

Could a Robot? Should a Robot?

Name a job or a task. Everyone votes twice: could a machine do it, and should it?

The gap between the two votes is where the best family conversations about AI happen.

AGE BAND	DURATION	GROUP SIZE	CONCEPT
Ages 6–14	10–20 minutes	Two or more players	Judgement

What your child practises

Your child can explain the difference between whether a machine is able to do something and whether it should be the one doing it.

What you need

- Nothing at all. A good one for long journeys

Why it works

Most talk about AI is about what it can do. The more important question is often what it should do, and children have sharp instincts about this. Separating “could” from “should” gives them a simple tool they can use for the rest of their lives: just because a machine is able to do something does not settle whether it is right to hand the job over.

How to play

1. Someone names a task. Start with a mix, for example: drive a bus, mark a spelling test, choose a birthday present for Grandma, decide who gets into a school, comfort a friend who is sad, sort the recycling.
2. **First vote: could a machine do it?** Thumbs up, down, or sideways for “sort of.”
3. **Second vote: should a machine do it?** Thumbs again.
4. Talk about any task where the two votes were different.
5. Take turns naming the next task. The best ones are the ones the family disagrees about.

Make it easier, make it harder

- **Easier:** use tasks from home and school, like tidying up or reading a story.
- **Harder:** for every “should not,” say what would have to change for it to become a “should.” A person checking the result? A way to complain?

Talk about it

- Which task had the biggest gap between could and should?
- What do people bring to a job that a machine does not?
- Who should get to decide when a machine takes over a job?

If your child asks

“Will robots take everyone’s jobs?” Machines are taking over some tasks, and they will change many jobs. Nobody knows exactly how much. But it is not only up to the machines. People decide where machines are used, and those decisions can be argued about, voted on, and changed. That is part of why it is worth thinking about now.