

School profile: Whitby Community College is a 14–19 comprehensive school with Technology College status.

What did the school want to achieve?

Students transfer in this area from key stage three to key stage four after SATs. Students arriving at the school have little or no 3D experience. This assignment was designed to develop 3D skills using a vocational approach to Art, Craft and Design. In any rural community there are many successful craftspeople making a living producing contemporary outcomes inspired by their surroundings. The department wished to look outside the classroom to highlight the vocational potential of a range of creative and commercial skills. Staff therefore decided to introduce transition students to craft knowledge and skills development by working on a vocational assignment with a studio jeweller who sells her work all over the country.

How was learning organised to achieve these aims?

This was a new departure in the way time and learning was organised during transition.

The project was introduced with a question and answer session about crafts, including the number of studios and galleries in the area. This took a day to complete. A visit was organised a visit to the craftsperson's studio. She commenced by asking students to look out of her studio window, especially at colours and shapes. She showed students her jewellery, explaining how these elements fed into her designs, how

it was made, and the importance of deadlines and quality. Students saw visible evidence of this quality in her work. Pricing was explained in some detail.

The subsequent assignment, 'paper jewellery', was planned as a series of two weekly challenges. The task required researching/presenting contextual information in teams, producing and refining individual ideas and production of outcomes including a display stand. These outcomes had to be presented and evaluated.

Timetable allocation was ten hours over a two-week cycle. Resources needed were minimal, simply paper, thin card, jewellery findings and simple hand tools such as pliers. Peer, self and tutor assessments skills were introduced. Staff encouraged students to comment both verbally and in written form about ongoing work, using assessment grids from the units to help them improve. They were remarkably accurate.

The craftsperson came in every two weeks to check progress and to give feedback. An afternoon was organised for the final presentation of work and students invited her, the Team Leader for Business and some Post 16 art & design students to comment.

All students produced high quality outcomes, which they presented with confidence. (Fig 1, 2, and 3)

How well did the school achieve these aims?

Using a 'challenge based' approach to assignments worked well and students were motivated. They developed a range of new skills. These included working in teams, peer analysis of work, production and refinement of ideas, effective presentation of work to a variety of audiences and good time management

Students developed their knowledge of the local crafts community, how a jeweller develops, produces and sells work nationally, and contemporary practice.

A different relationship had developed between teaching staff and students. Dialogue about assignments, progress and rationale for portfolio building became part of the course. High quality outcomes using 3D hand tools were produced. The twenty four mixed ability students all improved by at least one grade on predictions. Final results were 100 percent A* to C. Seven students obtained A* with three being in the top ten nationally. This was an Applied CGSE so the achievement was doubled. The departments aim to 'highlight the vocational potential of a range of creative and commercial skills had been achieved'.

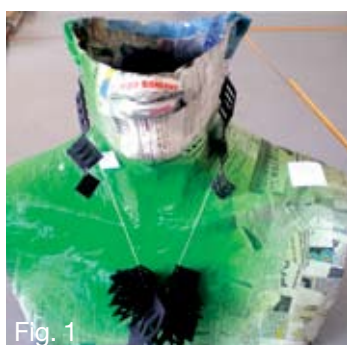


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

