



CAMBRIDGE

Futures thinking in your classroom

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Breakout session

Session outline

1. Researching the future
2. Disruptors
3. Provocations
4. Discussion
5. Preferred futures



When you imagine the future of education...



Do you feel **positive**?



Do you feel **negative**?

The Futures of... projects

Asking educators, students and parents:

- What current **changes** are influencing learning, teaching and assessment?
- What is the **impact** of these changes?
- What **positive** and **negative outcomes** could arise in education?



How we use the research



Understand the high-level **trends** driving change in education



Know what to do between now and 2050 to shape our **preferred** futures



Design curricula, assessments, learning resources and teacher guidance to support our schools



Understand what we **still need to research**

Disruptors

Futures thinking is about change



**Irreversible
or
reversible**



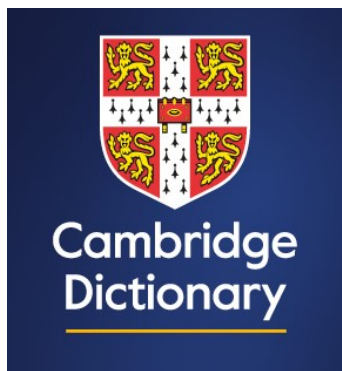
**Gradual
or
sudden**



**Out of our control
or
within our control**



**Unexpected
or
expected**



disruptor

noun [C]

UK  /dɪsˈrʌp.tə/ US  /dɪsˈrʌp.tə/

Add to word list 

a person or thing that prevents something, especially a system, process, or event, from continuing as usual or as expected:

- *endocrine/hormone disruptors*

+ 

BUSINESS • specialized

a company that changes the traditional way an industry operates, especially in a new and effective way:

- *If customers talk to everybody else they get the status quo. We're the innovator; we're the disruptor.*

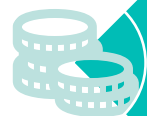
Examples of disruptors



Climate change



Global migration and cultural diversity



Economic inequality



Policy and regulatory changes



Changing workforce needs

What are the
consequences of
each disruptor?

Consider the question from the
perspectives of:
a) learning, teaching and assessment
b) managing a school

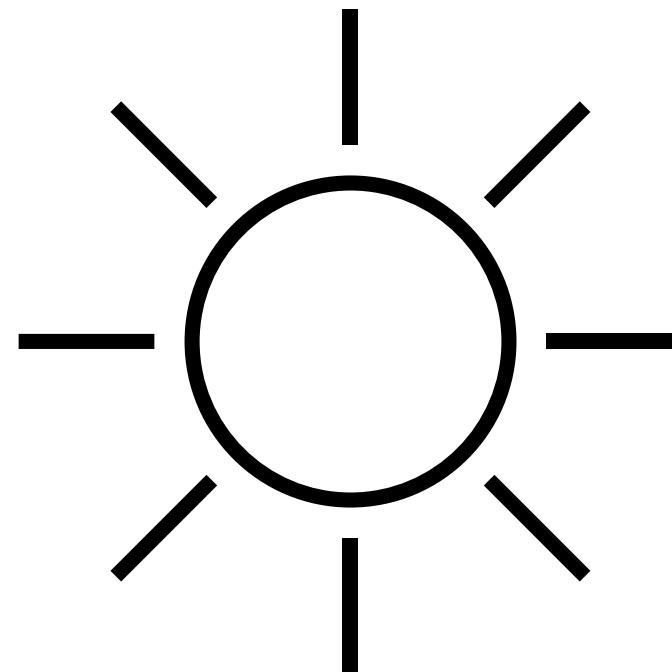
Examples of disruptors: climate change

What it means for schools:

Teachers may need to integrate sustainability themes into the curriculum and prepare for sudden shifts in teaching environments.

Extreme weather events and resource shortages could disrupt school operations and learning continuity.

Leaders must plan for resilient infrastructure and flexible approaches to learning, including remote or hybrid options.



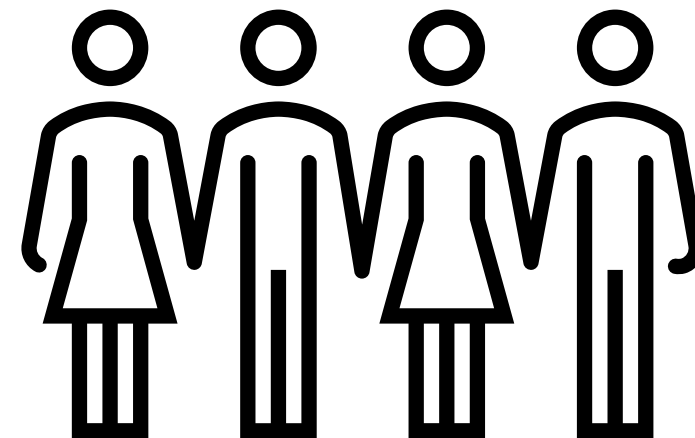
Examples of disruptors: global migration

What it means for schools:

Teachers will play a key role in creating culturally responsive classrooms and adapting curricula to reflect global perspectives.

Increased student mobility brings richer cultural diversity but also challenges in inclusion and language support.

Leaders will need to prioritise inclusive policies and multilingual resources.



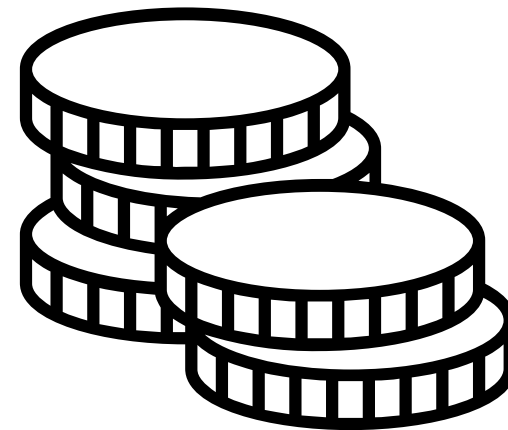
Examples of disruptors: economic inequality

What it means for schools:

Teachers will face growing pressure to adapt resources and support for diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Rising education costs risk widening the gap between students who can afford opportunities and those who cannot.

Leaders may need to explore alternative funding models, scholarships and partnerships to ensure equitable access.



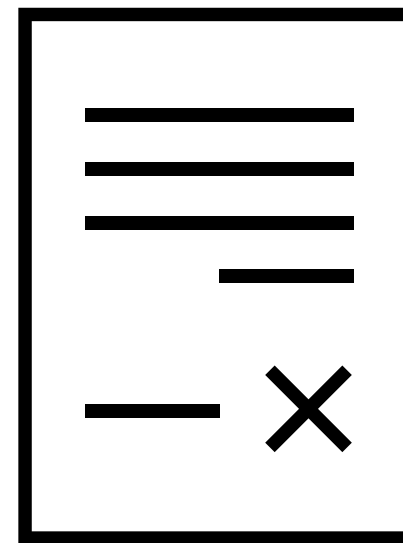
Examples of disruptors: policy and regulations

What it means for schools:

Teachers may need to adjust lesson plans and assessment methods to meet evolving compliance requirements.

Shifts in government funding, accreditation or curriculum standards can quickly alter priorities.

Leaders must stay agile, aligning school strategies with new regulations while safeguarding educational quality.



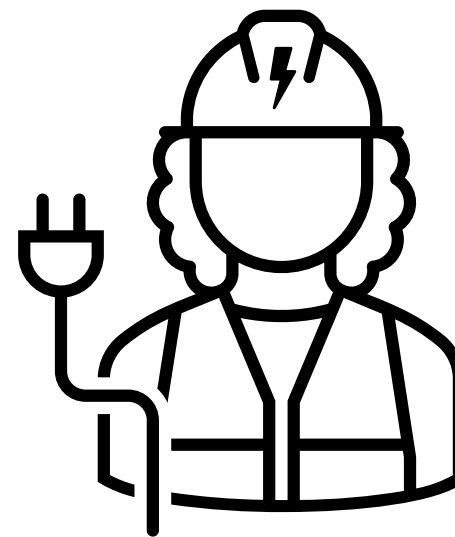
Examples of disruptors: changing workforce needs

What it means for schools:

Teachers will need to emphasise practical, transferable skills and encourage lifelong learning mindsets in students.

Employers increasingly value skills over formal qualifications, which could reshape expectations of education.

Leaders should consider partnerships with industry and expand vocational or skills-based programmes.



Provocations – "The World in 2050"

Reflections framework

Objective

- What have you heard?

Reflective

- What do you think or feel?

Interpretive

- What are the implications

Decisional

- What will you do next?



Professor Anna Middleton – Ethics



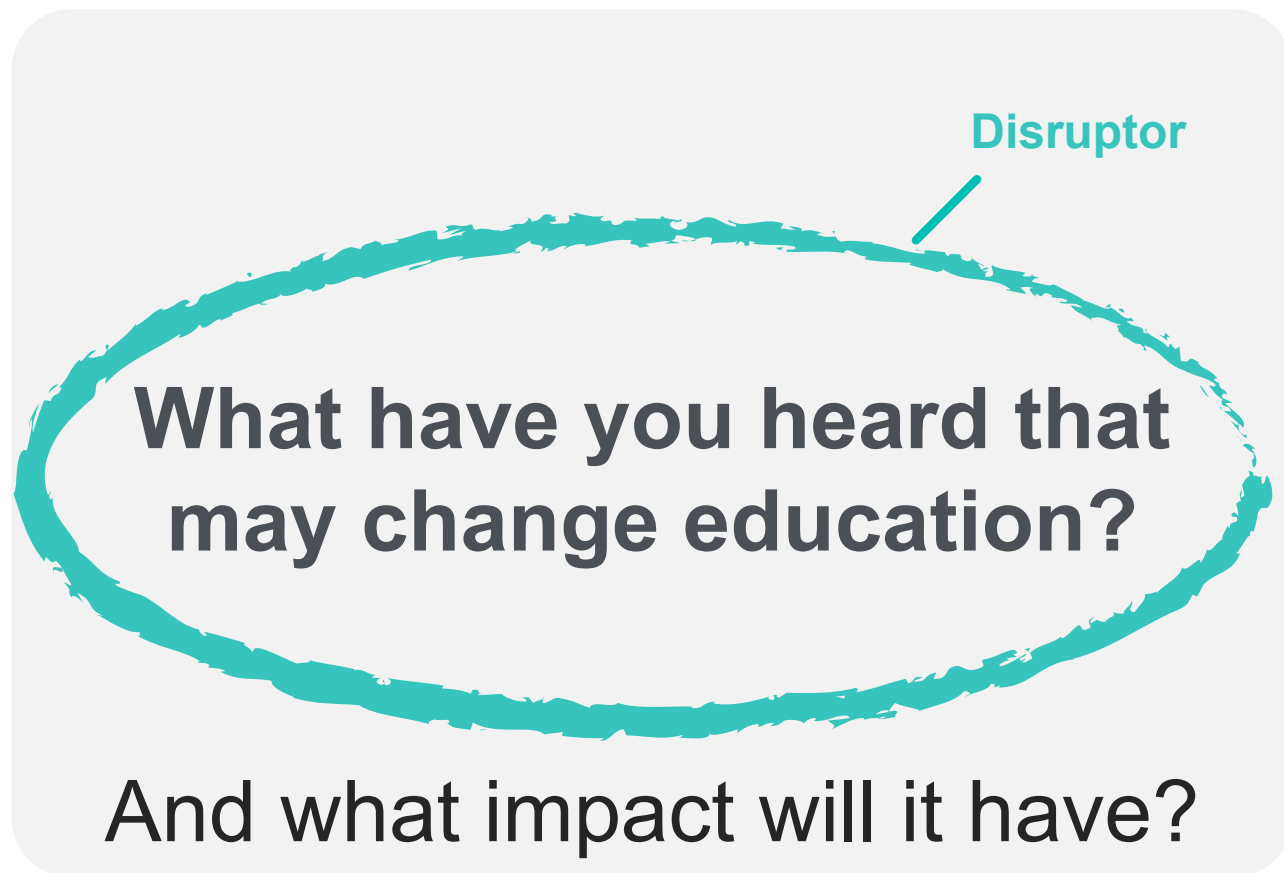
Dr Henry Shevlin



Group discussion

It might help to think about:

1. What is learnt
2. How and when it is learnt
3. The motivations for learning
4. Who (or what!) is teaching
5. Assessment methods



Disruptor

**What have you heard that
may change education?**

And what impact will it have?


What is your preferred future?

What will you **change** in your school?

How will you **prepare**?

What **support** will you need?

How will you know if you have **succeeded**?



**Ready
for the
world**