

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Strategic Commitment	✓	Part of the Gatsby Benchmarks National Pilot
Curriculum Provision	✓	End-of-year assessment in a core academic subject
Employer Partnerships	✓	A major construction consortium and the local Council
Reflective Young People	✓	Combining both academic criteria and employability skills
Informed Career Choices	✓	Encouraging consideration of the Construction industry

Major local construction project provides real context for KS3 English end-of-year assessment

The English faculty at Castle View Enterprise Academy had been using science fiction scenarios to consolidate and review learning about 'writing for an audience and different types of writing' with year 7 students. The ideal outcome was described as students completing, '*... a series of tasks which assess their ability to write for a variety of reasons. Students produce a range of text types*'.

A major construction project just down the road from the school is putting a new bridge across the River Wear. An informal visit to the site office led to in discussions with Sunderland City Council's communications officer for the New Wear Crossing.

Students were asked to respond to the statement: '*The New Wear Crossing will take 3 years to complete and cost £117m. How will this benefit young people?*'. They were provided with background information and a local councillor spoke at an assembly to launch the challenge. Written work could be in the form of a press release, briefing or leaflet and was judged using the faculty's KS3 assessment grid, but also took account of individual effort and creativity in the classroom. Based on these criteria, a group of students was selected for a 'VIP visit' to the construction site, where they met the Project Director and asked questions while on the viewing platform.

The project involved the whole year group of 160 students and was the basis for a press release from Sunderland City Council, resulting in local press coverage. Assessment data showed that students had particularly developed teamwork skills and learned about opportunities in life after leaving school.

Benefits for the Students

- '*What we have learned is really useful and can help us in our futures. I think the bridge is going to be an icon*'
- '*It's been very different to other English projects because I've learned about something that is actually happening in Sunderland. The opportunities the bridge will bring, like jobs and easier travel, will be great*'
- '*It felt like we were doing a fun activity ... it was something different to learn about*'

Benefits for the School

- The project has helped to show how real-life situations can contribute to learning in core academic subjects even more effectively than creative, fictitious scenarios
- *'Our Year 7 students have really risen to the challenge and have responded with enthusiasm. It's very different to other English projects, but has really engaged them because the New Wear Crossing is a huge construction project very close to home that they can see develop every day, and which will have an enormous impact on their lives'*

Benefits for the Employer

- *'We've been working hard to leave a social and economic legacy, as well as a physical one. It's great to see the children writing about the benefits of the structure and using and improving their English skills in the process'*
- *'... very little effort from ourselves and great to see the impact. It's also an activity the children will always remember ... in 20 years' time when the bridge will have been here forever in people's minds'*

	AO6 Structure and organisation			AO5 Content			AO4 Technical Accuracy		
	Structure Features	Ideas	Paragraphing	Vocabulary	Purpose, Form & Audience	Linguistic Devices	Spelling	Sentence Forms	Punctuation
STEP 4 Accurate & Varied	I can use some structural features accurately.	I can organise my writing with a variety of linked and relevant ideas.	I can use paragraphs in most of my response and use discourse markers.	I can use vocabulary deliberately chosen.	I can show a sustained attempt to match purpose, form and audience and attempt to control a register.	I can show a conscious use of linguistic devices.	I can spell most words correctly most of the time.	I can use a variety of sentence forms for effect, mostly in Standard English and with mostly controlled grammatical structures.	I can use a range of punctuation that is mostly successful and use sentence demarcation that is mostly accurate.
STEP 3 Relevant & Appropriate	I can use relevant structure features.	I can organise my writing with linked and relevant ideas.	I can write in paragraphs with some discourse markers that are always appropriate.	I can use relevant vocabulary.	I can attempt to match purpose, form and audience.	I can use some relevant linguistic devices.	I can spell most words correctly.	I can use an appropriate range of sentence forms with use of Standard English and control of agreement.	I can use sentence demarcation that is appropriate and show some control of a range of punctuation.
STEP 2 Basic & Simple	I can use some simple structural features.	I can organise my writing with simply linked ideas.	I can write with a simple use of paragraphs.	I can use a simple vocabulary.	I can communicate with a basic sense of purpose, form and/or audience.	I can use some simple linguistic devices.	I can spell basic words and some complex words accurately.	I can use a simple range of sentence forms with some use of Standard English and some control of agreement.	I can use sentence demarcation that is sometimes accurate and show some control of a range of punctuation.
STEP 1 Limited	I can use some simple structural features in a limited way.	I can communicate one or two ideas, unlinked ideas.	I can write with no or limited paragraphs.	I can use a limited vocabulary.	I can communicate with a limited sense of purpose, form and/or audience.	I can use some limited linguistic devices.	I can spell basic words correctly.	I can occasionally use sentence demarcation and show some evidence of conscious use of punctuation.	



Year 7 students developed writing skills as part of an end-of-year assessment, responding to a challenge presented in an assembly about a new bridge over the River Wear. The normal academic criteria were combined with observations of effort in the classroom to select a group that visited the construction site and posed questions to a local councillor and the Project Director.

New Wear Crossing – a bridge to a brighter future

The New Wear Crossing is the first bridge to be built in Sunderland over the River Wear for over three decades and is part of a wider transport plan to improve links between the Port of Sunderland and the city centre with the A19.

Once complete in the spring of 2016, it will help attract new jobs and investment and will be the catalyst for regeneration in the area. It will also reduce congestion for residents and create direct routes to new development sites along the south of the town.

It will be a striking, iconic steel bridge with an A-frame pylon that will reach 150m (500ft) in height, which is twice as high as Nelson's Column and taller than Big Ben's clock tower.

www.newwearcrossing.co.uk

New Wear Crossing – English Challenge

Name: Chloe Finley

Today, I am writing to you to tell you why the New Wear Crossing is a good idea for the City of Sunderland.

Firstly the New Wear Crossing is a good idea because it will congest the roads so there isn't any traffic this is because there is now three bridges so it gives people an alternative route to where they want to go. This leads onto emergency services. The bridge has two lanes of traffic on each side this means there is enough room for vehicles to move to the side to let ambulances, police cars or fire engines through. One last thing is that since there is a new bridge now there will be less pollution in the air this is because the vehicles won't be waiting.