



Dylan's trip to the business fair



Just outside a quiet Welsh village, lies a beautiful castle, surrounded by grassy, green fields. This is the home of a kind, conscientious, creative, ambitious and curious dragon, named Dylan. (1) Dylan loves to learn. From his bedroom window, he gazes at the distant fields and mountains. He watches the people in the village below. He stares at the clouds and stars in the sky. Dylan's head is full of questions.

"Where do the clouds go? Where do the stars come from? What lies beyond the mountains?" Dylan says to the sky. He looks down at the village and sees the people coming and going. He notices that the streets are decorated with colourful signs and balloons, and lots of people are gathered at the village green. Dylan has a new question, "What is happening in the village today?"

Dylan flies into town and notices a huge banner that reads 'Business Fair'. A woman is standing below the banner, holding a clipboard. She looks very smart and is smiling at all the people going by. Dylan is curious about this business fair and decides to find out more.

"Excuse me," says Dylan politely to the woman, "what is a business fair?" The woman smiles back at him.

"It is a gathering for people who own businesses, to meet and help each other," she explains. Dylan looks confused.

"I'm sorry," Dylan says to the woman, worried that she looks very busy, "but, what is a business?"

The woman turns to Dylan with a friendly face. "No need to apologise," she reassures him.

"You can learn all about businesses at the fair. There will be stalls to visit and talks to listen to. Anyone with an interest in finding out more about business is welcome to attend." The woman gives Dylan a sticker with his name. He feels very important. He wanders on to the village green, which is decorated with banners and multicoloured stalls. As Dylan looks around, he notices his friend Rhiannon. Rhiannon has a shop in the village that sells food, toys and gifts. Rhiannon is one of Dylan's best friends.

"Rhiannon!" Dylan calls excitedly, waving his arms. Rhiannon smiles and waves Dylan over to her table.

"How lovely to see you, Dylan!" Rhiannon beams. "Are you here to learn about business?" she asks.

"I am," says Dylan. "Can you tell me what a business is?"

"Of course!" replies Rhiannon enthusiastically. "It can be a bit confusing, but I will try to explain.

"A business is like a job that you make for yourself. Instead of being paid by someone to do a job, you think of something that people want or need and you sell it to them. You create your own job.

"You could make something to sell, you could offer a service, like cleaning cars, or you could buy things and sell them to other people. I have a shop. I buy lots of things for my shop and people come in and buy them. The people that buy the things are called customers."

Rhiannon continues, "If people really like what you are selling, you could have lots of customers. Then you might need some help to be able to sell to all of them. When this happens, you employ someone to help you. You become an employer and they become your employee. You tell them what you need them to do and you pay them money for doing the job." Rhiannon pauses to see if Dylan understands. (2)

Dylan thinks a moment about everything Rhiannon has told him. "So, are you a business?" Dylan asks.

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"I own a business, but I am not a business. The business is something that I have created." Rhiannon explains. (3)

"At the business fair today, you can meet lots of different types of businesses." Rhiannon informs Dylan.

"You should explore the different stalls and see what you can find out about these businesses."

Dylan thinks that this is a wonderful idea.

He loves to meet new people and he really loves to ask questions.

"Thank you, Rhiannon," says Dylan. "I will come back and see you later."

They wave each other goodbye and Dylan heads further into the fair.

He sees all sorts of attractive signs. Each one has beautiful colours and bold letters. Some have pictures and some have symbols. He notices a particularly appealing sign that reads 'Carter's Playgrounds'. Dylan makes his way over the stall to introduce himself.

"Hello" Dylan says politely to the man behind the stall. "My name is Dylan and I am learning all about business. Would you mind if I ask you about your business?"

"I would really like that," the man replies eagerly. "My name is Paul Carter and I love to help people who are thinking about business."

"What do you do?" Dylan asks.

"My business designs and builds playgrounds. That is the product we offer. It is a very important service for schools and communities that want playgrounds but don't know how to build them."

Dylan looks at the sign on the stall and asks, "Why is your business called Carter's Playgrounds?"

"I chose a name that would tell my customers what I do and who I am. I am Paul Carter and I build playgrounds," Mr Carter replied.

"That is a very good idea," said Dylan. "Thank you very much for talking to me Mr Carter."

Dylan waves goodbye to Mr Carter.

"You're very welcome Dylan," Mr Carter replies.

Dylan continues through the fair looking around at all the people and attractive signs. Another stall catches Dylan's eye. The sign reads 'Good Day Games'. Behind the stall sits a blonde lady with bright eyes and a broad smile.

"Good afternoon!" the woman says to Dylan enthusiastically. "My name is Cheryl, and this is my business. I design and make board games for children...and young dragons."

"I love board games," Dylan says excitedly. "I am learning all about businesses today. I saw your lovely sign and wanted to find out about a business that makes games."

The lady looks proudly at her sign. "I'm glad you like it," she says, "I designed it myself. I love to design and make things. I love to paint and draw, and I love to make up games. In fact, I used to make up games for fun until someone told me that I could sell my games. That was many years ago now, and I have had so much fun making and playing games ever since."

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Dylan is captivated by the story of this lady and her business. He thinks about how wonderful it would be to turn your hobby into a business, to earn money doing something that you love. He would like to talk to this lady all day but decides that he should probably explore more stalls before the day is over.

He smiles at the woman and says "I'm afraid that I must go if I want to see another stall before the day is over. It has been really wonderful hearing about your business. I wish I had the time to stay and hear more about it."

The lady gasps and points her finger in the air as if she has had an idea. She rummages through a bag under the table and produces a small card. "This is my business card!" she announces. "I give these to people who want to get more information about my business. It has my name, my telephone number, my email address and the address of my website. If you visit my website, you can find out more about Good Day Games and the products I sell."

Dylan takes the card and looks at it. On one side there is a small sketch of two dice and some playing cards. Blue letters that look like they were painted on with a tiny brush, read 'Good Day Games'. Underneath, in smaller red letters reads 'Good days like the good ole days, for you and your family'. On the other side, in neat typed letters, is the contact information that Cheryl described. Dylan holds the card to his heart. "Thank you," he whispers as he walks away from the stall. (4)

Dylan looks around the fair to choose one more stall to visit. Nearby a sign reads 'Owl Events'.

A very smart man stands confidently at the front of the stall, waving at people around the fair. He notices Dylan and smiles. "Hello, you must be Dylan?"

"I am," answers Dylan with surprise. "How do you know my name?"

"Everyone has been talking about the clever, curious dragon, who wants to learn about business. There aren't too many dragons here today," he says with a friendly chuckle. "It is wonderful to meet you."

Dylan laughs bashfully. "Thank you very much," he replies. "Would you mind telling me about your business?" he asks.

"Of course! I'd be delighted to!" the man exclaims with enthusiasm. "Owl Events is a service business. That means that I sell a service rather than an item or an object. I plan events, like this business fair. People contact me because they have a summer fair, or a wedding, or a fundraising event, and they need help to plan it. My business has a team of very organised and creative people who come up with great ideas and plan a fun event."

"That sounds very interesting," replies Dylan. "How did you think of you such an unusual idea for a business?" Dylan asks.

"As a child I was always very organised, and I decided that I wanted a career organising events. I went to university and studied Event Management. Then I got a job with a company that organise large sports events like rugby tournaments. I really enjoyed my career but wanted to do other types of events, not just sport. One day I met a businesswoman and she inspired me. I started Owl Events just a few months later."

"Wow! replies Dylan with wide eyes. "You have worked very hard," he adds, obviously impressed by this man's story.

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“Well thank you, Dylan.” the man replies gratefully. “Starting and running your own business is very hard work, but I enjoy it very much.”

“Do you mind if I ask about your business name?” Dylan adds, noticing that the fair is starting to close.

“Not at all,” the man replies. “I wanted my business to have a personality. I decided to name it after an owl because people usually think of owls as wise and precise. I hope that answers your question Dylan. I’m afraid I must start packing up for the day, but it was a real pleasure to meet you.”

“Thank you very much,” Dylan says to the man politely. He waves goodbye and looks around for his friend Rhiannon before he goes home. (5)

As Dylan walks away, he notices Rhiannon holding up two cups of hot chocolate towards him, while gesturing with her head, for him to join her. Dylan flies over the crowds to meet her.

“Oh Rhiannon,” he sighs “I have had the most wonderful day. I have met lots of lovely, interesting people and I have learned so much about businesses. I really want to start my own business one day.”

Rhiannon hands Dylan a delicious hot chocolate and smiles. “I am so pleased to hear that Dylan. You have lots of skills that would make you very good at business.”

“I do?” Dylan asks with a mixture of surprise and excitement. “What skills do I have that are good for business?”

Rhiannon sits beside Dylan as he takes a sip of his hot chocolate with a grin. “You are very hard-working, you are creative, you have lots of exciting ideas, and you like to put those ideas into action. Perhaps you should think about starting a small business now?”

Dylan thinks for a moment and takes another slurp of his hot chocolate. He has been inspired by all of the people he has met today, and he does really want to start a business of his own. Dylan thinks about the different businesses as fireworks dance across the sky to mark the end of the fair. He thinks about Cheryl and how she turned her hobby into a business, he thinks about Mr Carter and the playgrounds that he builds, he thinks about the man from Owl Events and how much he likes having a business.

Rhiannon reaches into her bag and hands Dylan a leaflet. “When you start a business, you need to do a little bit of planning,” she says. “You need to think about some important details. This can help you.” Dylan looks down at the leaflet. On the front it reads ‘Starting a business – a Handy Guide’. Inside the leaflet is a list of questions titled ‘Business planning’. Dylan reads the list carefully.

Business planning

- What product will your business sell?
- Who will buy your product?
- How much will your product cost you?
- What price will your customers pay?
- How much profit will you make?
- How will you tell your customers about your product?

Dylan finishes his hot chocolate and decides he had better head home for dinner. He thanks Rhiannon for the hot chocolate and waves her goodbye.

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Dylan flies into his castle, where the fire is lit. The flames dance around the fireplace and light the room with warm, orange glow. He sits in a big soft chair and puts his feet up. He reaches into his bag and finds the leaflet. As he reads by the fire, his mind is whirling with ideas and excitement.

“I will start a business, one day,” he says to himself with a smile, as he wiggles his body deeper into the comfy chair. (6)

1. Let's consider these adjectives. What do they tell us about Dylan?
2. What businesses can we think of? (Try to elicit a wide range of businesses by exploring parent or family occupations e.g. shops, making and selling cakes, online shops, electricity suppliers, banks, repair companies, construction companies, insurance, etc.)
3. Let's see if we can understand what Rhiannon is explaining to Dylan.
 - a. Use some of the following examples with the names of your learners.
 - i. Lets imagine that 'Sarah' has had a really good idea and thinks “I like washing cars. People could pay me to wash their cars.” She could get a job with a business, washing cars and get paid for helping. Or she could ask her neighbours if they would like their cars washed for £4. She didn't find a job, she made one. She had an idea and she found customers.
 - ii. Imagine that 'Rhys' is really good at making cakes and one day he would like to have a job in a bakery. Then someone says to him “You can make your own job. You could start a business, making cakes and selling them to people.” Rhys starts telling people that he can make them a cake for £10. Before too long, people are asking him to make them a cake and paying him £10. He has started a cake-making business.
 - iii. Imagine that 'Angharad', one day, realises that people at the park can get really thirsty and don't always have a drink with them. She has a really good idea to set up a table at the park selling water and fruit juice. She doesn't have a job in a shop, she has made her own little shop. Her own business.
4. What do you think about this business name and slogan? What does it tell us about this business? What does it make us think of?
5. What did we think of those businesses?
 - a. Which was your favourite idea?
 - b. Which business names did you like?
 - c. What questions would you have asked to the business owners?
6. We have all learned a lot about business, but Dylan has got some homework. Let's help Dylan to understand the questions on the leaflet. You can use the vocabulary list to assist you with definitions and examples. Focusing on the key words, break down each question to achieve a basic understanding.
 - a. What **product** will your business sell?
 - b. **Who** will buy your product?
 - c. How much will your product **cost** you?
 - d. What **price** will your customers pay?
 - e. How much **profit** will you make?
 - f. How will you tell your **customers** about your product?

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Story task ideas

Ask learners, in small groups, to come up with a business idea and give their business a name. One group at a time, ask the groups to informally present their ideas to the class.

Ask learners to turn their tables into stalls for an imaginary business fair. Learners could create a sign for their business, a business card and/or a leaflet. Allow learners to circulate in turns around the stalls and ask questions, imagining that their business was real.

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