



CEOKID BOOK CLUB

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR?

A Conversation with Emma Dryden

With the current influx of entrepreneurs, kids are becoming more interested in building their own businesses. The concepts of entrepreneurship are appealing to a younger audience who are curious about the opportunities having your own business can bring. Author, editor and entrepreneur Emma D. Dryden understands this all too well. In collaboration with co-author Rana DiOrio and illustrator Ken Min, Dryden created a picture book, "What Does It Mean To Be An Entrepreneur?," to teach kids about entrepreneurship. What we love about this book is it presents components of entrepreneurship that go beyond making money.

CEOKID spoke with Emma about why it is important for kids to learn about entrepreneurship and how kids can use it to change the world.

What inspired you to write "What Does It Mean To Be An Entrepreneur?"

The co-author of this book, Rana DiOrio, is an old friend of mine with a series of children's picture books titled "What Does It Mean To Be...?" As an entrepreneur, she wanted to help children, including her own, to understand what entrepreneurship involves.

She approached another co-author initially and hired me to edit. We didn't think the business-oriented approach the author was taking was quite right, though, so we decided, as entrepreneurs ourselves, to co-write it. We really enjoyed how it came together and we knew it would be a timely topic for kids.

What are the main lessons you want kids to take away from this book?

I think first and foremost it's very important for kids to feel confident about asking "Why?" and to be curious. It's also important for kids to be able to ask "Why not?" It's this "Why not?" question that really inspires entrepreneurs at any age and at any level. Some people may think entrepreneurship is too sophisticated for kids to grasp, but young people are very open to figuring out how things work and to solving problems they or other people may be having. Kids want to help and they want to be engaged. That is the core of being an entrepreneur— finding a problem and figuring out how to solve it. This book can inspire kids to be curious, to try new things, to keep going even if they don't succeed the first time – all tools that can

help them as they grow up.

Why is it important for kids to learn about entrepreneurship?

This is an interesting question because there are more entrepreneurs than ever becoming part of our society and culture. A lot of kids today may have a family member or know someone who is an entrepreneur. It's important for kids to understand the seeds of entrepreneurship. And it's important for kids to embrace the themes of entrepreneurship: curiosity, confidence, perseverance, empathy. It's never too early to inspire kids to be curious about how things work and how people work. Entrepreneurship is being taught in classrooms around the country. There's even a Girl Scouts badge for entrepreneurship merit. People are becoming more aware of how valuable the themes of entrepreneurship can be to young kids. Entrepreneurship is a way of thinking and approaching the world and other people. It does constitute being open to the "What if?" questions and thinking about how to be part of a solution to a problem. That's something we try to emphasize in our book.

What tips do you have for kids to get started as entrepreneurs?

Kids are capable of getting passionate about causes. I see a lot of young kids getting involved in activities like recycling at school and at home. Kids can start recycling initiatives, collecting cans and metal, and so on. In some ways this sort of community involvement may be replacing the lemonade stand. It's an entrepreneurial venture that can serve our society today. Kids can also get involved in efforts to save animals, plant trees and clean up oceans. Even at a young age kids enjoy being involved in some of these causes at a level that makes sense to them. This kind of involvement in something larger than themselves sows the seeds of entrepreneurial thinking and behaviors. Encouraging kids to look beyond themselves to help or encourage others engages the very basic tenets of entrepreneurship and can instill in kids valuable lessons of compassion, empathy, curiosity, and perseverance.

Order a copy of "What Does It Mean To Be An Entrepreneur?" at <https://www.amazon.com/What-Does-Mean-Be-Entrepreneur/dp/1939775124>.

Resources for Kid Entrepreneurs

- Junior Achievement USA (<https://www.juniorachievement.org/web/ja-usa/home>)
- Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) (<https://yeausa.org>)
- Build (<https://build.org>)
- Horn Program in Entrepreneurship (<https://www.udel.edu/research-innovation/horn/pre-college-programs/>)
- Girl Scouts - Cookie Program/Entrepreneurship (<https://www.girlscouts.org>)
- The Lemelsen Foundation (<https://www.lemelson.org/about-us>)
- Kaufmann Foundation (<https://www.kauffman.org/>)
- Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (<https://www.nfte.com/>)
- Biz Kids (<http://bizkids.com/themes/entrepreneurship>)