

Key Stage 3 website project: six-lesson unit plan

Years 7 to 9 | Six lessons of 45 to 60 minutes | Built to run in PagePal, adaptable to any website tool

Curriculum statements covered

National curriculum in England, computing programmes of study (DfE, 2013). Pupils should be taught to:

- *“Undertake creative projects that involve selecting, using, and combining multiple applications, preferably across a range of devices, to achieve challenging goals, including collecting and analysing data and meeting the needs of known users.”*
- *“Create, re-use, revise and re-purpose digital artefacts for a given audience, with attention to trustworthiness, design and usability.”*
- *“Understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy.”*

Unit outcome

Each pupil publishes a multi-page website for a named user, planned from wireframes, tested with a user and revised, with design choices justified against usability.

Success criteria for pupils

- I have identified a known user and written a one-sentence brief for them.
- My information architecture is planned before I build: pages, sections and navigation.
- My site meets the brief and is usable on a phone as well as a computer.
- My design choices (colour, contrast, hierarchy) are justified against usability.
- My content is accurate, in my own words, and I can say where it came from.
- I have tested my site with a user and revised it in response to their feedback.
- I can explain what should not be published and why.

Lesson sequence

Lesson 1: Audience, purpose and a usability audit

Objective	Evaluate real sites against usability and trustworthiness criteria.
Starter (5-10 min)	One minute test: open an unfamiliar site, find a specific fact, time it. Discuss what helped or hindered.
Main activity	Pupils audit two contrasting sites against a rubric covering navigation, hierarchy, readability, mobile layout and trust signals. Introduce the project brief and the known user.
Plenary (5-10 min)	Class agrees a usability rubric to be reused in lesson 6.
Assessment evidence	Completed audit with judgements justified against the rubric.

Lesson 2: Information architecture and wireframes

Objective	Plan a multi-page site that meets the needs of a known user.
Starter (5-10 min)	Card sort: given 12 content items, group them into pages and name the pages.
Main activity	Pupils write a one-sentence brief for their known user, then sketch wireframes for each page: section order, what each section does, and the call to action. Sources for content and images are recorded.
Plenary (5-10 min)	Peer critique of one wireframe against the brief.
Assessment evidence	Brief, wireframes and source list.

Lesson 3: Building and structuring content

Objective	Select, use and combine content to build to a plan.
Starter (5-10 min)	Model building one section from a wireframe, thinking aloud about section choice.
Main activity	Pupils build the primary page, choosing section types that match their wireframe rather than accepting defaults. Content is drafted for the user, not copied.
Plenary (5-10 min)	Exit ticket: which section type did you reject, and why?
Assessment evidence	Primary page built to the wireframe.

Lesson 4: Navigation, buttons and secondary pages

Objective	Build coherent navigation and calls to action across a multi-page site.
Starter (5-10 min)	Discuss the difference between navigation and a call to action.
Main activity	Pupils build the remaining pages, add button sections linking to internal pages or an approved external source, and test every route through the site.
Plenary (5-10 min)	Route test with a partner: can they complete the task in the brief?
Assessment evidence	Complete site structure with tested navigation.

Lesson 5: Design, accessibility and responsiveness

Objective	Apply design principles and check the product works for different users and devices.
Starter (5-10 min)	Contrast demonstration: the same text on four backgrounds. Which fail and why?
Main activity	Pupils refine colour, hierarchy and image use, then preview at phone, tablet and computer width and fix what breaks. Introduce accessibility basics: contrast, meaningful headings, describing images in the surrounding text.

Plenary (5-10 min)	Record one accessibility improvement made and its reason.
Assessment evidence	Annotated before and after of one design decision.

Lesson 6: User testing, revision and publication

Objective	Revise and re-purpose a digital artefact in response to user feedback.
Starter (5-10 min)	Recap the class usability rubric from lesson 1.
Main activity	Pupils test their site with a partner acting as the known user, record three findings, then make revisions. Final proofread, then submit to the teacher for review and approval.
Plenary (5-10 min)	Compare a before and after screenshot and explain the change to the class.
Assessment evidence	Test findings, evidence of revision, submitted site and teacher review note.

Adapting for your class

- Bridge to Key Stage 4: frame the unit as preparation for the OCR Cambridge National in Creative iMedia interactive digital media unit, or the Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology user interface component.
- Assessment: mark against the class usability rubric rather than the finished look, so planning and revision carry the weight.
- Stretch: require a data element, for example a survey result presented as a simple table or a set of findings summarised for the user.
- Support: supply the brief and wireframe template so pupils start from a structure and focus on content and design.

Online safety and publishing

Cover online identity and privacy explicitly: what a public page reveals, why surnames and locations stay off, and how to report concerns. Pupil sites remain private until a member of staff reviews and approves them, and published pupil sites are set so search engines do not list them.

Teacher checklist before publishing

- No personal identifying details of pupils or third parties
- Images are original or cleared for use, with sources recorded
- Claims of fact are attributable to a named source
- Site works at phone width as well as on a computer
- Navigation tested end to end

PagePal is a classroom website builder from Greyphox Digital Ltd. Teachers create pupil logins with no pupil email addresses, pupils build by clicking straight onto the page, and nothing is published until a member of staff has reviewed and approved it. Free for up to 10 pupil accounts at pagepal.school.