

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Strategic Commitment	✓	Part of a regional, ESF-funded 'Careers Local' programme
Curriculum Provision	✓	Contributing to non-fiction writing in GCSE English
Employer Partnerships	✓	Involving a small PR agency a few miles from the school
Reflective Young People		
Informed Career Choices	✓	Showing how English skills are used in public relations

Local PR agency helps GCSE students understand and analyse non-fiction writing

In their bid for funding support, Pingle Academy in South Derbyshire stated, *'We are in need of a sustained and regular approach to CEIAG and our students need it to be embedded into their lessons.'* One of six curriculum projects developed by the school involved year 10 students preparing for GCSE English, which examines their ability in 'writing to present a viewpoint'. The teacher brief indicated it is *'Difficult for students to understand the style of non-fiction writing and analysing non-fiction'*. The ideal outcome was described as, *'Students understanding how writing can help them in a range of careers, who they write for and why'*.

Papillon Communications is a PR agency located a few miles from the school. The company's highly experienced communications director, who has overall responsibility for all client accounts, visited the school after the students had produced a piece of non-fiction writing. The students read out their piece before hearing how the PR agency presents non-fiction writing for a range of audiences, including newspaper editors and social media. They were also told about a press release that helped launch an innovative hair cutting service in Birmingham's Bull Ring.

The students were challenged to write their own head-turning headline for the piece they had written, receiving feedback from the guest expert, who also shared her career story.

Benefits for the Students

- *'It was nice getting feedback from an expert. It's different because she does it for a living'*
- *'We tried to prepare as much as possible so that, when she came in, she could give us feedback on what we could improve ... We could advance on that and add a bit more because she's got more experience and can give us feedback and know what we're on about'*
- *'I feel good because I came up with an idea she actually liked.'*
- *'They do it all the time. So, if we have someone who comes into our lesson and show us what they can do with it. We're learning it, but they're actually doing a job in it'*
- *'It was good because we've not seen her before and she's given us feedback that is good to know and we can learn from'*

Benefits for the School

- *'From an educational perspective, the session was massively beneficial to the students. I know they can be a difficult audience, but take it from me, they were definitely engaged with the session and the feedback from Sarah. The handout is also superb and we will definitely revisit the sheets as they are great for explaining structure'*
- This was one of six curriculum projects piloted by the school, three of which involved English
- The teacher asked Papillon PR if they would be happy to continue linking with the school

Benefits for the Employer

- *'I'm a real advocate of going beyond standard educational practices to look at ways in which we can engage young people and it was great to be part of an initiative that aims to do just that. The students became really involved in the session and were coming up with some brilliant ideas'*
- *'At 15, they have some big decisions ahead of them as they start to make plans for their futures and it was great to have the opportunity to speak to them at this stage of their lives to hopefully help make their choices a little clearer. You never know – we may have inspired some PR professionals of the future'*



Year 10 maths students were asked to prepare a short piece of writing about a local charity event, which they then presented in class to an account director from a PR agency. With guidance about writing press releases, they each wrote a headline that would grab an editor's attention, receiving feedback from their guest.

