

Reflective activities for Design and Digital Technologies

Example activity 1

Playground Renewal: Students assess a local playground or public space and develop a redesign plan to enhance inclusivity, safety, and engagement. They must consider accessibility, material durability, and budget constraints, working within a set budget and material costs. Their final design is presented through a scaled model and a persuasive virtual advertising campaign aimed at the local community.

Each task requires distinct competencies, so teams must strategically assign roles based on

their strengths, using character avatars to guide decision-making. If gaps in expertise arise, teams can subcontract tasks to others, using their budget to "pay" for external skills and resources. Keeping teams small fosters collaboration and encourages seeking outside support.

Collaborating and managing AC9TDE6P05

Develop project plans that include consideration of resources to individually and collaboratively make designed solutions

AC9TDI6P08

Select and use appropriate digital tools effectively to share content online, plan tasks and collaborate on projects, demonstrating agreed behaviours

Reason for the design

Budgeting: A key aspect of this task is using money as a constraint. This encourages students to prioritise essential design elements rather than including every idea that comes to mind. It also highlights the importance of having a team member who is budget-conscious, a point that should be explored in the reflective discussion.

Subcontracting: Subcontracting aligns with budgeting and mirrors real-world collaborative work. Effective teams assess individual strengths and weaknesses, strategically planning to achieve the best outcome.

Before beginning, discuss key skills relevant to the task, helping students recognise their own competencies. Subcontracting carries a cost—whether financial (hiring external help) or time-based (redistributing tasks within the team)—but every member plays a crucial role. Highlight skills often overlooked in traditional schoolwork, such as computer skills, technical drawing, advertising, jingle creation, or videography.

Reason for the design

Lowering cognitive load to permit

reflection: Building on an existing design reduces cognitive load when developing and promoting a new task while still engaging various problem-solving competencies. The goal of this task is to collaboratively create designed solutions, providing a framework for students to identify the competencies they have used and those they still need to develop.

Example activity 2

Innovation pitch: Students work in teams to improve a product from the Shonky Awards, ensuring it appeals to the original target audience. Before they start the design process they consider the problem solving competencies that would be particularly relevant to the task and identify who will take on this role. During the reflective phase, students evaluate both the final product design and the problem-solving strategies they employed. They also reflect on how their own competencies have evolved, and what they need to develop for future projects.