

Welcome to 2010

This issue we have started to think about the number of finalists who have used imaginative ways to promote their project. In India there has been street theatre, in Hungary the infamous frogs, and both Egypt and Comoros have wowed with dance. There have been many models used in Turkey and of course excellent photography from every country.

So without further delay – here is some guidance to help promote your environmental projects. Promoting a product, plan or initiative to a group is an important element of any environmental project.

Creating Posters, Leaflets, Brochures or Web Pages

Your group may wish to design its own posters or brochures. A simple method can improve their effectiveness. Start by collecting together examples of posters, brochures and leaflets. Ask the group to decide which they like or don't like. Use squared paper, or acetate sheets with centimetre squares printed on them, ask the group to analyse relative sizes of text positions of pictures, and where the headlines or titles are. A similar process can be used to look at web sites, by analysing the grid markings on the screen, the size of text, etc.

Then think about:

- Your audience, the people you want to talk to – what will motivate them to listen to you?
- Don't forget to be original and different. If your target group gets loads of email could you send them a letter? If they are used to flat brochures – could you make yours pop up?
- Test your ideas and design – remember that sometimes you might think the idea is great but if the audience you are hoping to talk to do not understand it or find it difficult to read then your designs will fail.
- Remember that a poster is not a brochure or a book – keep the text to a minimum. The less text you use, the more impact you can have.
- Test the language you've used. YOU might understand what you are saying, but maybe your audience won't. Remember it is easy for an expert in a subject to think they are communicating effectively but actually they are not. So test out what you've written.
- Make sure that people know what to do next and if you need them to help, let them know how and who to contact.
- Try to make time to sleep on your ideas – this means you have time to reflect but also it's amazing how often spelling mistakes become obvious the day after!
- Always have a test copy printed – and check this carefully. Sometimes you do not notice mistakes on a screen.

If you have no computer then remember the old fashioned way – draw a dummy design and make up a jigsaw of different sized pictures and spaces for text, even write out different styles. Move them around and play to see which combination works best.

Photograph checklist:

There is a simple way to think about photographs and pictures: a card frame. Cut one out and look through it to imagine what the final image might be. It means that people can all look for good viewpoints if you only have one camera.

It can be helpful to divide the frame vertically with two strings (into thirds) and then do the same to divide the frame into thirds horizontally. Where your strings intersect, that's a good place to have the object of your photograph. Don't forget to move around. What would happen if you took the picture from the ground, or up a tree, or standing on steps?

A variation is to put your frames on sticks. When you have found a good composition, push the stick into the ground then the rest of the group can look and see if they agree.

Here are a few ideas to help you compose a perfect picture for promoting your project:

- Think about composition –look at pictures in papers and magazines. Analyse how much of the picture is taken up by different features, what sort of activities are people doing, how close the photographer is to people's faces, how much sky there is.
- Read your camera's instruction book and find out what your camera can do – there might be some surprise features you can use. It also means you will find out what to do under different light conditions to get the best pictures.
- Decide on the object of your picture and get them to fill the frame. Nothing is worse than a group of people who are too far away to see what they are doing properly.
- Plan ahead – think about what people are doing in the picture, can your photographs build up to tell a story such as going to a site, getting a spade out, digging a hole etc.

A presentation checklist:

Using PowerPoint presentations is essential for the final if you make it there. Unfortunately, people can forget that the audience needs to get a clear message from them.

So start by thinking about your audience, then write down the objective of your presentation, its message, and the information you want to communicate.

- Then think about good presentations you have been to – decide what you like and dislike about them.
- How long should it take, are there any activities the audience could do?
- Can you illustrate PowerPoint with something different such as a play, a song, or costumes?
- You could use the checklist for posters for developing your presentation slides.

Once you have decided what your presentation is to be like and what it will contain, remember these tips:

- Be passionate and enthusiastic – if you are not, then why should anyone else be?
- Be short and think about the time you are expected to take
- Remember that most peoples' attention starts to disappear after 15 minutes. Five minutes is an ideal time – then your audience will be actively listening.
- Avoid being trendy if you can – it upset some audiences – unless your audience is a trendy audience, then knock yourself out with trendiness!
- Make sure your presentation is accessible – if you know there is no electricity, then use props or dance instead?
- Remember the tips from the Photographs section when you're composing your slides.
- Write a script and choose the right person to present – that means testing and rehearsing. Let everyone have a go and see who does it best – do not make assumptions about who will do it, as people can surprise you.
- Remember the medium is not the message, what you say is the message – don't think a brilliant animation and flash colours will cover up a badly written presentation!
- Keep text to the briefest amount of words – it's a slide not a book!

A little thought-provoker:

For those of you wondering about different ways to communicate with your audience, here is a list of approaches and styles you might think about – with a column for jotting your ideas down.

Approach	Idea
Tell stories	
Create a drama	
Oral history	
Film or video	
Dance	
Traditional crafts	
Drawing	
Painting	
Print	
Textiles	
Fashion	
Graphics	
Animation	

For each of your ideas think about:

- The materials you might need
- The people and equipment needed to make or produce your idea
- Produce step by step instructions
- Write down a list of the items needed and figure out how much it will cost
- For dramas see if the tips from Bob the Bunny storyboarding can help you tell your story

Bob the Bunny Submissions

We have also thought about Bob the Bunny and this month we are giving you further ideas for creating the action plan that goes with your cartoon entry. Hope they help!

Step 1 – Identify a theme for your project

Whatever the subject of your project you will need to have a clear idea why you are doing it. You will need to think which specific aspect of one of the subjects you are going to look at. For example if you choose to look at biodiversity in your school, think about how much biodiversity there is already. What is encouraging biodiversity? What discourages insects, wild animals and plants from living in the grounds? From your lists you will be able to decide which specific things you want to research and create an Action Plan for. Try filling in the grid below to help you decide on the best subject.

Project: (e.g. water, transport or energy etc.)	Why is this important

When you have come up with an environmental topic to investigate, try using these steps. Use the check boxes to keep track of things you still need to think about.

Step 2 – What's the situation now?

- What do people think and do?
- What do you think about the issue
- What do other people think – are they concerned?
- How will you find out what is being done in your school or community to help the environment?

Step 3 – Your desired situation – what you would like to see in future

In your group, discuss what you would like to see in future. How could the environmental issue you are investigating be resolved, or how could the current situation be improved? Think of the situation you would like to aim for and write it down.

Step 4 – Your Action Plan

- What actions could you take to help reach the situation you talked about in Step 3? Think of practical and achievable actions to help solve the problems
- You can also think about the recommendations you would give to teachers in your school, the directors of companies and your local authorities? What would you do if you were in their shoes?
- What things do you need to make the project happen?