

Meaningful Learning Experiences

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| Strategic Commitment | ✓ | Part of a strategic commitment by the academies trust |
| Curriculum Provision | ✓ | Directly relating to an existing 12-week project |
| Employer Partnerships | ✓ | Engaging a well-established city-centre retailer |
| Reflective Young People | ✓ | Motivating students to deliver their best work |
| Informed Career Choices | ✓ | Promoting management roles in the Retail sector |

City centre retailer motivates year 8/9 students to produce their best work in Design Technology

Year 8/9 students at Nottingham Academy complete a 12-week 'Night Light Project' as part of their studies in Resistant Materials. They are required to design and build a product for a specific audience. The head of department indicated that students find it difficult to come up with creative ideas, stating that these tend to be '*... box-shaped or they replicate ideas already created*'.

Nottingham Lighting Centre is a long-established retail business in the city centre. Alongside information and pictures of the store and its product range, the managing director sent an introductory letter that was shared during week five of the project:

'... I have sent you examples of other products that are innovative and can attract a higher price tag. These are the sort of products that we could consider stocking. I am always interested in fresh ideas for lighting products – as are our suppliers – and I would like to see what you think could be done with a nightlight to make it appealing to, for example, a teenage audience ...'

Interviews with students at the start of the project revealed that they were aiming to try harder and produce better work than would normally be the case. When the managing director visited the school, students were given an opportunity to meet him in groups, explaining ideas for their LED night lights, which had been designed with a teenage market in mind. He provided feedback about technical details and explored what might have been possible without the restriction of the Design Technology department's limited budget.

Benefits for the Students

- *'With this, I have to take a bit more pride and time because I know someone's going to look at my work ... If you make something presentable, he may like that idea'*
- *'I will try harder. I want to come up with unique ideas so my work stands out'*
- *'It's given us a massive opportunity to show how good our school is and impress him with our work, but it puts more pressure on us ... I'll be happy if he picks my work'*
- *'It's interesting because you don't normally hear from someone who works in the industry; it's normally just your teacher ... so you kind of trust them more'*

