Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Design and Technologies – Materials and technologies specialisations, Levels 7 and 8

An existing learning activity linked to a particular learning area or capability in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 can be easily adapted to incorporate career education, enriching students’ career-related learning and skill development.

1. Identify an existing learning activity

**Curriculum area, sub-strand and levels:** Design and Technologies – Materials and technologies specialisations, Levels 7 and 8

**Relevant content description:** Independently develop criteria for success to evaluate design ideas, processes and solutions and their sustainability [(VCDSCD052)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCDSCD052)

**Existing activity:** Designing and producing an appropriate product as a commemorative item for Grade 6 graduation and evaluating it according to chosen criteria.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Engaging with a specific group, such as Grade 6 students at a nearby school, to conduct ‘market research’ on their products, and pitching their ideas to the group.

2. Adapt the learning activity to include a career education focus

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| Existing learning activity | Adaptations, changes or extensions that can be made |
| Students are tasked with designing and producing a commemorative product for Grade 6 graduation, such as a t-shirt, bookmark, necklace, or photo frame.  They work in small groups come up with design ideas, then groups present their options to a local Grade 6 class for feedback. | Teacher invites a local small business owner who sells/designs/makes products to talk with the class about their work. The talk should incorporate how the small business owner designed their product, and what processes they went through to get feedback on prototypes (if any), or feedback from customers that changed their design. |
| Students present their design ideas for feedback. They also ask the Grade 6 students questions to guide what criteria the 7/8 students will use to determine if their preferred design idea is successful. This could include the younger students rating how important each aspect is to them:   * Is the product durable? * Is the product portable? * Is the product unisex? * Does the product reflect the values of the school? * Is the product made from sustainable materials? * Is the product made from materials that are affordable? * Does the product have a personal connection to the Grade 6 students? | Teacher introduces students to the concept of market research as a formal way of gathering information on what customers want. They link the creation of success criteria to the outcomes of market research. For example, if 9/10 customers polled say they are more interested in something being affordable rather than good quality, a producer knows their item needs to be cheap rather than durable.  Students approach the data collection component of the task as market researchers. |
| Students sort the data to find out what adjustments need to be made to their design ideas. They also use the feedback from the Grade 6 students to create criteria to assess the success of their preferred design idea. For example, if students rated ‘sustainability’ as most important, and ‘portable’ as least important, ‘sustainability’ would be included as a criterion while ‘portability’ would not.  Students finalise the criteria for the design project, adding in criteria to assess the project overall, such as teamwork, communication, time management and process planning, and whether all the products were made in time for the graduation. | Student groups use their market research findings (along with the refined design) to create a ‘pitch’ to present to the Grade 6 class, as though they were customers. Students should be able to explain their refined design as meeting the criteria the younger students wanted. They discuss the benefits of their product using persuasive language. The Grade 6 class picks their preferred design. |
| Students present their refined design ideas to the younger students, who pick their preferred design.  Students create the final product, then assess the overall project using their criteria. | Students reflect on the additional steps they took to ensure the product met their customers’ needs. They discuss the skills they developed during the activity – critical and creative thinking, teamwork, gathering and collating data, communication, and design solutions. |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* The small business owner could be invited back to see the presentation of the refined designs, including the pitches using the research.

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* Students develop skills in communication and self-presentation as they liaise with younger students to gather information on preferred designs, and present their options to the Grade 6 class.
* Creating an item for a specific group, including revising designs to incorporate feedback, encourages students to be adaptable and respond to challenges with a flexible mindset.

Know your world – career exploration:

* Students use information and technology effectively as they gather data, draft and finalise designs, and present their designs as pitches.
* Students experience work as creators and market researchers as they work with ‘clients’ to produce items to meet their needs.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* As they use information gathered to alter their designs to suit clients’ needs, students practise using critical and creative thinking to inform decision-making.