

A guide to creating a Digital Outreach poster or pamphlet on trading aspects of an item

Well done for deciding to research into an object of your choosing because the activity is likely to help your search for niche ways in which your interests and energies could serve others. This is a key life skill at home and also at work. Confidence can be built through undertaking the research, and presenting the findings is creative, whether you act alone or in a group. Additional confidence can be built by including meeting people either when seeking information or when sharing findings.

How to start?

Choose the item of your focus, which can be from a very wide range, for example: a cake, a piece of clothing or jewellery, a piece of furniture, a treasured possession, a tourist souvenir, a stained glass window, a marquee, shed or chalet; a news-sheet, calendar through to a cooker.

Asking some preliminary questions about your chosen item

- Is the item still desirable? To whom? How was it made, built or grown, and when?
- What are its constituent parts, and where was each grown or designed and made?
- Which traders may have been involved in growing, making, or any importing of the item?
- How much did it cost to buy and what value does it have now?
- How is it maintained, renovated or mended, and, if relevant, are spare parts available?
- How is it recycled or otherwise disposed of? Does it constitute heritage?
- Is there commercial logic in producing the item closer to home due to high delivery charges or as market research shows a preference for better quality items than imported?

Researching deeper into some aspect that has caught your interest

Check sources such as local or industry-specific directories and the press. Ask around for what the history of the chosen item may be, perhaps finding that local older people provided relevant services years ago, before production was relocated overseas. Find traders who sell, hire, mend and alter the item. This may prove difficult because the incentive to mend and repair things was reduced as price of imports dropped and is only gradually being raised again by reintroduction of recycling and reuse.

Using an internet search engine see if you can find how relevant traders now market their services, whether they sell or import or grow the item of your search, or a constituent part of the item, or any associated repair, renovation, maintenance or recycling. For example, if researching into cakes and baking, search for cake-makers, decorators and bakers and growers or importers of constituents. If researching into a piece of wooden and upholstered furniture, then search for traders who sell the item and also those providing joinery services, timber supply, and fabric replacement services.

A choice hitting a dead end is valuable in indicating no niche of interest, in which case report on that and, if time allows (and any mentor you have agrees), start again with another choice.

Display the findings in a poster or pamphlet, and store a copy

Design and produce a poster or pamphlet *describing the chosen item* and an *outline of some of the findings*, perhaps using a computer and ideally within 2 A4 pages. Add in the *authors' name* and the *date*, and (in small print) state '*This resource is for education purposes only.*'. Display the poster or pamphlet and lodge a copy somewhere safe, as your mentor instructs.

Congratulations, you have created something useful!!