



# Teaching & learning round up

## Teachers share more ideas on remote teaching and learning from our #VirtualValley

In this week's teaching and learning round-up we share some of the fantastic, innovative, and inspirational approaches being used from the **drama**, **German**, **chemistry**, **DT** and **biology** departments.

### Drama - Miss Williams

Since the start of the first lockdown, the department quickly became very aware of how unforgiving remote learning can be for a practical and creative subject such as drama that thrives on spontaneity, relationships, and group dynamics. The first solution was to flip the curriculum plan to accommodate the theoretical components for all drama students, as this suited the digital remote environment most appropriately, but with the ongoing changing landscape and the continuance of lockdown conditions, we saw it as a necessity to retain the creative and organic nature of our subject. Drama encourages creative ownership and independence, and to digitalise our approach to our subject too much would be to limit this. Therefore, we investigated a digital style that still allowed the student to adopt a 'Maker Mindset' in an environment that mimics the physical drama classroom as closely as possible. For a successful drama lesson in both the real world and the remote world, it is essential that there is active engagement from each individual student and so, as a department this term, we embarked on a diverse range of project-based theatrical activities that have seen the students participate as: creators, performers, directors, designers, problem solvers, explorers, project managers, risk takers and interactive thinkers, to name but a few key skills in drama (and in life).

We have seen Years 10 to Upper Sixth continue with exam content in the form of monologue performance work. The Drama Department made 'Doodle Videos' to support the instructional delivery of the chosen

theatre practitioner, which usually needs a workshop environment, to help give structure to the students' independent rehearsals. Students have worked both on screen in 1-2-1s with staff, and in small 'study buddy' rehearsal groups, as well as off screen independently, whilst videoing their progress for reflection.





Six O'clock News interviewing one of the King's Men in Nursery Rhyme Town!

Year 9 drama students have been exploring Brechtian Theatre through group performance work in both breakout rooms and assigned breakout channels. Students have used the assigned breakout channels to rehearse news reports and courtroom dramas, whilst using Brechtian Theatre Techniques. Once the performances were ready, the students either performed live to the class, by using the 'pin' or 'spotlight' function, or performances were recorded in the channels by the students for assessment and premiered by the teacher to the class in a later lesson.

Year 8s have further developed their media skills acquired during the first lockdown through a project-based consolidation task for the Hidden Homeless scheme of work. Students used an animation of The Little Matchstick Girl as a stimulus to create, direct, perform, film and edit their own charity-style video to raise awareness of the number of young people affected by homelessness in the UK today. The remote learning environment has given Year 8 students the additional opportunity to take the final performance product to a platform that mimics the professional platform used by charity companies, linking the teaching and learning directly to the world in which we live.



First scene: Princess enters into forest.

Second scene: Princess sees the King Frog



HeLLo! AHhhhAa, Wwwwherree am I?



PheW its only you!

Year 7 Shoebox Model Theatre designs – one with a real live tortoise!

For Year 7s, at the start of their theatrical journeys at Woldingham, remote learning has provided the department with the opportunity to broaden the students' theatrical horizons by allowing them to experiment with a range of additional

pathways to acting. Students have created 'Shoebox Model Theatres' and written 'Alphabet Scripts' to name but a few. Year 7 students have also been keen to extend this creative diversity, through their participation in our extra-curricular drama activities such as playwriting, film making, dance and West End Wold rehearsals.



Dance with Attitude – street dance & contemporary class

Blending the digital world with the practical world of drama in this way for all drama students, from Year 7 to the Upper Sixth, whilst encouraging retro-style organic project-based skills away from the screen, has allowed students to feel safe and secure and to thrive in what could have been a very alien environment. What we have seen so far is a high level of creativity and ownership, which has in turn empowered the students. In many cases, students have discovered skills and areas of interest that they might not have realised otherwise.

## German - Herr Ceska & Frau Haythorne

The German department's transition to online in 2021 was smoother than in the first wave as we were able to build on all the experiences of last year. In addition, over the summer, we took the opportunity to participate in a course organised by Bishopsgate Institute to gather some ideas about how other institutions approach teaching online from the perspective of a student. The general conclusion is that two or three shorter activities and a discussion as a summary at the end was the best way to go.

In teaching online, we decided to keep certain habits from the classroom, including using exercise books. The familiar routines of writing the date and a title in our books and a couple of notes on each topic reassure students about the continuity of learning. As a result, the exercise book has become more of a notebook, where students add new vocabulary and expressions that we come across during our sessions. In addition to the continuity, students also learn to be more independent in their note taking. Students can always access it and just turn the page if they want to look for information they noted in a previous session. We always have the chat sidebar open to remind students of the spelling of a new or a complicated word. We also use the chat sidebar for suggestions, brainstorming and independent questions. For exercises to mark we use OneNote.

In our experience, many students feel more comfortable speaking online than in a classroom – the fact that they are in their rooms on their own can support their self-confidence. And in smaller groups, students can find they are able to be more creative and ready to expand on their answers. There are advantages to online learning in some circumstances and for some students.



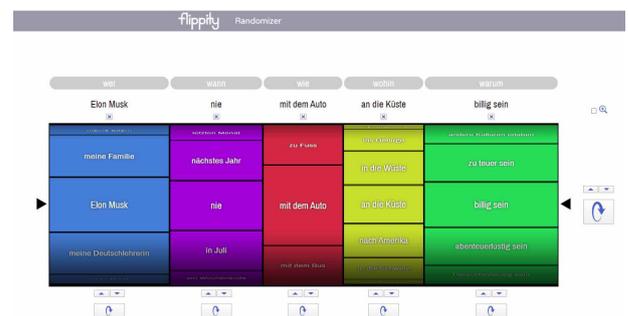
Students also like sharing their presentations and recordings. The home environment opens a whole new world of vocabulary. For example, we don't ask them what is in their school bags but rather what is on their desk. We don't speak about our classroom but about their room.

Among the more creative tasks, students have recorded themselves presenting their hobbies, their collections of magazines, vinyl records or preparing their breakfasts in German and showing us their pets. For vocabulary learning

we now promote creating vocabulary cards or mind maps with pictures as we believe it helps them to focus on an activity which is not computer based. They also have Languageut learning programme or Quizlet where they can learn vocabulary expressions and grammar on their own and compete

for points with their schoolmates. For example, Frau Haythorne's Year 11 students were put into breakout rooms to work with a partner using the "Randomiser". They practised jumping between different tenses, spinning the coloured barrels to give a random sequence of sentence prompts. Apparently, Elon Musk never takes his car to the coast just because it's cheap!

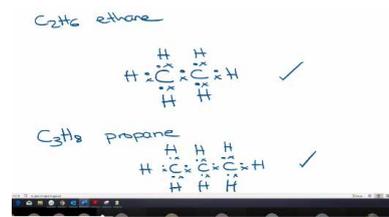
Our German Assistant, Frau Hufnagel, is continuing her conversation classes with GCSE years and A Level students and works with our bilingual students. They work with e-books and audiobooks so students can strengthen their listening and spelling skills. The written summaries of the material they have read or listened to are also discussed. In addition, the website Diktat-Truhe offers a range of dictations for all levels. Students listen to the dictations on their own and correct what they have written themselves using the solution page. It gives the students listening, writing, and spelling practise, as well as the opportunity to reflect on their own written work.



## Chemistry - Miss Gallagher

The Chemistry department continues to embrace remote teaching and learning and has adapted and developed skills using new technologies. Here are a few examples of activities we are using to help promote progress in lessons:

- **Practical demonstrations** – Chemistry teachers have been into school to set up and record demonstrations of some of the core GCSE and A Level required practicals to help encourage high levels of engagement and understanding in lessons.



- **New Wacom pen** – Chemistry teachers are still able to draw diagrams and write equations easily with the use of their new digital pens. This helps teachers to model answers and carefully work through the key steps to aid student understanding.

Chemistry teachers have tried to challenge students by frequently giving them the opportunity to deepen their thinking and encouraging more independent learning opportunities. The breakout function on Teams allows for peer teaching and group work, enabling students to try to tackle a problem together first before the teacher discusses the solution with them.



- **Breakout rooms and personalised channels** –



- **Kahoot** – Chemistry teachers are using Kahoot to help students reinforce challenging content, prepare for end of topic tests and quickly identify gaps in their knowledge.

Miss Kelly has been extremely busy and created a dedicated chemistry website for all of our GCSE and A Level students. She has tutorials on every topic and exam-style questions to build confidence for assessments.

- **Chemvids.co.uk** –



- **Co-curricular lectures** – Chemistry Society has access to pre-recorded lectures and talks from Oxford, Sussex and Liverpool Universities, to name just a few. Sixth Formers have been encouraged to watch these and discuss the wide range of different topics covered.

## Design and Technology - Mrs Wilkinson

Having lost the ability to use department equipment and machinery and do much of what we love and do best, we had to think long and hard about how we can inspire students at home. Being a creative department, which thrives on problem solving, we came up with some overnight changes to our curriculum:

**Year 7** began 2021 by entering the competition 'Put a sock in it' – The 'Oh Deer' sock challenge. The students rose to the challenge and created some creative and funky designs for a pair of socks. Well done to the seven girls whose designs were selected for the external competition. The Year 7 students have now raided their house for 'junk', explored the six Rs in Sustainability and are about to undergo the iterative development and modelling of a desk tidy through upcycling.

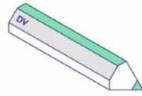




Bringing the business of design to life with Deutsche Bank

Design Ventura Online Mini Challenge for year 7 and year 8 students!

Design a product for the Design Museum Shop for your chance to win a prize.



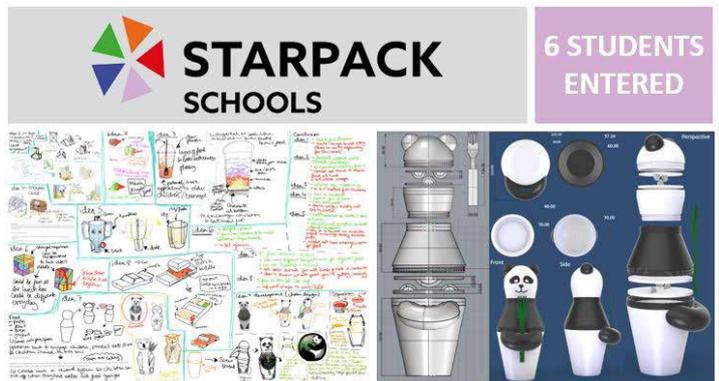
Year 8 students completed the manufacture of 'point of sale' display stands using scissors and cardboard rather than laser cutters, vinyl cutters and acrylic. They produced some fantastic models. We are now making a start on designs for the Design Museum's Design Ventura competition, which is very exciting! Fingers are crossed for some competition success.

Year 9 students have researched into 'dropshipping' and mass customisation of products and have investigated a company to create biomimicry (nature-inspired) designs. They produced a highly creative range of designs and many students showed entrepreneurial potential!

With Year 10 we have taken the opportunity to focus on some of the theory content after the disappointment of needing to delay their main GCSE warm-up projects (again). To bring some excitement back in, we set the students the Dyson chair challenge and enjoyed seeing Bella's tortoise star as our first animal to test a product of this nature.

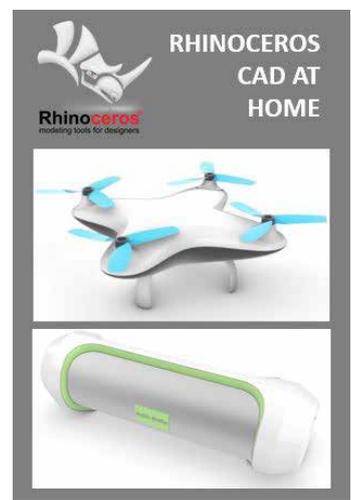


Lower Sixth students got their packaging projects ready for submission to the Starpack Awards. We have had success in this competition in the past and are hopeful of more because we have some particularly outstanding entries this year. Students are now about to analyse the materials and performance of a sledge after watching a video of their teacher sledging. They will then redesign a performance upgrade to the polypropylene sledge, having investigated composite materials.



GCSE and A Level – After much disappointment at being denied the chance to produce working prototypes this year for their NEA, our students have shown much resilience and are about to start modelling using materials available at home to make the closest thing to a prototype that they can. One particularly keen student, Grace, has ordered resin casting materials from America to ensure she can make something suitable at home.

Software – It seemed sensible to make use of the opportunity to deliver software remotely. The IT team rose to the challenge and enabled us to set up software licenses to work remotely – a huge thank you to the IT Team. Smile in Year 10 set the ball rolling with some impressive modelling of a speaker and a drone.



## Biology - Mrs Baldwin

**Extracting DNA in science lessons** – Year 8 students are discovering what makes them who they are as part of their topic of inheritance. Year 8 had a virtual lesson in their teacher's kitchen, where they watched an experiment that extracted DNA from fruit. The girls were invited to repeat the experiment at home too...



Having seen what DNA looked like the girls then built DNA models.

