're worth).

Get it?

Now have a look at the [BBC Bitesize Careers website](#) or [NationalCareersWeek.com](#) where there are hundreds of ideas and options to get to grips with.

Choose four ideas (use the grids overlaid to help you) and make some decisions! Then chat through your ideas with your Careers Leader at school or college.

Good luck!



Job or career title:

Options to get into the job or career:

Qualifications needed:

Where can I study / apply:

What do I need to apply?

Job or career title:

Options to get into the job or career:

Qualifications needed:

Where can I study / apply:

What do I need to apply?

Job or career title:

Options to get into the job or career:

Qualifications needed:

Where can I study / apply:

What do I need to apply?

Job or career title:

Options to get into the job or career:

Qualifications needed:

Where can I study / apply:

What do I need to apply?

Teachers:

Find out more about *The Ladder* at:
www.independentthinkingpress.com

Connect with Bernie on Twitter: [@EnterpriseSBox](https://twitter.com/EnterpriseSBox)

To enquire about booking Bernie to speak at your school or conference, please email: learn@independentthinking.co.uk

Read an extract from the book by scanning this QR code:

