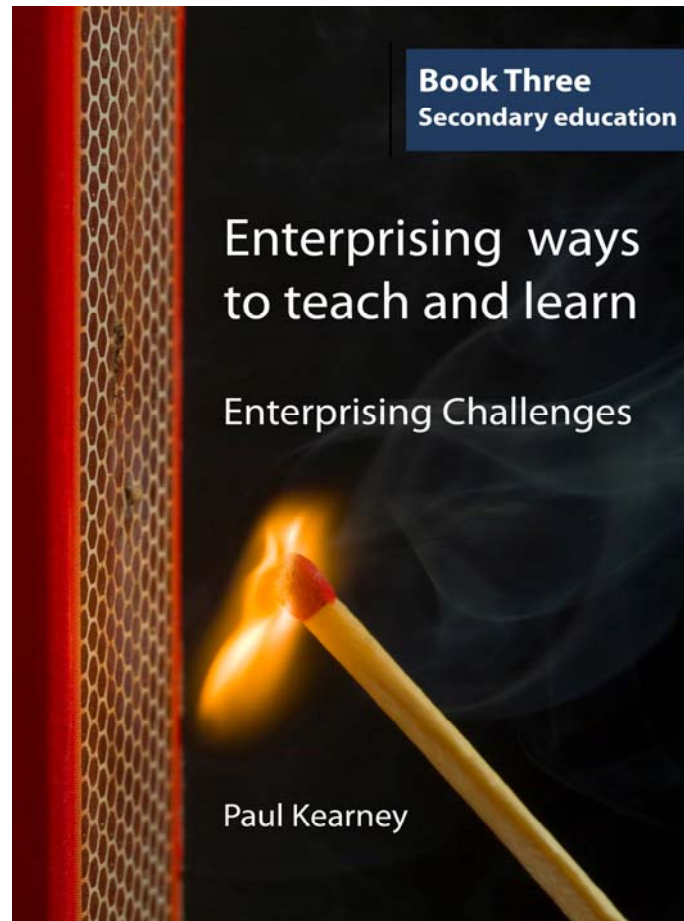


Sample

Enterprising project



Contracting Christmas

Contract management

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CONTRACTING CHRISTMAS



The Challenge

Your team is a **contract management team**.

Your aim is to make Christmas more enjoyable for senior citizens. Your task is to raise money to 'contract' **another group** of students in your class to organise and run a Christmas party in a local retirement home. To raise the money **Old-Fashioned** Christmas Decorations packs will be made and sold.

Your team will be known as the Contract Management team. As the contract manager, you get everyone else to do the things needed to make the party happen. This is done by writing out agreements (contracts) describing **exactly** what it is you want others to do and what you will pay them in return.

Your team must contract:

- 1 a group of students to **produce** the packs of Christmas decorations
- 2 a group of students to **market** the packs, and
- 3 another group of students to organise and run the **party**

The first two groups will be known as Supply Contractors and they must come from other classes.

The last group will be known as the Main Contractor and must come from your class. Their jobs include

- liaising with the senior citizens' home
- decorating the venue
- arranging the catering
- organising the entertainment
- providing small presents donated by school families

The Main Contractor may 'sub-contract' some (but not all) of these tasks to other classes. The Main Contractor must hire (sub-contract) a **choir from another school**. Even though the Main Contractor may 'sub-contract' other groups, they are still responsible for making sure everything happens properly. But **ultimately** you are responsible because you contracted the Main Contractor.

As the Contract Management team, you will have to sit down with your contractors to make sure that everyone is absolutely clear on what exactly needs to be done. A part of this is making sure that your contractors are capable of doing all the tasks well enough. Remember in the end you are responsible for making sure **everything** happens.

At the beginning you will visit the retirement home to see if they like your idea. Try to make your presentation interesting. For example, why not dress up in Christmas outfits. You must check if there are matters that **non-Christian residents** want considered. How are you going to deal this with sensitivity?

You will work with two retired people.

Your team has **27 hours** over the next six weeks.

The Contract Management team is an **independent organisation**, which must make its own decisions and do all the work in managing contractors. If you want to change the project, talk to your teacher.

The team must devise an '**equity policy**', which lists 9 things you must do to ensure that every team member:

- is treated fairly
- has a say in what is decided
- has a chance to participate in all tasks

Depending on your assessment, you will receive **free-time** if the team scores:

- 65 to 74 points - members receive extra time for lunch for two weeks
- 75 to 84 points - members receive a half-day free time
- 85 or more points - members receive 1 free day

Also your teacher may ask if the team wants to '**speculate**' on its **assessment** results to increase this free time. Be careful, speculation doesn't always pay off. Your teacher will tell you more about free-time. * (conditions apply)

Before starting, the team must list 7 things that may cause the project to fail, if they start happening, unless immediate action is taken. They will be known as **Red Alerts**.



Finding ways to reduce your '**carbon footprint**' when doing this project will benefit your assessment. This includes the footprint of your contractors.

Enterprise skills exercise – Bar Code

Each member of the team must shade the Bar Codes to show what they think and repeat at the end of the project. *We might put the bars on the walls or turn them into graphs.*

School is boring

no	start	yes
	end	

I feel comfortable dealing with people I don't know

no	start	yes
	end	

I can influence decisions made in a group

no	start	yes
	end	

I am confident I could lead this project

no	start	yes
	end	

If there is a problem I'd volunteer pretty quickly to fix it

no	start	yes
	end	

I don't have to wait to be told to start a task

no	start	yes
	end	

I'm happy to try new things

no	start	yes
	end	

Teachers find it hard to let students manage projects on their own

no	start	yes
	end	

Teachers need to know more about contracts

no	start	yes
	end	

Teachers are too bossy

no	start	yes
	end	

Rules and conditions

- 1 The decorations must be old fashioned. They will be hand made. They cannot be bought ready-made from a commercial outlet. The Christmas packages cannot be sold to relatives.
- 2 The venue must be decorated with old-fashioned items. The team must sell the decoration pack at a 33% discount to home staff.
- 3 The decorations must be **safe**, especially for little children.
- 4 Before you give any money to your Main Contractor and the Supply Contractors, you must get permission from the relevant teachers.
- 5 You must write down the things that you want the contractors to do. And someone from your team and the contractor's class must sign an agreement. Teachers may want to **sign the agreement** as well.
- 6 With contracting, details are important. For example:
 - Can the choir spend money on transport? Who will decide what songs they sing and what they will wear?
 - Will senior citizens receive little gifts or cards? Where would they come from?
 - How many packs should be made? What will go in them? How should they be presented? Do you want to see prototypes first? Who will decide these things?
 - Do you want to impose restrictions on how the contractor and their subcontractors arrange their finances? Remember, in the end, all the finances must be included in your final accounts and these will be 'audited'.
 - How long should the party last?
 - When should contractors be paid?

All of this, and many other '**specifications**', should be written in the contract.

You must keep **financial records** of where the money came from and how you spent it. This is your job not the teachers. All money left over must be donated to the retirement home. This includes money that the Contractor, or any of their sub-contractors, has left over.

The **cross-word puzzle** you receive will provide you with more clues about what should be placed in the contract.

How well you organise yourselves will be assessed, particularly the areas below:

- 1 The team must use the **time-log** supplied by the teacher to record what it did, when and for how long.
- 2 Proper meetings will be held, using 'agendas' and recording 'minutes'. The meeting record-book may be assessed at the end of the project.
- 3 All team members must have a role, e.g. finance officer. The team must prove that it conducted a '**skills audit**' before allocating roles.
- 4 Draw up an **action plan** for each task detailing:
 - What - will be done
 - When - and how long it might take
 - How - it will be done
 - With - the equipment you will use and people who may help
 - Where it will be done

Your action plan and logs could be part of your assessment.

Resources

To achieve the project the Contract Management team has:

- A working space of their own
- A £20 grant
- A £20 loan, paid back with 4.7% interest
- £25 worth of 'credit' for use of the school's telephone, fax, email, photocopier, postage and other equipment. The office staff will tell you about this.

You must purchase three hours advice from the head teacher. It will cost you £1 credit per hour. Also, at the same cost, you must buy three hours advice from the school finance officer, who will help you set up 'your books'. This person may be involved in your assessment.

Tips

Ensure a prototype is made before production starts.

Working out what you spend and **when** is extremely important.

Remember you will be generating income from the sales of the pack. You need to ask questions such as:

- When do we need to get this money?
- What are the first things we need to do with it?

Organise for your Supply Contractors to start operating as soon as possible.

Always remember you must repay your loan.

Many people know about contracts. Most people will have one, even if it is an employment contract or insurance policy. They might let you examine the documents. Although you will not write anything like these documents, it helps to see how they are set out and some of the language used.

Pick your contractors well and check who the Main Contractor subcontracts. Besides their capacity to deliver, the most important quality of a contractor is **their motivation**. If you treat your contractors with **respect** and as 'partners', they are likely to be more committed to the entire project.

Being able to check how things are progressing is extremely important to project management. This means constantly monitoring the Main Contractor and the subcontractors. You must insist that the Main Contractor also monitor its subcontractors.

Adopt a **catchy name** for the business.

Every piece of assessment adds up! You can't afford to let a point or two slip here and there.

Do these **tasks first** – you might need to miss some and add others:

- 1 Negotiate any changes you want
- 2 Discuss rewards
- 3 Develop your equity policy
- 4 Conduct a skills audit
- 5 Identify your Red Alerts
- 6 Complete the enterprise skills exercise
- 7 Visit the home

Assessment

- 1 You will be asked to rate your **reliability** out of 7.
- 2 Each member of your team will be asked to rate your **effort** and contribution out of 7. This will be averaged.
- 3 The Main Contractor will rate your **contract management skills** out of 15.
- 4 The local **bank** will rate the quality of your contracts out of 13.
- 5 Each **Supply Contractor** will rate how clear you were about what you wanted them to do – out of 11. This will be averaged.
- 6 The teacher/s involved with Supply Contractors will rate your **enthusiasm** and communication skills out of 9. This will be averaged.
- 7 **The deputy head teacher** will rate how well you ran the business side of the project out of 9.
- 8 The **retired advisors** will rate your professionalism out of 9.
- 9 **The local mayor** will rate the quality of your equity policy out of 6.
- 10 The school finance officer will rate your **financial records** out of 7.
- 11 Office staff will rate your **meeting records** out of 7.

Your teacher will rate your team's performance and success out of 100. This score will be added to your other scores.

If you think that a score allocated by someone other than the teacher is unfair or inaccurate, you can appeal against it. You must provide evidence and have the support of one other person involved in your assessment, such as a team member.

The appeal will be conducted in private by your teacher. Similarly your teacher reserves the right to adjust any of the ratings from others but he/she must talk to you first.

Teacher notes

The Focus

Much of today's work and business is done through contract arrangements. It is necessary therefore, that young people understand both sides of the equation.

- How do you contract others?
- What is it like to be contracted?

There is scope for developing:

- communication skills, both verbal and written
- planning and organisational skills
- financial management
- crisis management
- interpersonal skills

The following concepts can be examined in detail:

- mutuality
- partnership
- collaboration

By providing the senior citizens with a 'gift' (party), students are able to develop personal growth, especially in areas such as:

- empathy
- fellowship
- values awareness
- family

Much can be learned through examining the activities of their contractors. For example, with the making and selling of packs a number of matters can be explored, such as:

- production processes
- value of prototypes
- occupational health and safety
- methods of marketing
- nostalgia as a market
- the appeal of natural products

Recommendations

The whole business of contracting other class groups can be messy... hence the importance of good contracts.

Given the contracting involved, the Party could be less than a grand success. This is okay, as long as the home knows that it could happen. The home will still get their decorations. Students will learn a great deal, regardless of the party. Nevertheless it is critical the staff and residents understand that primarily the whole undertaking is about learning.

Whatever happens, do not readily rescue the students and the project.

It is particularly hard for teachers to resist the temptation of unduly interfering and influencing. This is especially the case with the more public undertakings. Remember, you can easily rob the students of valuable learning. Your job is to extract the learning! Your only other job is supervision and regulation.

Make it abundantly clear that **all adults** involved are only there to offer advice, in as much as they raise questions and help students to clarify their own thinking. The task is 'drawing out' rather than 'putting in'. Under no circumstances should they make decisions or do work for students. Point out that the learning is finding the answers not being given them.

Also be wary of teachers, associated with the contracted groups, taking charge. Come to some agreement with them about how you will facilitate and supervise the project. A common understanding and purpose is critical. Do not allow the students to enter into arrangements with other classes where the relationship is not 'committed'.

Making it easier:

- Where it is not practical to involve a choir from another school, allow the students to seek one in the local community or a musical group.
- It may be more practical to have a single Supply Contractor, who both makes and sells the Christmas packs.

Devise **an assessment regime** for the Main Contractor team. Help the teachers involved with the Supply Contractors teams to do the same if they wish.

If the school commits to a system of **real rewards**, genuine attempts must be made to **honour** rewards students have earned. See the appendix for details.

Ensure that all groups involved have a copy of this challenge, including

- the home
- teachers
- contract teams
- head and deputy head teachers
- the choir and their school

The following describes one way you can **use the bar code**.

In pairs, students discuss the topic, such as the example below. Then each individual shades the top bar to express her/his current opinion. Next all bars are placed closely together on the wall to make one large graph. The bars are placed vertically or horizontally. The graph can be recorded on a computer. To show any changes in opinion the students complete the graph at the end of the project.

I can influence decisions made in a group

no	at the beginning		
	at the end		yes

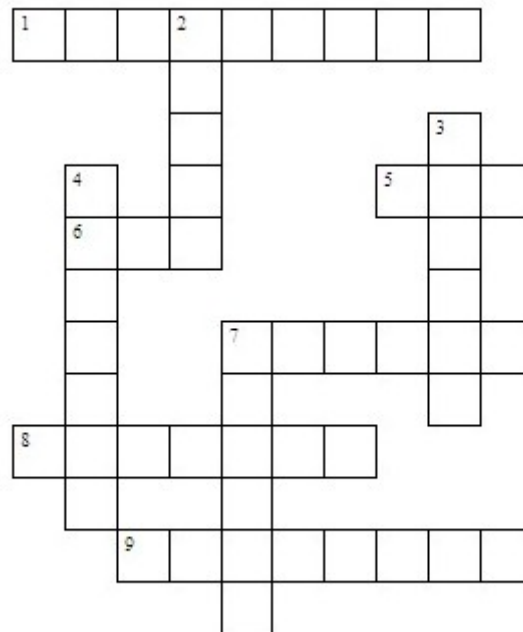
Review-Reflection-Generalisation

Review - Reflection - Generalisation (RRG) is fundamental to learning from first-hand experience. Without it at least a third of the potential learning is lost. Videoing activities such as meetings, always provides a good basis for discussion. In addition use strategies described in the appendix to stimulate RRG before, during and after the project.

Some other activities include:

- focussing students' attention on the assessment requirements at the beginning and other points
- completing the bar codes
- including others (e.g. management and residents of the home and contractors) in the debriefing
- completing **The Looking Back** - handout individually and then in pairs before it is considered by the whole group

Handout – Making Contracts



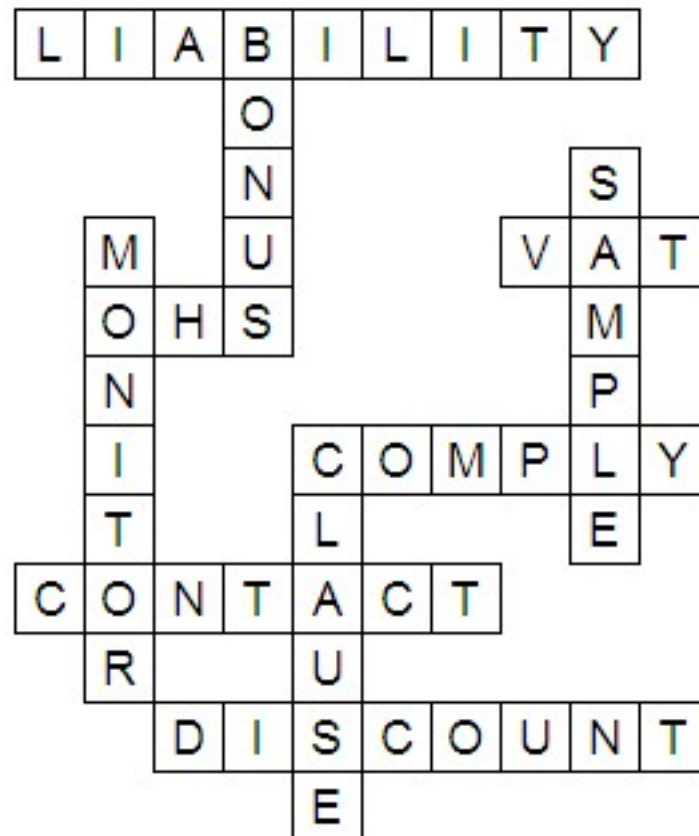
ACROSS

1. Someone must take responsibility for things that go wrong and cause harm. The contractor says who has 'this'.
5. Put cows' milk in, must include in contract.
6. Working in a safe way.
7. Obeying industry product standards, e.g. size of toys.
8. You talk to him because he is the ... person.
9. You pay less because you buy lots of them.

DOWN

2. Extra money ... sounds like something a dog would chew.
3. See what they are like.
4. Keep an eye on. Computers need one and you need to do it to your contract.
7. Part of Father Christmas's name. Number them so people know the one to which one you are referring. How you describe things on your contract. They need to be numbered.

Making Contracts



Handout - Looking Back

1. Giving is better than receiving.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

2. Young people don't care much about older people.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

3. Our teacher lacked confidence in us.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

4. It was the best fun I have had at school this year.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

5. We couldn't have completed the project without the help of our senior advisers.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

6. The contractors knew exactly what they were doing.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

7. I'd rather be contracted than contract others.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

8. Our contracts were the best we could do.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

9. We worked really well together.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree