Practise managing workplace challenges

Workbook

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Introduction

What happens during work experience? A typical task on a work experience placement, whether face to face or virtual, is to complete a workplace challenge, which can also be called answering a project brief.

You can start your journey today with virtual work experience by completing one or both of the project briefs in this toolkit. Read through the briefs before choosing which one to work on. Respond to the brief using the template on page 6 onwards.

Getting practise answering a brief can help you develop core transferable skills such as creativity and problem solving, as well as helping you learn about some roles in different industries.

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yourmanager@primaryschool.com
Your brief

Your industry: Education

Primary school teachers are passionate, creative and committed to inspiring young minds and ensuring every child reaches their potential in a positive classroom environment. Primary school teachers develop activities and put them into lesson plans that are in line with what the UK government's Department for Education needs schools to teach in the curriculum.

The challenge:

Phonics is a method for teaching the reading and writing of the alphabet by showing the relationship between letters and their sounds – a is for apple, b is for bus and so on – and usually is taught to children in years 1 - 2, aged 5 - 7. The school needs you to come up with a classroom activity (worksheet, game, quiz etc.) and presentation around phonics to use with a class.

The why:

By the time they are in year 2, students should be on their way to becoming fluent readers and accurate spellers, with an understanding of trickier letters and sounds like 'ch', 'st' and 'oi'. Your activity should help students embed phonics as a tool they can use in reading and spelling, ensuring they are confident as they move up the school and progress their education.

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Project challenge 1: Create an activity for a primary school class

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The aims:

- To create an activity and presentation for a lesson that supports year 2 students to feel confident in reading, writing and using phonics
- To design an activity that helps students understand trickier letters and sounds, and use phonics to read and write more advanced words

Things to consider:

- How long will it take for you to plan the activity and create the presentation or anything else you'll need for the classroom activity?
- Think about the age group of your students and what appeals to them, for example bright colours, images, real-life examples, physical activities etc.
- Will you have a starter activity and how will you end the lesson?

Top tips

✓ Think about some of the trickier words and letters that students may have come across already, for example the 'ch' sound in chocolate or 'ck' sound in kick

✓ Could your classroom activity be something different and more engaging than filling in a worksheet? Could you encourage the practise of another skill like teamwork or problem solving through the activity?

✓ What does a classroom activity look like? You can view examples of activities within a primary lesson plan from TES by clicking **tes.com/teaching-resources/hub/primary**

✓ How is your lesson linked to the curriculum? You can view the national curriculum from the Department for Education by clicking **gov.uk/national-curriculum/key-stage-1-and-2**, and would your head of year/senior leadership team approve of it?

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yourmanager@graphicdesign.com

Your brief

Your industry: Graphic design

Graphic design is the process of creating visual content to communicate information through typography, photography, iconography and illustration. Graphic designers use these elements to create a variety of assets including logos and branding, posters, leaflets, adverts, websites, packaging and more. The design of an item, logo or advert can be what encourages a potential customer to purchase or engage with it, so it's very important that it looks good.
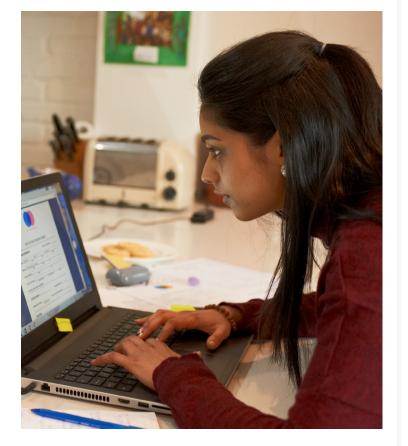
The challenge:

The company you work for has created a new reusable bottle that encourages people to stop using single-use plastics, such as plastic bottles, and instead refill their bottle each time. Your task is to create a logo for this new product. The target audience for the bottle is people aged 16 - 30. You can also create a poster and advert to go into a magazine advertising the new water bottle. These designs will be presented to your colleagues in the marketing team who will need to be persuaded to use them.

The why:

Single-use plastics are made from non-renewable sources and take anywhere from 20 to 1,000 years to decompose, making them one of the causes of environmental damage and harm to wildlife. It is therefore essential that the amount of single-use plastic produced is reduced, and adopting a reusable bottle is one way to do this. The branding and advertising for this water bottle should encourage the target audience to purchase it so they can help towards decreasing plastic pollution.

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The aims:

- To create a visually attractive and appealing logo, poster and advertisement for a reusable water bottle
- To encourage people to buy the bottle and therefore increase sales

Things to consider:

- On what will you create your designs? You can research the best design software to use on the internet or ask friends for recommendations. Platforms such as Canva are free and simple to use. Software like Adobe Illustrator, InDesign or Photoshop are common ones used by graphic designers within organisations, but cost money so check your school/college has an existing subscription if you want to use them. Or you can draw your designs using pens, pencils and paper
- How long will it take to create your designs? Make sure you plan when you will do each stage and how long it will take, so you would be able to give your colleagues a date to share your ideas with them
- What colours, shapes and fonts will be most appealing to the target audience, encouraging them to buy the bottle? Look at existing brands and products targeted at your audience, this could be ones aimed at people aged 16 - 30, and think about the designs they use to capture their audience
- What existing water bottle companies are there and what is their logo/branding like? Do you think it is effective?
- Make sure your design is not based on existing logos out there as it could result in copyright (intellectual property law) issues if a company thinks you have copied their logo
- How can you present your idea to your colleagues and persuade them that your logo, poster and advertisement will increase sales? View our article about how to get presentations right and look at some examples **here**
- Are your designs consistent and do they create a strong brand message? I.e. the reason a consumer will buy from your brand

Top tips

- ✓ Get further inspiration by looking at the branding of companies with a similar sustainability related purpose
- ✓ What colours will tie in with the environmentally friendly theme as well as be appealing to your audience?
- ✓ Sometimes less is more, don't be tempted to overcomplicate your design with lots of design elements

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Your project

Challenge chosen

1. Research your project	2. Make it happen
Who is your audience (the people that will benefit from your campaign)?	What are the tasks you need to complete to execute your idea?
What will make people want to take part? Look into similar initiatives from other organisations.	How much time is required?

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3. Persuading others

Who do you need to persuade to take your idea forward? Is it others you work closely with, a manager, another team within the business whose help you require?

What are the key types of information to communicate when you're persuading them? This could be things like whose help you need, why you think it will work.

4. Reaching your audience

How will you tell your audience about your initiative? What channels will you use?

Why will they get involved, and what do they need to know?

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Your project

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5. Your idea

Lay out your idea in full here. Make sure you include key information like how it addresses the original brief and why you think it will work, as well as what the activity is. Include the skills needed at each point to make your project a reality. Don't forget to include how you will know if you have been successful. How can you measure this? Are you conducting a survey, or tracking data?

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Presenting your project

Now you have completed your project it's time to present it. This could be to a parent/carer, or your teacher may ask you to present your project brief to the class. Your parent/carer or teacher will act like your manager, who you're hoping to convince to take your idea forward. You'll need to decide the best format for a presentation; could you make a film to support your idea, or a PowerPoint presentation? This is a great opportunity to work on your communication skills and is good practice for future work experience, internships or jobs.

Don't forget to read our article about how to get presentations right and take a look at some examples **here**.

Top tips

1. **Display innovation and creativity**
   Show why your solution is the best one. Have you thought about problems you might face? Your presentation should show these, and how you would overcome them. This shows resilience, proactivity and adaptability.

2. **Research your audience**
   Show that you know who your project is helping. If you have your audience in mind all along, this makes it more likely your idea will work.

3. **What questions may be asked?**
   Anticipate and plan for potential questions, particularly when running through your presentation. Is there anything you thought about during your process that you haven't mentioned? Why not? Could it be of interest?

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