

# Getting better all the time – using Nuffield D&T for special needs pupils

Waveney School is a 5-16 day school with 65 pupils on roll, (13 girls and 52 boys; 24 primary, 41 secondary) who have a variety of needs falling under the broad umbrella of 'language and communication disorders'.

I bought the Nuffield Key Stage 3 design and technology resources realising that I would have to be the material for my special needs pupils. In some cases the adaptation was extensive. I chose to start with the Textiles Resource Task TRT 8 from the Resource Task File. It was totally unsuitable for special pupils so before I could use it in class I had to do a lot of preparation work to allow my pupils access. To do this I:

- cut down the amount of information presented in one lesson - I spread it over 3 lessons
- made it more practical, to keep them on target
- cut down the new vocabulary to 5 new words per session
- enlarged the space given for pupils to write in.

It was time consuming but the pupils enjoyed the lessons I eventually presented – especially rummaging around the scrap fabric trolley and tipping it out on the floor.

The next time I used the Nuffield Task Files I chose one of the Capability Tasks – 'Novelties Incorporated'. All the Key Stage 3 pupils followed this during the summer term and it was an outstanding success. I think that this was because although we started using the Nuffield task we adapted it as we proceeded so that it developed around the pupils' ideas. The stimulus for the task was a visit to Tonbridge Castle which provided



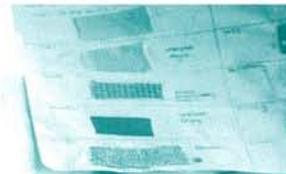
Emma in her costume for 'Props!'

an ideal task setting for designing and making articles that could be sold in the Castle gift shop.

Enthusiasm abounded and we even had some of our work displayed in the Castle's Council Chamber. The pupils remembered this unit of work for a long time to come.

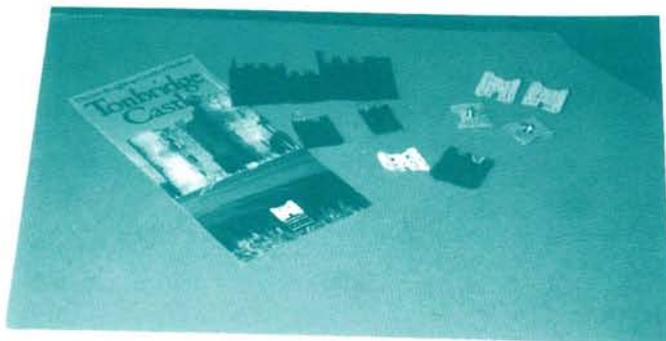
Each summer term we now use a Capability Task for all the Key Stage 3 pupils to follow. We have since used 'Carrying devices' and 'Props!'. It is with the Capability Tasks that I have found most success as a teacher. However, throughout the year we dip into the Resource Task File for ideas – often to enhance areas of the curriculum where we

A pupil's record of the properties of fabrics based on TRT 8



Properties	Properties
Shiny	water proof
Flexible	P.V.C
Tweedy	wind proof
absorbent	proofed nylon
fouling	not light through
heavy	keep warm (winter)
	lets heat through

Simple novelty jewellery produced by year 7 pupils Emma and Sarah



feel there is a gap or when we feel unsure of our expertise. They are often used for one-off lessons, especially by teachers in my department who have had no specialist technology training.

By now the pupils who had attempted 'Novelties Incorporated' in Year 7 were in Year 9 and I decided to have a go at the non-statutory tests for the end of Key Stage 3. I chose the theme 'Going Public' and encouraged the pupils to draw on the work they had completed in Year 7. The photos of Emma and her appliqué work below clearly show a considerable improvement on her work from Year 7.

I needed to rewrite the written test as follows:

- putting it into a logical sequence
- providing vocabulary lists
- writing it in language the pupils could understand.

Part of the rewritten test for 'Going Public' is shown in Figure 1.

This hard work paid off; we managed to sit the test as a class group, under test

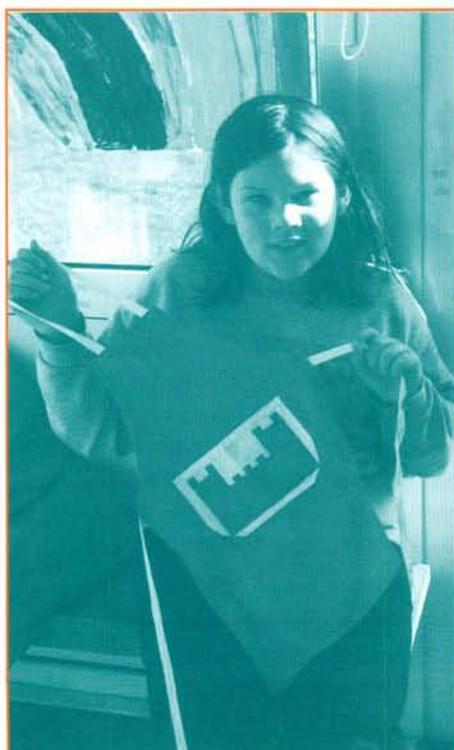


Figure 1 – The rewritten test for 'Going Public'

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1b  
Add labels to show the type of fabric each part was made from.

Here are some words you could use

felt, polyester cotton, cotton, jersey, hessian, binca, even weave linen, waterproof nylon

1c  
Add labels to show it was made.

2.  
Add coloured arrows and labels to your sketch to show where it might not be very strong when it gets used.

3a  
Which organisation have you designed your product for?

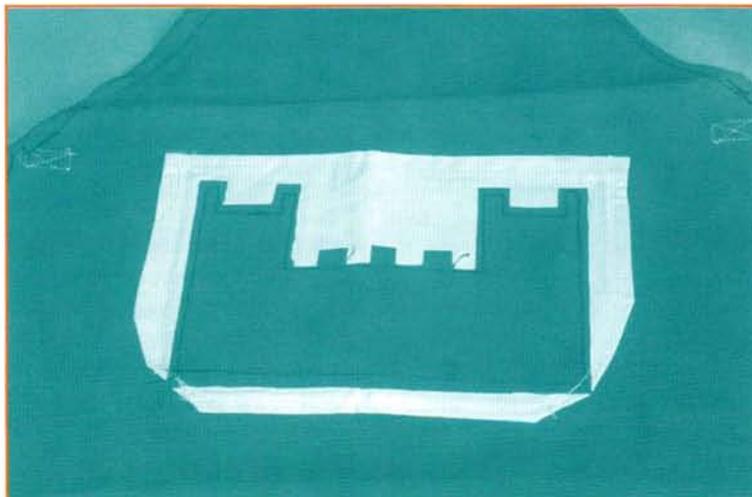
3b  
Where are you hoping they will sell your finished product?

3c  
Do you think your customers will like your finished product?

Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

They will like it because \_\_\_\_\_

Emma and her 'Going Public' appliqué work





*Mood boards and story boards*



conditions, with me reading out the questions to the group. Only one of my pupils needed a learning support assistant to scribe for him. The pupils reacted positively to this arrangement, knowing that they were doing the same as their mainstream peers.

The Year 8 pupils who had originally tackled the much revised Textile Resource Task have become Year 10, so I have purchased the Key Stage 4 Textiles Resource Task and Capability Task Files to help me develop a design and technology examination course. I have based much of the work on the Capability Task 'Themed scarves'. One of

the gaps in my design and technology curriculum is helping pupils to develop good research and written folders. My special needs pupils have an abhorrence of anything involving reading and writing, especially as they see design and technology as a practical subject involving much less paper work than other lessons. With the help of the Resource Tasks on mood boards and storyboards they are developing some excellent folder work.

We finished the summer term with a brief fashion show, where the pupils showed off their silk painted scarves.

<b>1995</b> Year 7 Carrying devices	<b>1996</b> Year 8 Props!	<b>1997</b> Year 9 Novelties Incorporated
Year 8 Carrying devices	Year 9 Props!	Year 10 CoA/GCSE course Themed scarves

The Capability Tasks that we have tackled over the past three years are summarised in the table above.

I think you'll agree from the evidence in the photos that the standard of our work has improved over the years. When I go back to school this term I'm going to develop the 'Rally arm bands' Resource Task to help me teach manufacturing techniques.

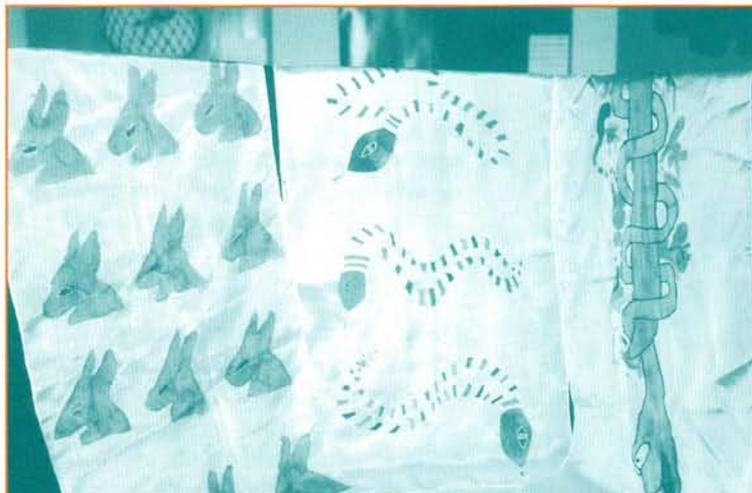
*Pat Whitby is a member of the Nuffield D&T Learning Support Group which met once a term for three terms at the Nuffield Curriculum Projects Centre to use special needs teachers' expertise to develop resources for pupils with learning difficulties. The results of the groups work have just been published.*

**References**

Barlex, D. et al. (1995) *Nuffield Design and Technology KS3 Resource Task File* Essex: Longman

Barlex, D. et al. (1995) *Nuffield Design and Technology KS3 Capability Task File* Essex: Longman

Barlex, D et al (1997) *Starting Nuffield Design and Technology* Essex: Longman



*Work on the Capability Task 'Themed scarves'*