

Year Groups
Years 6

Aspect of D&T
Electrical systems
Focus
More complex switches and circuits

What could children design, make and evaluate?
vehicle alarm security lighting system
alarm for valuable artefact
automatic nightlight electrical board game
alarm for school shed other – specify

Intended users
vehicle owner themselves
school community school administrator
younger children siblings parents
museum curator other – specify

Purpose of products
safety protection security detection warning
comfort illumination entertainment

Health and safety
Pupils should be taught to work safely, using tools, equipment, materials, components and techniques appropriate to the task. Risk assessments should be carried out prior to undertaking this project.

Project title
Design, make and evaluate a _____ (product) for _____ (user) for _____ (purpose).

Possible contexts
home school community culture
leisure enterprise business

Possible resources
zinc carbon or zinc chloride batteries, crocodile leads, bulbs, bulb holders, buzzers, light emitting diodes (LEDs), micro switches, reed switches and magnets, light dependent resistors (LDRs), wire, automatic wire strippers, masking tape, construction materials and tools as required

computer control software and interface boxes or standalone boxes, connecting leads

Key vocabulary
series circuit, parallel circuit, names of switches and components, input device, output device, system, monitor, control, program, flowchart

function, innovative, design specification, design brief, user, purpose

Key learning in design and technology
Prior learning
• Understanding of the essential characteristics of a series circuit and experience of creating a battery-powered, functional, electrical product.
• Initial experience of using computer control software and an interface box or a standalone box, e.g. writing and modifying a program to make a light flash on and off.

Designing
• Use research to develop a design specification for a functional product that responds automatically to changes in the environment. Take account of constraints including time, resources and cost.
• Generate and develop innovative ideas and share and clarify these through discussion.
• Communicate ideas through annotated sketches, pictorial representations of electrical circuits or circuit diagrams.

Making
• Formulate a step-by-step plan to guide making, listing tools, equipment, materials and components.
• Competently select and accurately assemble materials, and securely connect electrical components to produce a reliable, functional product.
• Create and modify a computer control program to enable an electrical product to work automatically in response to changes in the environment.

Evaluating
• Continually evaluate and modify the working features of the product to match the initial design specification.
• Test the system to demonstrate its effectiveness for the intended user and purpose.
• Investigate famous inventors who developed ground-breaking electrical systems and components.

Technical knowledge and understanding
• Understand and use electrical systems in their products.
• Apply their understanding of computing to program, monitor and control their products.
• Know and use technical vocabulary relevant to the project.

Investigative and Evaluative Activities (IEAs)

- Using research, discuss a range of relevant products that respond to changes in the environment using a computer control program such as automatic nightlights, alarm systems, security lighting e.g. *Who have the products been designed for and for what purpose? How and why is a computer control program used to operate the products? What input devices, e.g. switches, and output devices, e.g. bulbs, have been used?*
- Investigate electrical sensors such as light dependent resistors (LDRs) and a range of switches such as push-to-make switches, push-to-break switches, toggle switches, micro switches and reed switches. To gain an understanding of how they are operated by the user and how they work, ask the children to use each component to control a bulb in a simple circuit. Remind children about the dangers of mains electricity.
- Children could research famous inventors related to the project e.g. Thomas Edison – light bulb.

Focused Tasks (FTs)

- Through teacher demonstration and explanation, recap measuring, marking out, cutting and joining skills with construction materials that children will need to create their electrical products.
- Demonstrate and enable children to practise methods for making secure electrical connections e.g. using automatic wire strippers, twist and tape electrical connections, screw connections and connecting blocks.
- Drawing on science understanding, ask the children to explore a range of electrical systems that could be used to control their products, including a simple series circuit where a single output device is controlled, a series circuit where two output devices are controlled by one switch and, where appropriate, parallel circuits where two output devices are controlled independently by two separate switches.
- Drawing on related computing activities, ensure that children can write computer control programs that include inputs, outputs and decision making. Test out the programs using electrical components connected to interface boxes or standalone boxes.
- Teach children how to avoid making short circuits.

Design, Make and Evaluate Assignment (DMEA)

- Develop an authentic and meaningful design brief with the children.
- Ask the children generate innovative ideas by drawing on research and develop a design specification for their product, carefully considering the purpose and needs of the intended user.
- Communicate ideas through annotated sketches, pictorial representations of electrical circuits or circuit diagrams. Drawings should indicate the design decisions made, including the location of the electrical components and how they work as a system with an input, process and output.
- Produce detailed step-by-step plans and lists of tools, equipment and materials needed. If appropriate, allocate tasks within a team.
- Make high quality products, applying knowledge, understanding and skills from IEAs and FTs. Create and modify a computer control program to enable the product to work automatically in response to changes in the environment.
- Critically evaluate throughout and the final product, comparing it to the original design specification. Test the system to demonstrate its effectiveness for the intended user and purpose.

Related learning in other subjects

- Spoken Language** – ask relevant questions, give well-structured descriptions and explanations. Build technical vocabulary.
- Computing** – use technologies for research purposes and be discerning when evaluating digital content.
- Science** – apply knowledge and understanding of circuits, switches, conductors and insulators.

Related learning in other subjects

- Mathematics** – apply understanding and skill to carry out accurate measuring using standard units i.e. cm/mm.
- Science** – apply knowledge and understanding of circuits, switches, conductors and insulators.
- Computing** – design, write and debug programs that accomplish specific goals, including controlling physical systems. Use sequence, selection, and repetition in programs. Work with variables and various forms of input and output.

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Cultural Capital	
Visits and visitors We the curious Science museum	Experiences and events. Project/mini outcomes
Key Texts	Links https://www.data.org.uk/resource-shop/primary/electrical-control/alarming-vehicles-yr-456/ https://www.data.org.uk/resource-shop/primary/electrical-control/designing-and-making-alarm-circuits-using-inputs-with-computer-control/
Community events and links	Global issues Global warming
Famous People Thomas Edison	Life Skills problem-solving teamwork negotiation consumer awareness organisation motivation persuasion leadership perseverance