




# HAL Parents information Evening 2017



## The aims of the evening are to:

- Explain what it means to be a High Ability Learner (HAL) at Birchwood.
  - Introduce our TAG (Talented- Ambitious – Gifted) Programme, with current learners outlining some of the opportunities on offer to our Higher Ability Learners.
  - Introduce our exciting new TAG challenge passport.
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Good Evening and welcome to our High Ability Learner information evening.

My name is Lucy MacLaren and I am Deputy Head

My name is Richard Grimmer/Lucy MacLaren and I am Assistant Head with responsibility for High Ability learners and our TAG programme- Talented, Ambitious and Gifted.

It is lovely to see so many of you here tonight and in fact the event has proved so popular that we are running two events at the same time. For that reason you will see some of the learners and students leave or arrive throughout the next 60 minutes as they move across to speak at the other event.

Just a couple of bits of housekeeping before we begin. There isn't a fire drill planned and so if the alarm sounds I would ask you to leave from the fire doors at the back and to my right and assemble on the main yard. Could I also please ask you to ensure that your phone is either turned off or on silent.

The aims of the evening can be seen on the screen behind me. As well as stretching and challenging learners and students within lessons, we aim to offer a wide and varied range of wider opportunities. I hope that you find this evening both enjoyable and informative. Senior staff will be available at the end should you have any further questions or please add them to the evaluation form and we will get back to you.

So who are our High Ability learners or students?

They are those who achieved Level 5 in English and Maths at Primary school. Those in Year 7 this would have been 104 points or above in the SATS tests.

You might think why am I here/why is my child here? In a few cases they might even be not doing so well in school. Well this is about raising aspirations no matter current levels of performance. Rising to the challenge. Becoming the person that the learners really want to be.

Some learners may also be identified by one or more departments as a Talented learner. These are learners/students who show or have the potential for, advanced ability in creative arts and/or sport. This refers to the following subjects: Art, Design and Technology, Performing Arts and Sports.

It is the learners who are sat in front of us tonight who have the greatest potential to achieve the highest GCSE and A Level results. It is you who should be considering applying to the top, Red Brick, universities, and have the highest ambitions and aspirations for yourself. That is why you have been invited to join us here tonight because we share those aspirations for your future success. We want to ensure that you take all the opportunities that are on offer and push yourself to the full.

The A5 size leaflet details the events that you will hear about tonight plus many more that have recently been or are currently available. It is not always possible to give a definitive list of the opportunities available as these change so frequently and some are one-off events, however, our aim is to give you a taste of the things that you might do as you move through the school. I would just encourage the learners here to take part in as many of the opportunities described as possible.

I will leave the majority of the evening now to our learners and students who have come along tonight to tell you about the opportunities that they have grasped.

There are many learner leadership opportunities at the school including our learner officer team. Selection for this team at the end of Year 10 is a rigorous and challenging process. I'd like to start this evening off by handing you over to our head girl/head boy Fiona Baxter/ Matthew Kersey,



Head Boy/ Head Girl

Mathew Kersey/ Fiona Baxter

Good evening everyone.

I'm just going to talk briefly about how important KS3 is when preparing for you GCSEs and how thorough preparation can have a positive effect on your results, especially for high achieving learners.

I'm going to start with attendance as the more school days and lessons you are in for, the better your overall results will be and I think as high achieving learners these are things we want to aim for as much as possible. Good ALT scores are also a key factor for success as it shows good progress and dedication in lessons.

There are many opportunities running up until Year 9 which provide learners with skills they will use in the future. One example is the Life Programme, which provides team building and leadership skills at local businesses including Fiddlers Ferry, which I went to in Year 9. We worked as a group to create products which were sold to raise money for charity. As a school we also take part in the UKMT Math's Challenge, which I'm sure many of you have already taken part in or will do so in April.

Within KS3, you will learn the foundations of topics that you will study in more detail in KS4. Therefore, it's worth listening carefully in class and making detailed notes as this will help you to make the transitions between the key stages.

As high achieving students, a lot of focus will be put on your learning through the next few years, especially with the new GCSEs. So, it's important to also think about extra-



curricular activities and other events outside of school to make sure you enjoy your last few years at high school as, believe me, it goes a lot quicker than you may think. My advice would be to take all the opportunities you can as they will help you to achieve and progress further.

When entering KS4 you are given the opportunity to become a peer mentor, where your responsibility is to help the younger years settle into school and have someone to simply talk to. In Year 11 you can be a part of the learner officer team, which allows you to practice teamwork skills and learn how to lead a team when necessary.

Overall, I'm sure all of you will do well and succeed in KS4 as you've all made a great start in KS3.

## Bobby Hewitt

### Y13 Birchwood College Student



Booby Hewitt

A levels, university and Sporting success

Good evening. I'd expect that many of the learners here tonight would aim to attend university. It is my ambition once I have completed my A levels at Birchwood College. As part of the application process for university you have to complete what's called a UCAS application. This is a bit like a personal statement about yourself. To stand out you need to talk about more than academic success. It's often the wider life experiences that set you apart in a competitive word. I'd like to share with you a few extracts from my UCAS application.

When I look back over the exciting memories I've had in my lifetime so far, they mostly revolve around our astonishing natural world. Having travelled as part of the GB sailing team to many international competitions I've experienced some incredible things; getting hit by thunderstorms five miles off the coast of Germany or exploring some amazing river basins in Norway are among my favourites. During my travels I'm forever asking myself geographical questions about my surroundings and I've gained a true fascination with and love for our planet. My interest in the world around me has transferred into my academic studies and my earth science based A-Levels have given me a breadth of knowledge into the complex ocean, earth and environmental processes.

As part of my research I completed the 'Exploring our Oceans' online course created by the University of Southampton which I found extremely helpful. To widen my education further I've also attended physical geography open lectures at Liverpool Hope University, including one that discussed the question "Is the world becoming more hazardous?" Both the online course and lectures confirmed for me that my passion lies in these areas of academic study.

Competitive sailing has been a massive part of my life for longer than I can remember and since the age of eight I have been training and competing at local, national and international levels. The challenge of combining over 600 hours of intense training each year with my academic studies has made me a hardworking and driven individual, highly independent and organised, and capable of excellent time management. I've had many successes over the years including two back to back World Championship wins alongside a National and European title and while competing for the last two years in Youth classes I have been consistently ranked within the top three teams in Great Britain. The transferable skills I've obtained from sailing over the years such as team work and performing under pressure are invaluable.

I am hoping to continue to combine my love for earth sciences and sailing once at university, by progress through the RYA Squads up to Olympic level where my goal is to represent Great Britain in the 2024 Olympic Games.

Thankyou for listening.

# Youth Speaks



## Youth Speaks

Cara Moran (9JJ)

Niamh Talbot (9CH)

Rosa Downes (9CH)

**Rosa:** Good evening everyone, My name is Rosa Downes and this is Niamh Talbot and Cara Moran. We are all year 9 learners and are here to talk about an opportunity we were offered from school. This time last year, we were given the chance to participate in a public speaking competition called Youth Speaks.

**Niamh:** Within this competition we had to prepare a speech. The topic we chose to speak about was 'The impact of school sanctions'. I was the main speaker and spoke for 6 minutes, Rosa was the chairperson and spoke for four minutes and Cara gave the vote of thanks and spoke for 2 minutes. We went to the Bury town hall to give our speech in front of the other teams. The mayor visited, watched our speech and offered us feedback afterwards. We won the first round and as a result of this we were invited to Birchwood Golf Club and attended the Rotary Club meeting. We performed our speech for them and they gave us further feedback for improving our speech for the next round. The rotary club sponsored us during the competition and gave us a generous donation for the school.

**Cara:** Unfortunately we didn't get through the second round however we were kindly

rewarded with certificates and money by the Rotary Club. We would like to thank Mr Hamilton and Miss Fogg for guiding us through the process and providing us transport and other help. As well as this we thank the Rotary Club and the school for giving us the opportunity.

**Rosa:** Overall we had an amazing experience with Youth Speaks and we gained confidence and important communication skills. If you have the opportunity to take part to take part in Youth Speaks then we definitely recommend it. Thank you

## BBC School News



BBC Newsday

Rosie Wray (9KO)

Thomas Higham (8KH)

BBC school news day speech

**Tom:** Last year, some pupils from year 7 and 8 attended a club, run by Mr Hamilton, called BBC school news. We were asked to explore a variety of topics. These could have been from around school, locally or even globally. There were a number of groups and we discussed: the school show, the amount of sugar in school meals and how women are represented in the media. The 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2016 was BBC school news day. As a result of this, Rosie and I were invited to Broadcasting House in London, along with other schools from around the country to take part in this event. Out of all the schools, we had travelled the furthest.

**Rosie:** On the day of the trip, it was a very early start, and we had to meet Mr Hamilton at Bank Quay station at around 6am. We arrived at Euston station at about half 8 and we had to navigate our way across London using the underground. This was a new experience for us as we had never been to London before. We entered BBC and it was extremely busy with people constantly coming in and out. We were greeted by our guide and were taken up to the second floor. This was where we were told about what was going to happen throughout the day. We met Tony Hall who is the Director-General of the BBC, also known as the DG.

**Tom:** At about half 9, we were taken to a presentation about how to make high quality

videos. We were then able to practise it ourselves by filming from different angles. We then went back to the second floor to think of ideas of the topic that we were going to question the other schools opinions. We settled on 'the amount of sugar and salt that's in school meals and what schools should and shouldn't sell'.

**Rosie:** After that we went to talk to the education department. This is where we shared our ideas and we got some feedback on our final topic. After this we were ready to start filming. We went round asking the pupils of other schools what they thought of the matter. At about 1 o'clock we stopped for lunch. By this point we were both exhausted but we carried on because it was so interesting and exciting.

**Tom:** After we had finished lunch, we went to see a man who helped us put the video together. He helped us crop the bits that we didn't need and rearrange the footage so it flowed. When we thought it was perfect, we went back up to the education department to show them what we had produced. They were really impressed with our final product. We had about half an hour before we had to leave, so we were given a tour around the news room where all the computers are and we got to see what goes on during the filming of the news.

**Rosie:** At 4 o'clock it was time to go and we thanked everyone for an amazing experience. The train home wasn't until 7 o'clock so we were able to get a KFC and do some exploring around South Bank. My favourite part of the day was being able to see the computers in the background of the news, because I have always wondered if it was real or on a green screen.

**Tom:** My best moment was the same as Rosie but for a different reason. I just wanted to be in the same room as all the tech.

**Rosie:** If I had to sum the trip up in one word, I would say eye-opening. We learnt so many new things and I would do it again in a heartbeat. It was such a long day and by the end of it we were exhausted. We got off the train and practically slept walked down the platform to meet our mums. We would both like to thank Mr Hamilton for accompanying us on this fantastic adventure and also to Mrs Bryan for allowing us on this amazing trip. We both had a great time and it was really inspiring.



## Big Bang



### Big Bang

Chee Yin Liu (9CH)

Stan Cormack 9CH

Recently we, along with 2 other students, attended the Sellafield big bang competition for High Ability Learners. The competition was a STEM based challenge, STEM standing for science, technology engineering and maths . The task itself consisted of 2 parts-one, designing and constructing a model bridge and the other also to design and construct a model crane. Each of these assignments were given a set specification with limited resources, testing our maths and communication skills. Once completed, each model was tested on its strength and structure by adding weights on to the centre of each model. Points were awarded to the structures for every new weight added on to the model. As well as this, points were awarded for decoration and our presentation skills. Overall, I'm glad to say that our school won the competition and received £1000 going towards our science department.

Throughout the day, we learned the fundamentals of engineering and construction to further our knowledge in STEM. It was an engaging event that provided us with the opportunity that a high ability learner should receive.



## Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme



### Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Karen Hayes (11CO)

Georgia Cross (11CO)

**Georgia:** Hi my name is Georgia

**Karen:** And my name is Karen

**Georgia:** And we have come tonight to talk to you about the DofE scheme

**Karen:** The DofE program consists of four aspects, these include volunteering, physical, skill and the expedition.

**Georgia:** I did young leading for my volunteering, archery for my physical and tapestry for my skill, but obviously there are so many other options you could choose depending on your interests.

**Karen:** I found that my volunteering in a primary school links club has considerably improved my confidence and has helped me to develop a greater understanding of my future career path with children.

**Georgia:** For me the scheme was an opportunity to develop my map and camping skills from what I already knew from scouting.

**Karen:** And for me it was an opportunity to strengthen my friendships. However, we do still hold a grudge over the person who managed to convince us that we were going the wrong way.

**Georgia:** I would encourage you to take part as I believe that it is a great opportunity to gain several new skills or develop on current skills, contributes to a strong CV and allows

you to discover new things about yourself.

**Karen:** You can also have a weekend away from your family.

**Georgia:** Thank you for listening to what we have had to say and I hope that any of you that do DofE really enjoy it.











# Musical Break

Corey Sugden (9KO)  
Rosie Wray (9KO)

## Oxbridge



### Oxbridge University Visit

Ellis Bird (11DY)

Ellie Butler (11SC)

Ellie: Good evening everyone,

In 2016 me and Ellis along with 18 other learners had the amazing opportunity to visit 2 of the top universities in England. We had the experience of going to Cambridge and Oxford University for the day, participating in a range of activities such as a tour of the Oxford and Cambridge grounds and sitting through lectures on psychology, history and science.

Ellis: We had to get up at 5:30am to get to school for 6:00am and were on the road for roughly 4 hours. Once we had arrived we walked to the main halls of both Oxford and Cambridge, and there we were greeted by current students studying a range of different subjects. We met with other high achieving high school learners where we then learnt about the courses both universities had to offer. We participated in games and quizzes, interacting with different people from different schools as well as speaking to students at both Cambridge and Oxford about student life. We were told about student loans and how to manage, money wise, when we eventually make it to university.

Ellie: In the afternoon, we had our lectures, which gave us insight to the style of teaching at university and how it is different to the high school setting. The lectures were extremely interesting and a new experience for the majority of us who went to Cambridge and Oxford. We were able to ask questions which helped some of us decide on a career pathway we were interested in. For some of us it helped us acknowledge the pathways that we were considering, but ended up changing our minds about. We toured the grounds of Cambridge and Oxford, going to the various libraries within specific subjects as well as seeing the halls and places students congregate throughout the day.

Ellis: This experience for many of us opened our eyes to what other places apart from Warrington, Manchester and Liverpool have to offer. It gave us the push we needed to think about our post 18 future and inspired us to follow our career goals and dreams. Through the range of students studying various subjects like law and medicine to modern and medieval languages, it proved that there is something out there for everyone and therefore we should do what we feel passionate about.

Ellie: Speaking to students currently studying the courses and hearing about how everyday they wake up to go and learn about the things they love and aspire to be, was a realisation for some of us about how different university life is compared to way the way we live currently. For the majority of us, it was an incentive to push through our GCSEs so that we are able to study the courses we want later on in life. It taught us to work hard and never give up on our ultimate aims for the future, as it showed us how successful you can be when you are diligent and driven.

Ellis: We were privileged enough to spend a day experiencing things not many people will get to experience, so please don't turn down the chance, if you are ever lucky enough to visit either Cambridge or Oxford university. For us 20 learners, it inspired, motivated and influenced us to follow our dreams and it could do the same for you.





#### Worldwise Quiz

Nathan Bryan (9RC)

Owen Darbyshire (9CH)

James Rae 9CH

~OWEN: Hello and welcome to our presentation. We are Nathan, James and Owen from year 9 and we took part in the Geography world wise quiz. The geography department held a competition for year 8 and 9 to qualify for the World Wise Quiz. We formed a team and won the qualification round and took two teams competing with schools from all over the N.W. of England.~

JAMES: The winning Birchwood teams were our own and a Year 8 team. As winners we went on to represent the school at Chester University in the Geographical Association's World Wise quiz. We competed against 25 other schools from North West England and North Wales. The 2 hour quiz had 8 rounds, quizzing us on all things geography such as fieldwork, map skills and even the Rio Olympics!~

Nathan: Both the Birchwood teams did amazingly well. The year 8 team gave some tough competition and where the only year 8's to qualify for the Chester University final! Our year 9 team went on to finish 7th and we are really proud of our achievement~

Nathan: As you can tell we had a lot of fun.

James: We prepared a range of questions for you to answer. Lets see how you get on.

NATHAN: so there will be a picture hidden behind multiple squares and one by one we will reveal parts of the image.

James: Remember.No shouting out

Owen: Yep; that's correct the taj mahal

Nathan:Right again; the York minister

James: That's right it is the loch ness

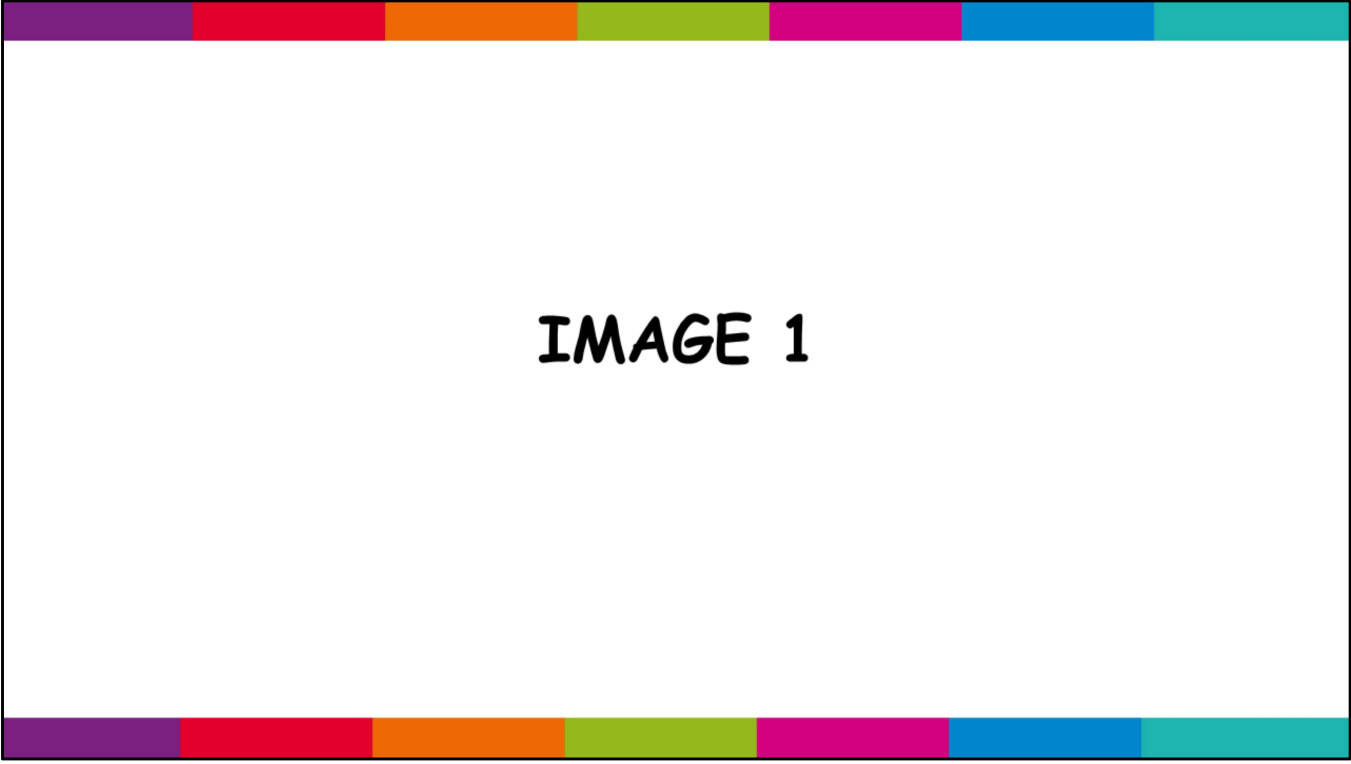
Nathan: Westbury white horse; correct

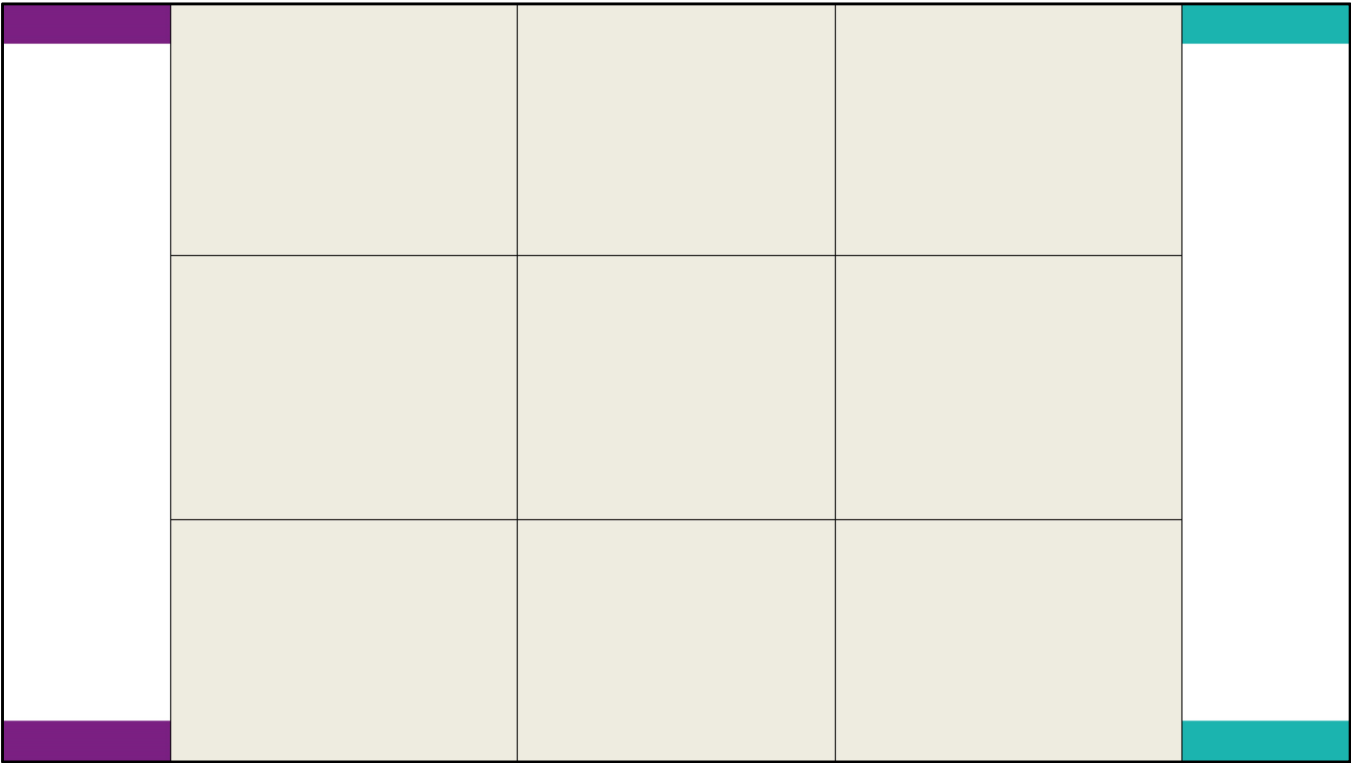
James: Yes last one was the liver building

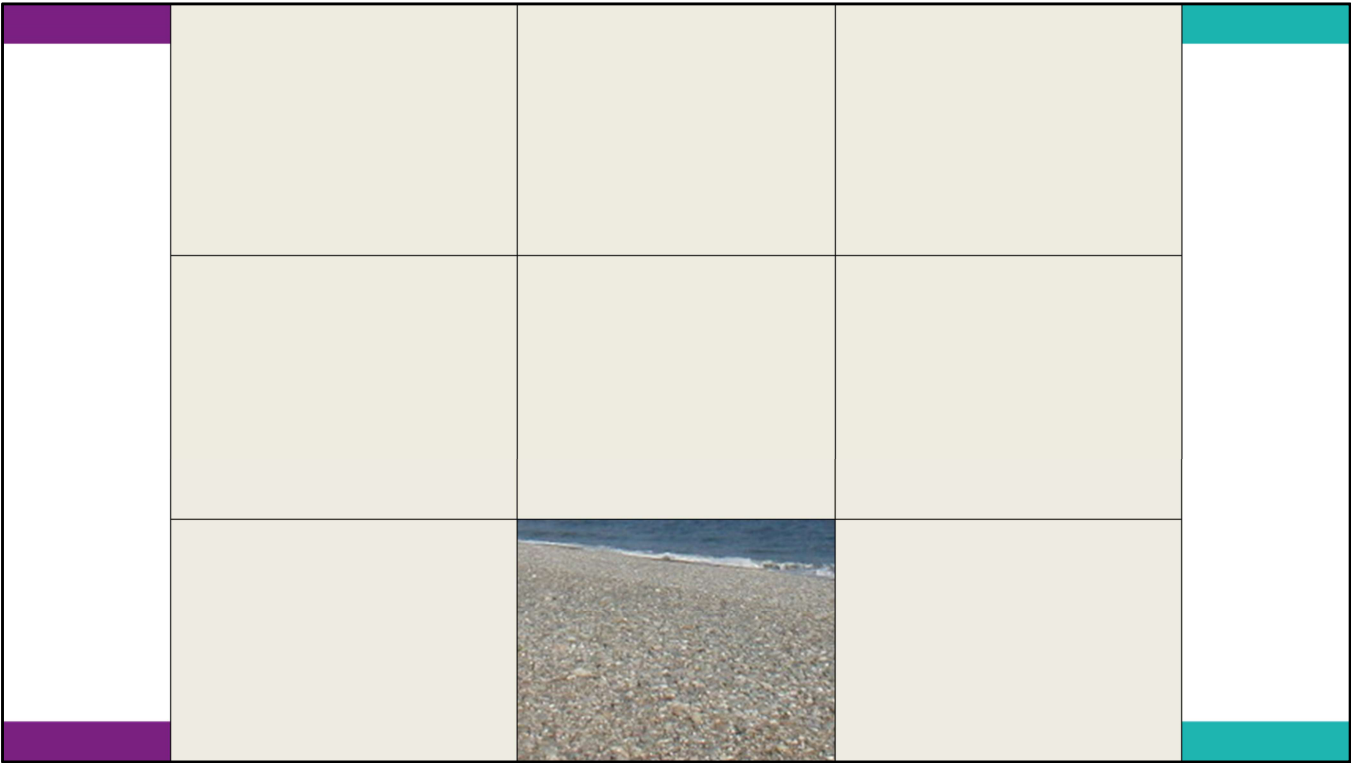
Owen: I hope You enjoyed our presentation and got a taste of what a high achieving learner means at birchwood. Thankyou.

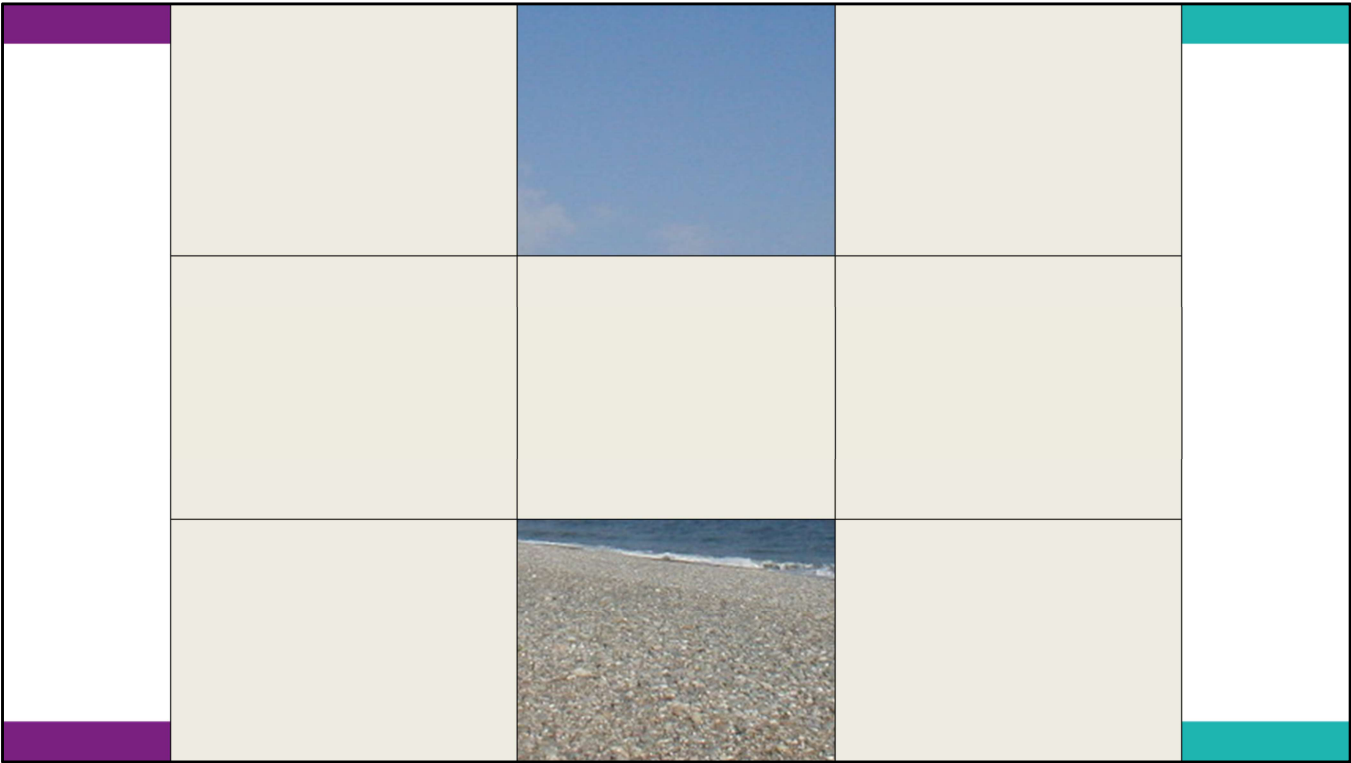


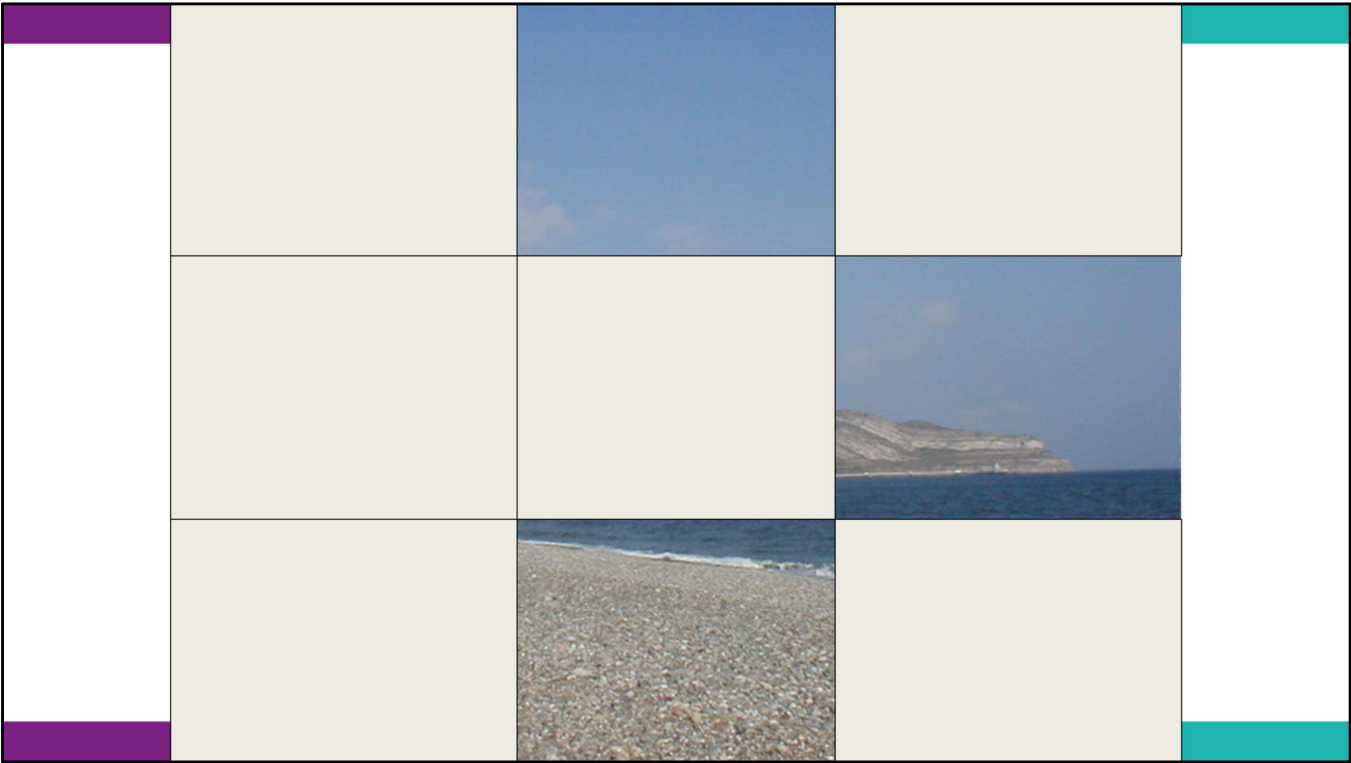
# Landmarks of the UK Round







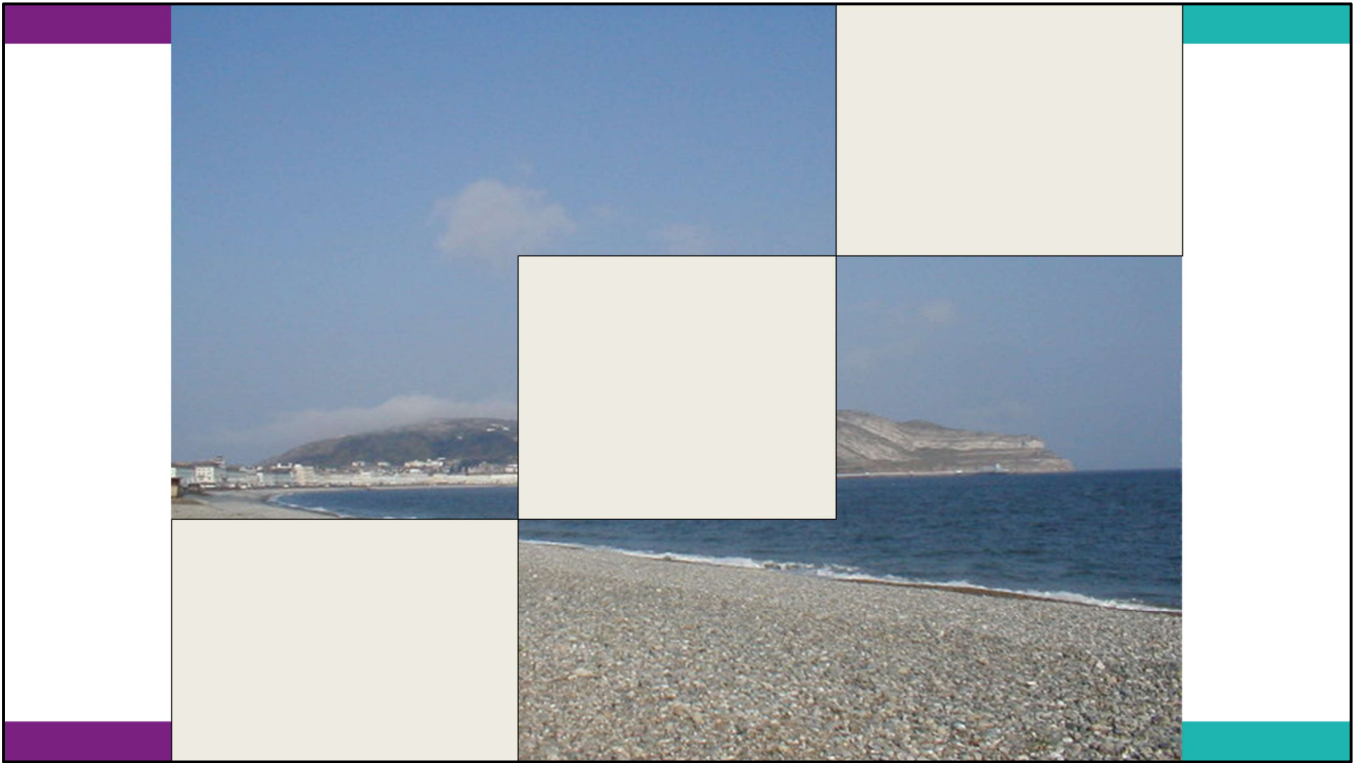








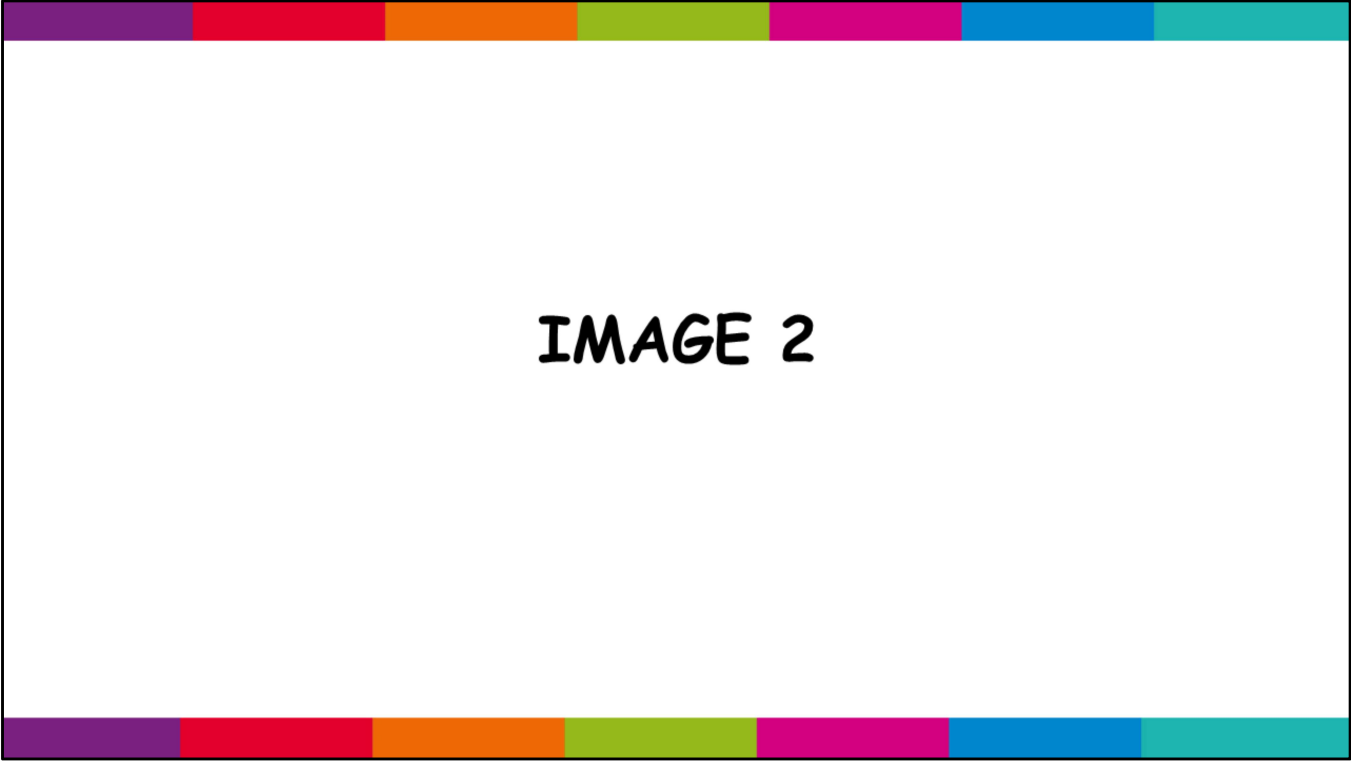


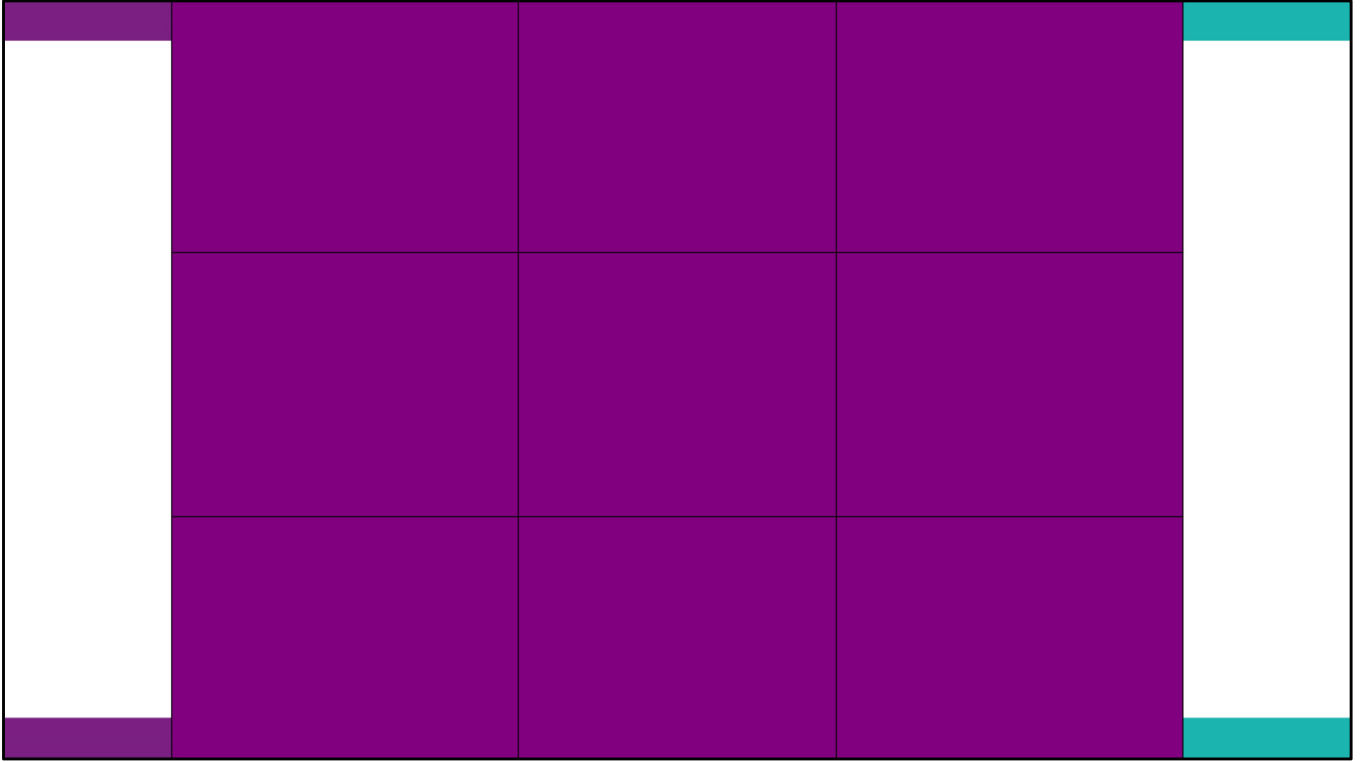




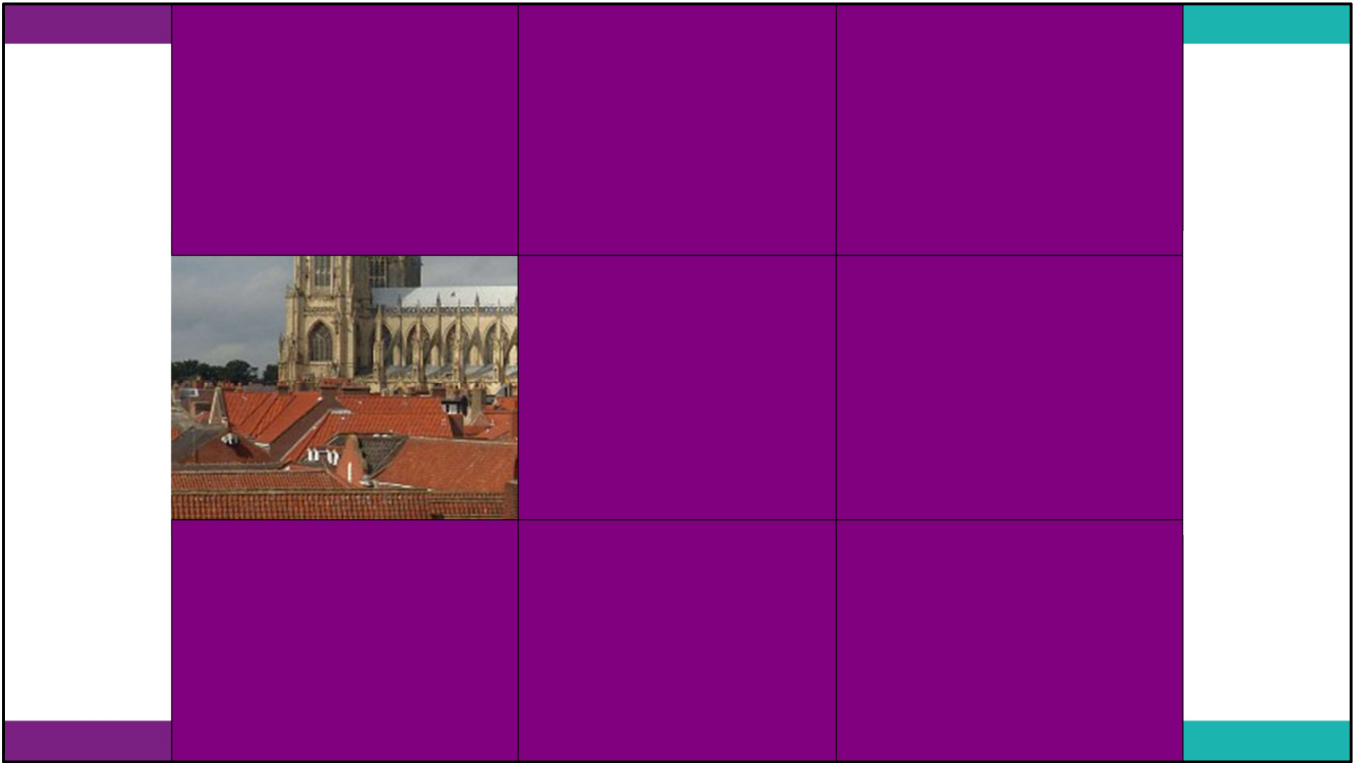


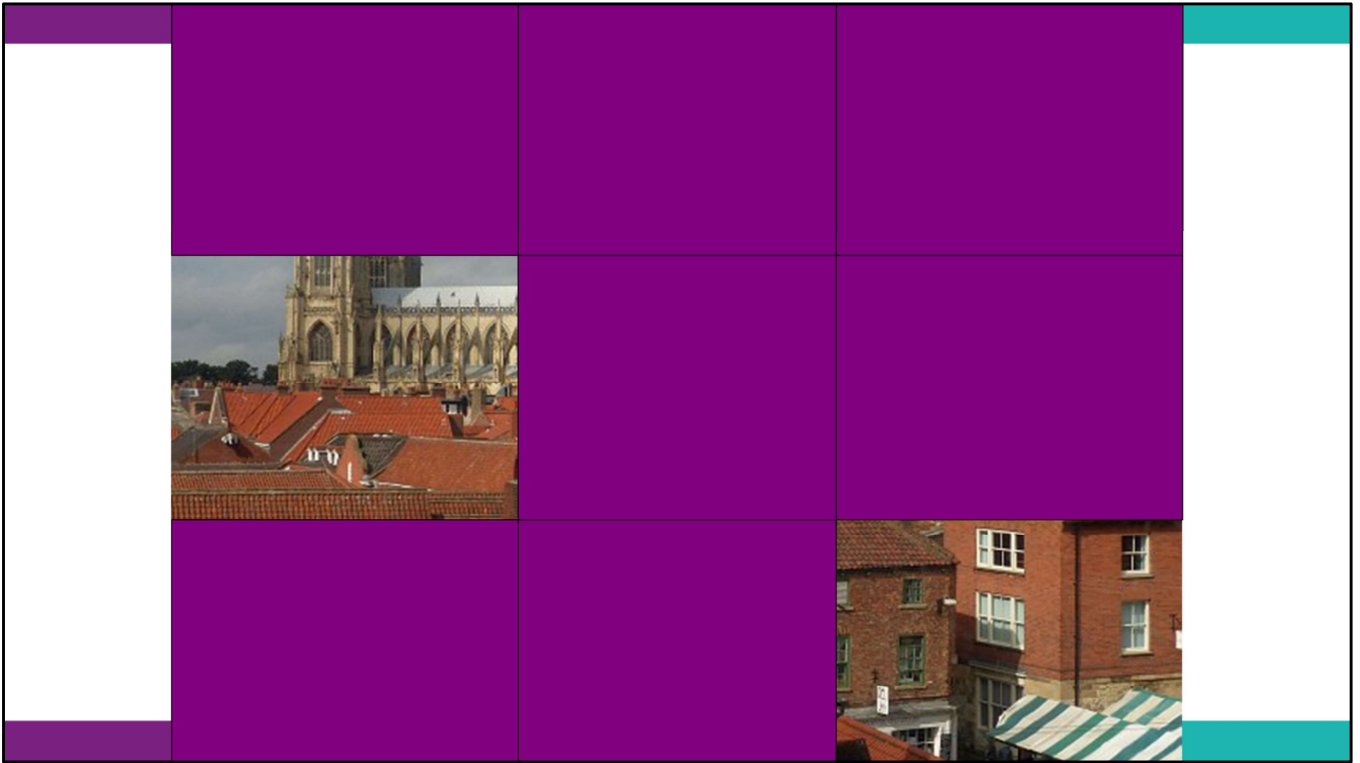


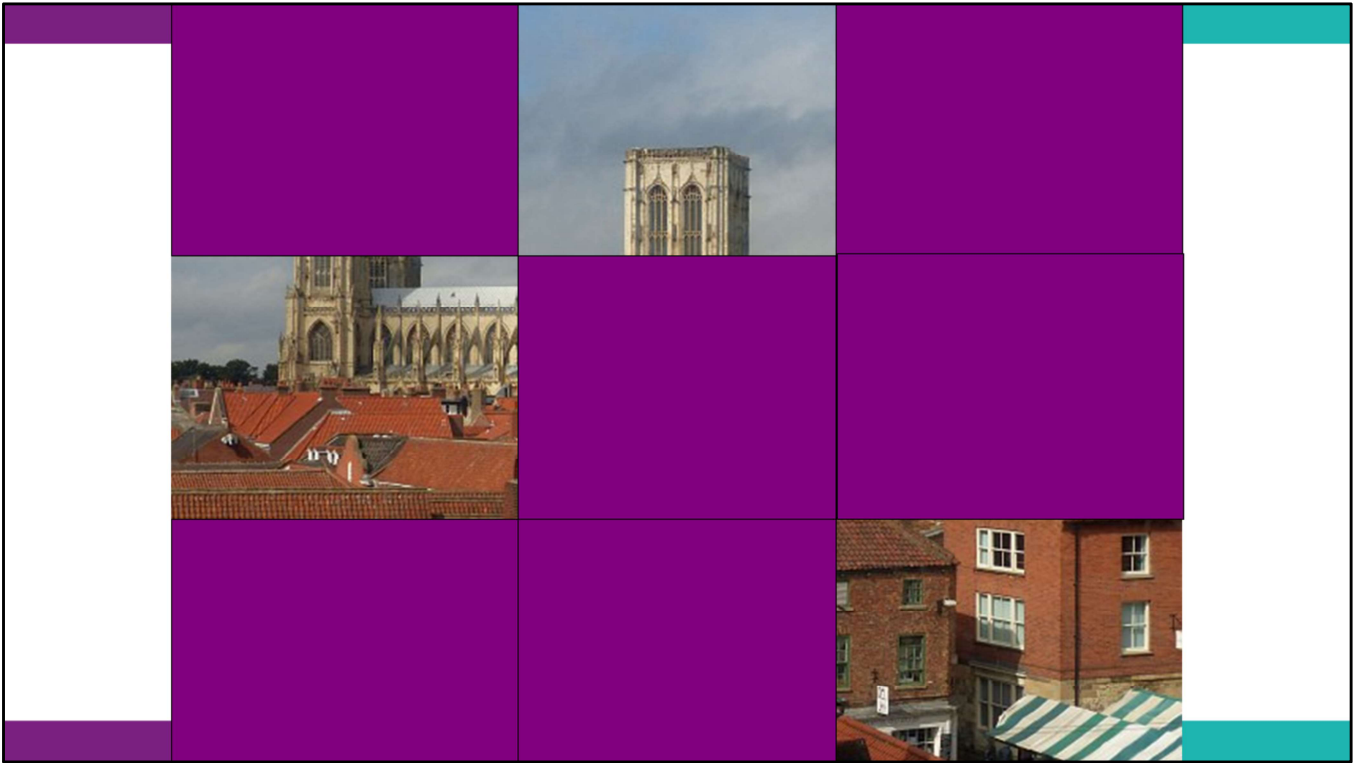
















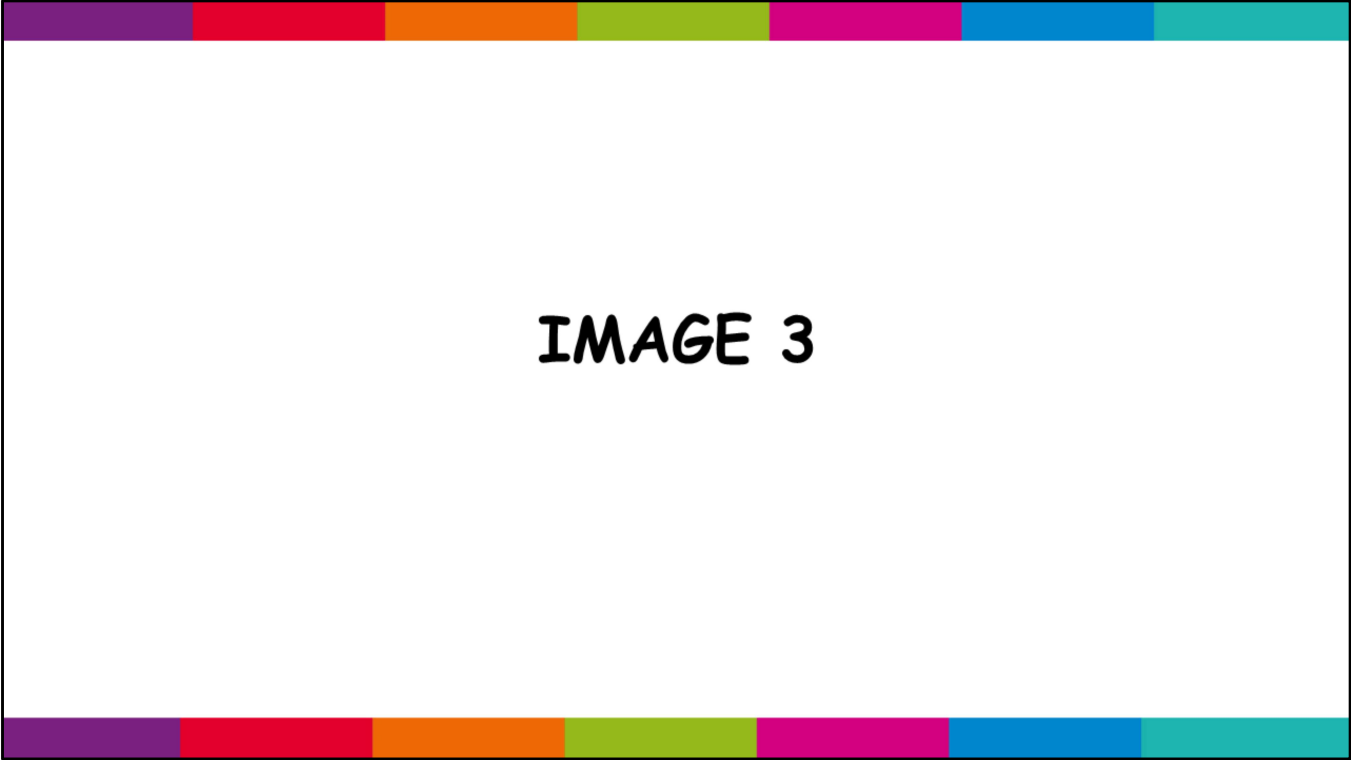


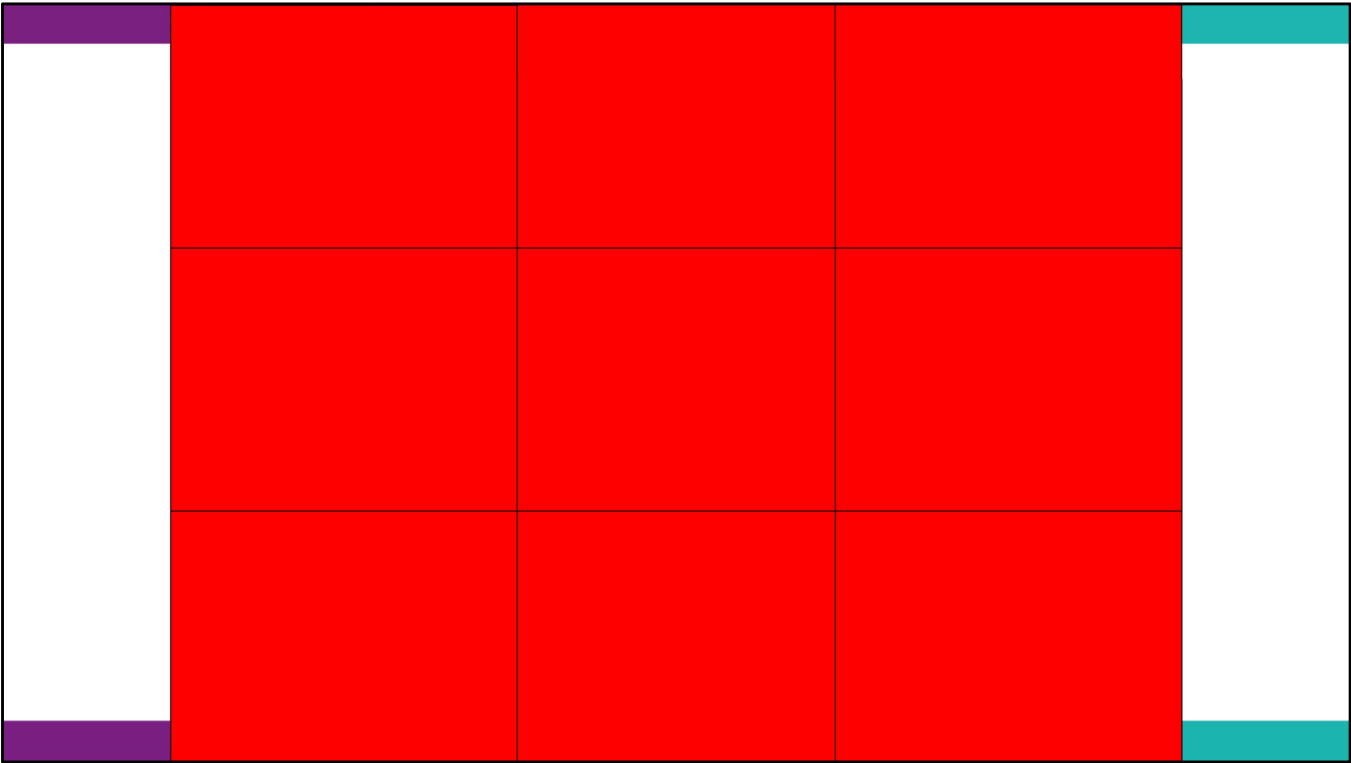


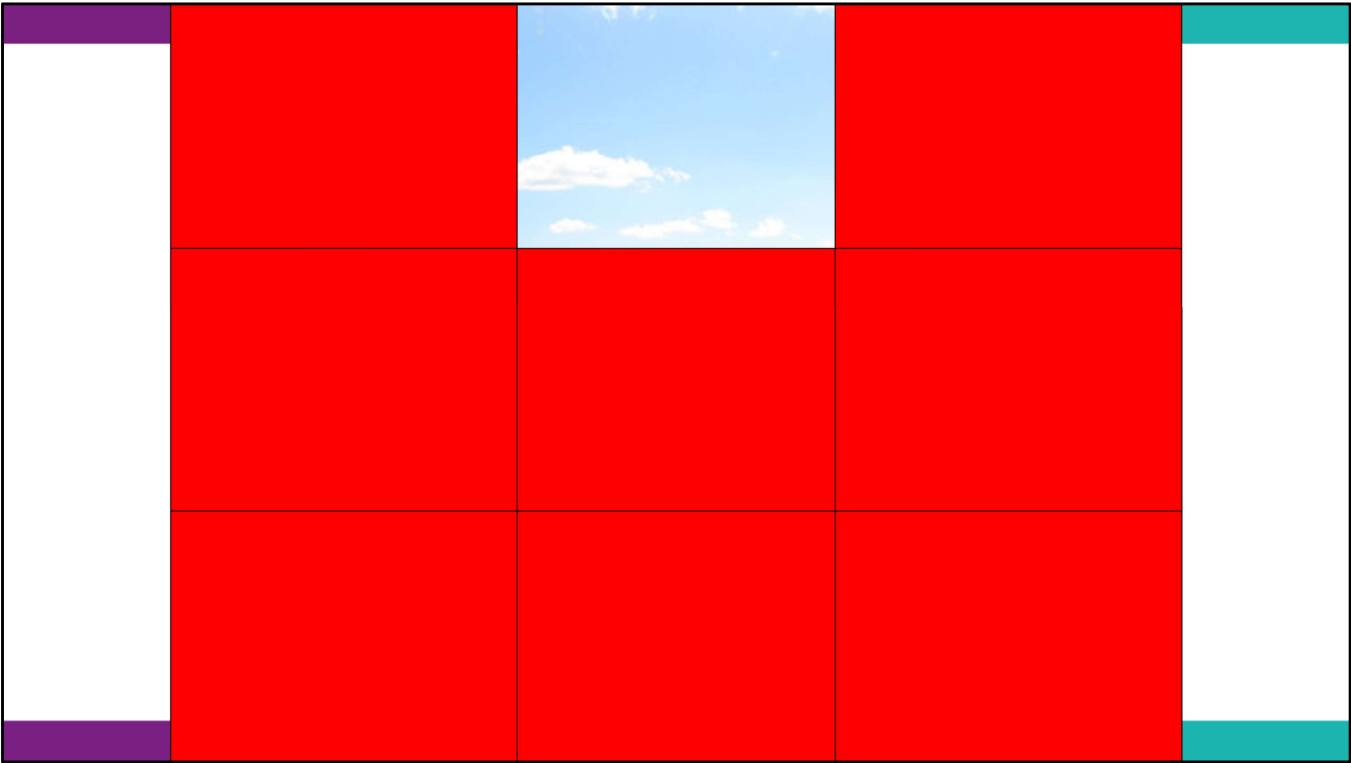


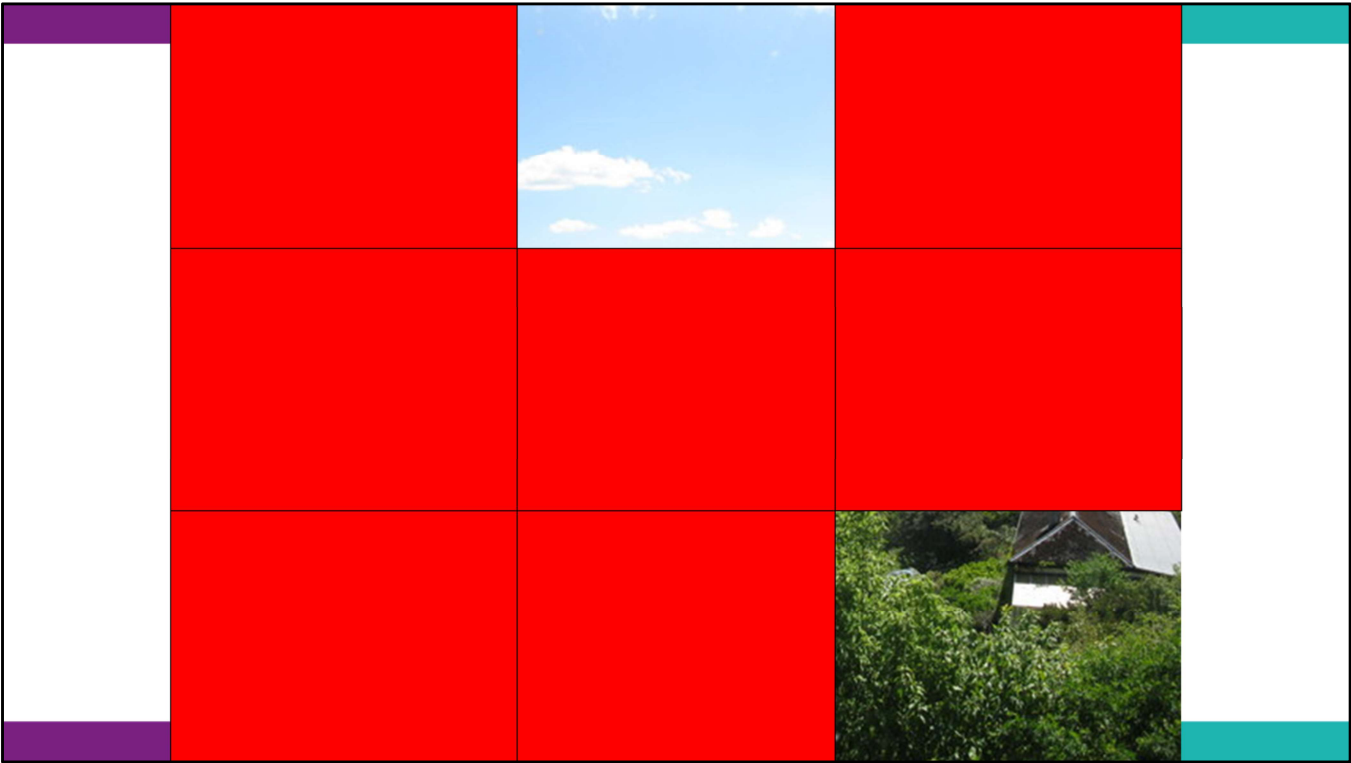


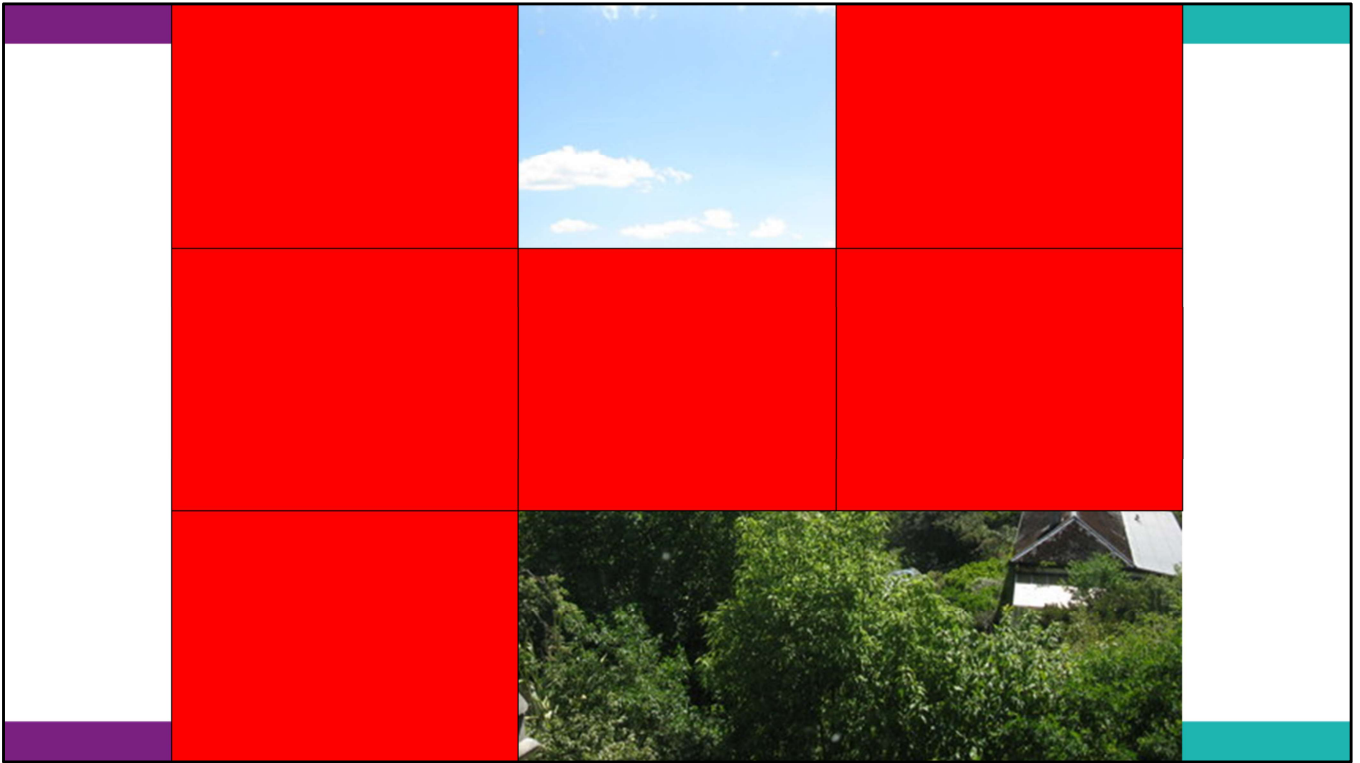


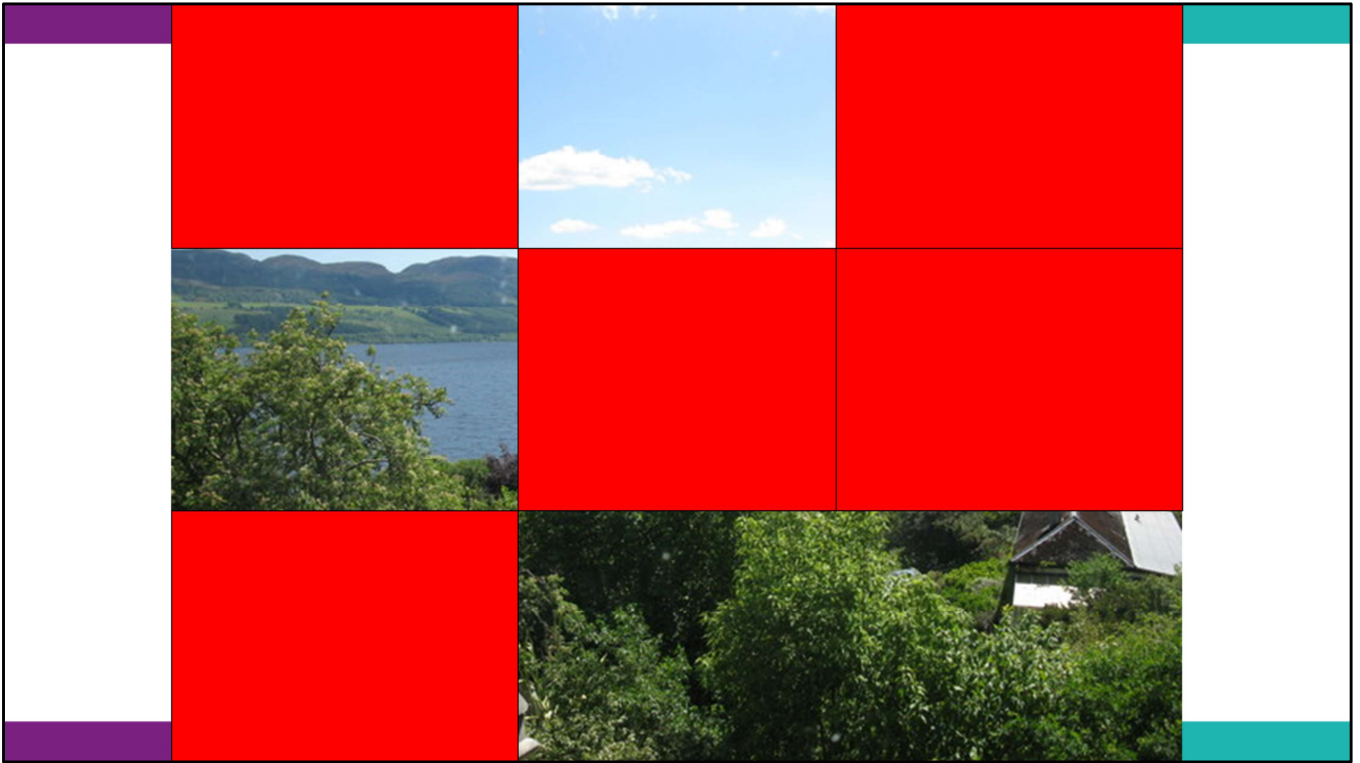


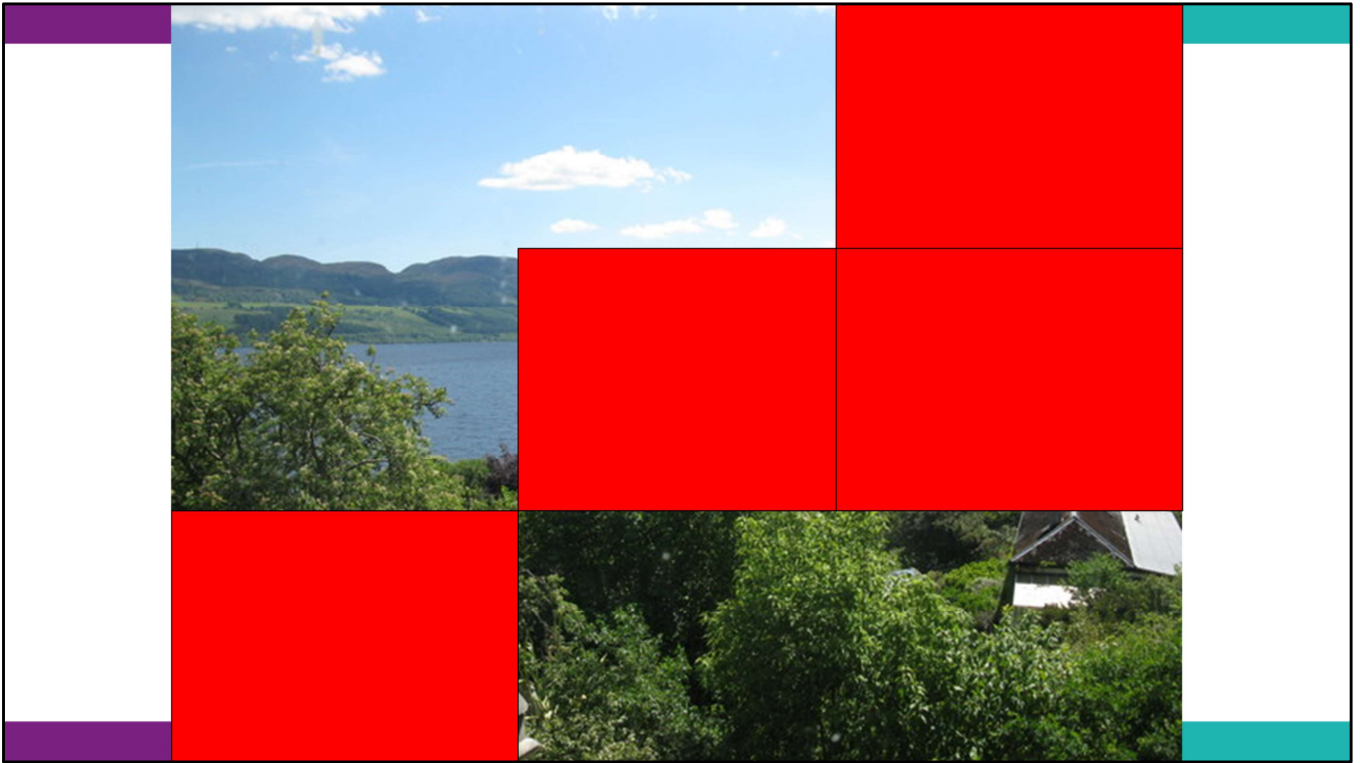












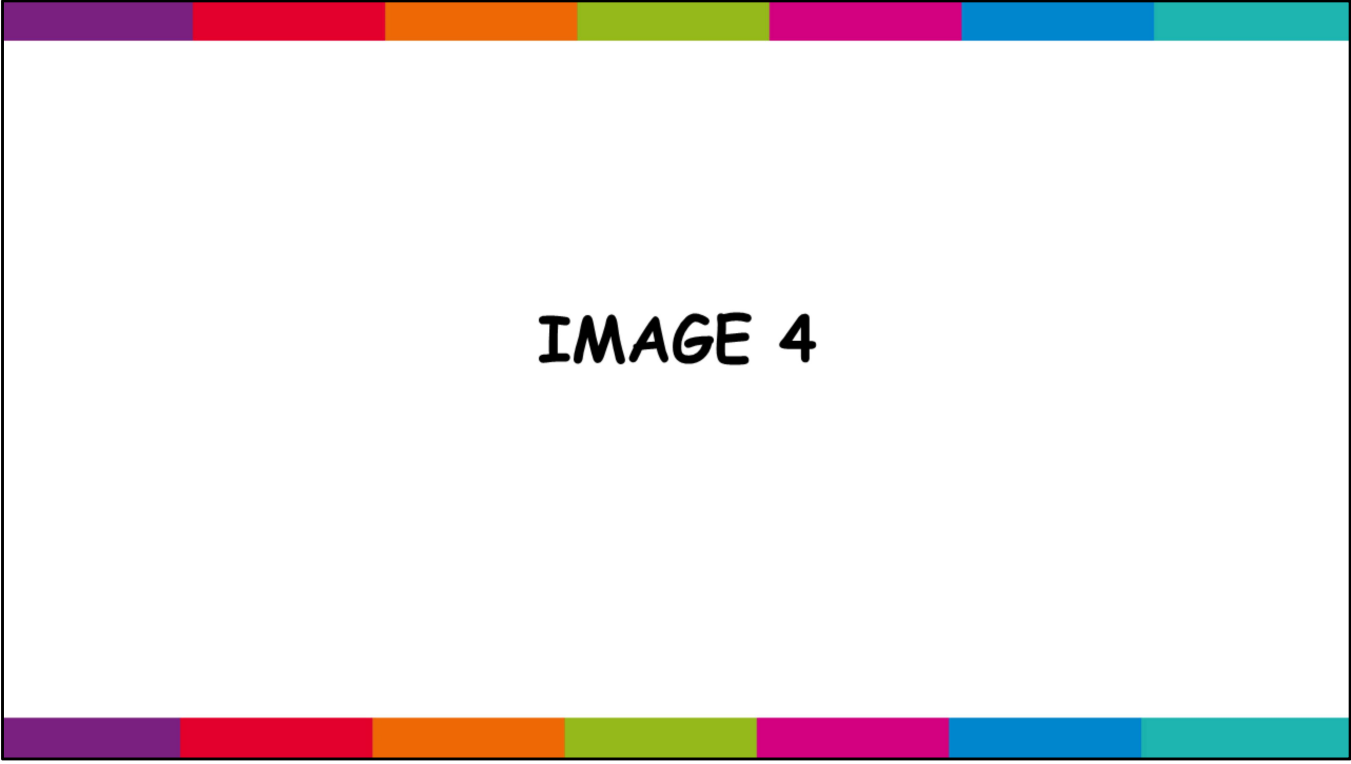


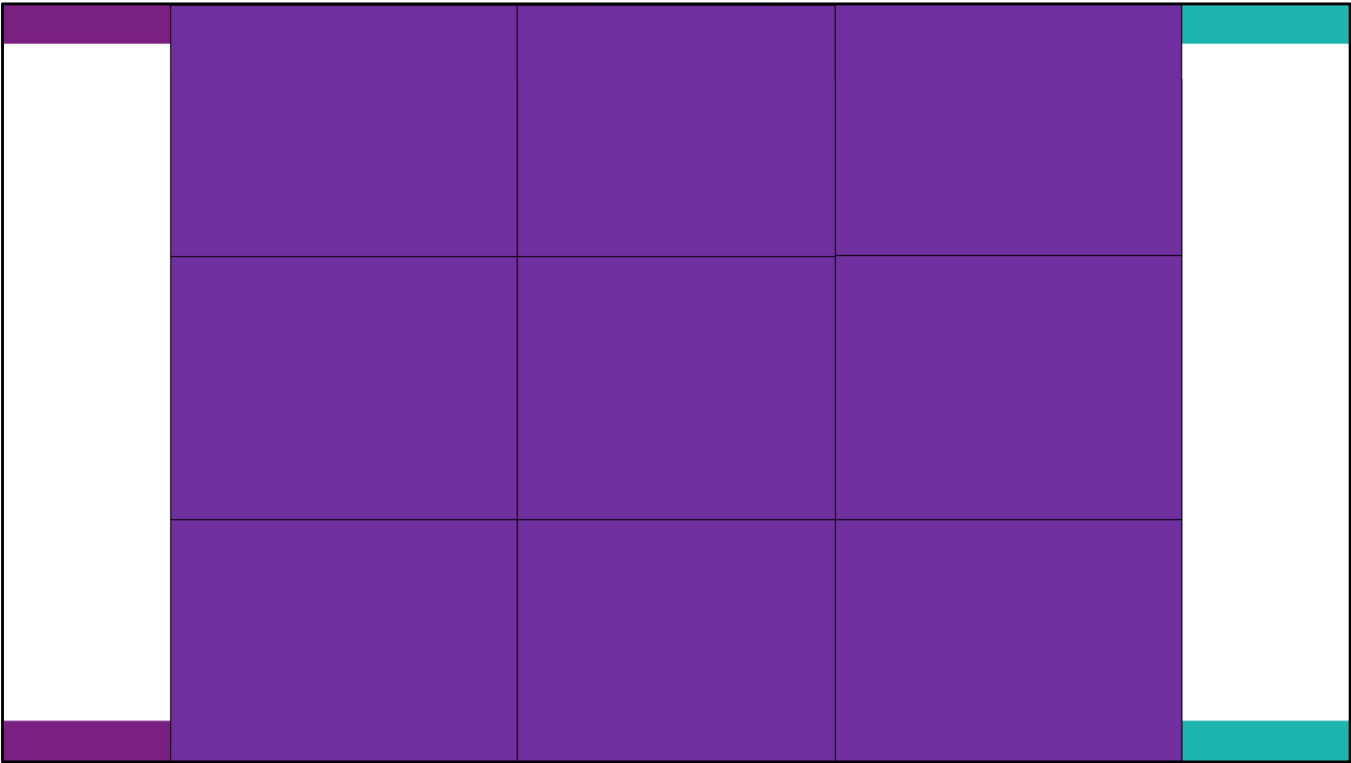


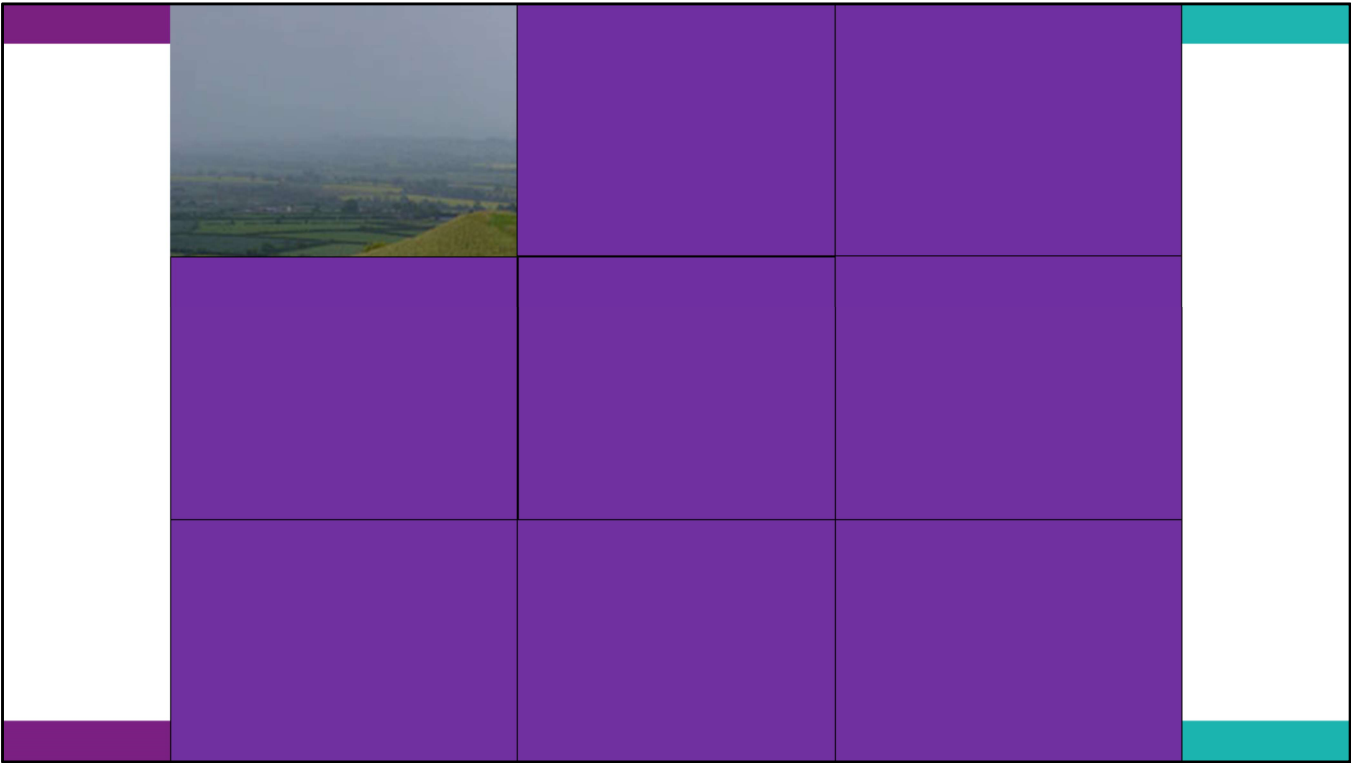






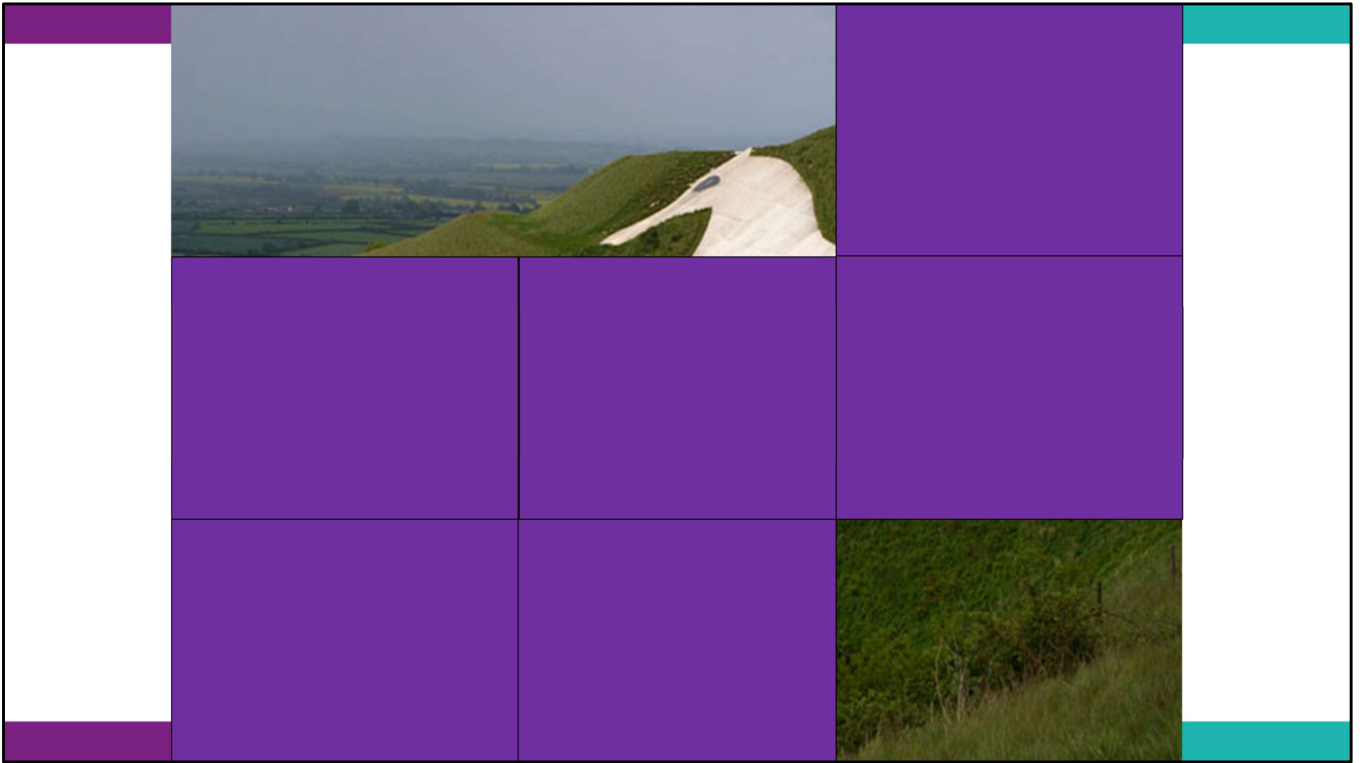


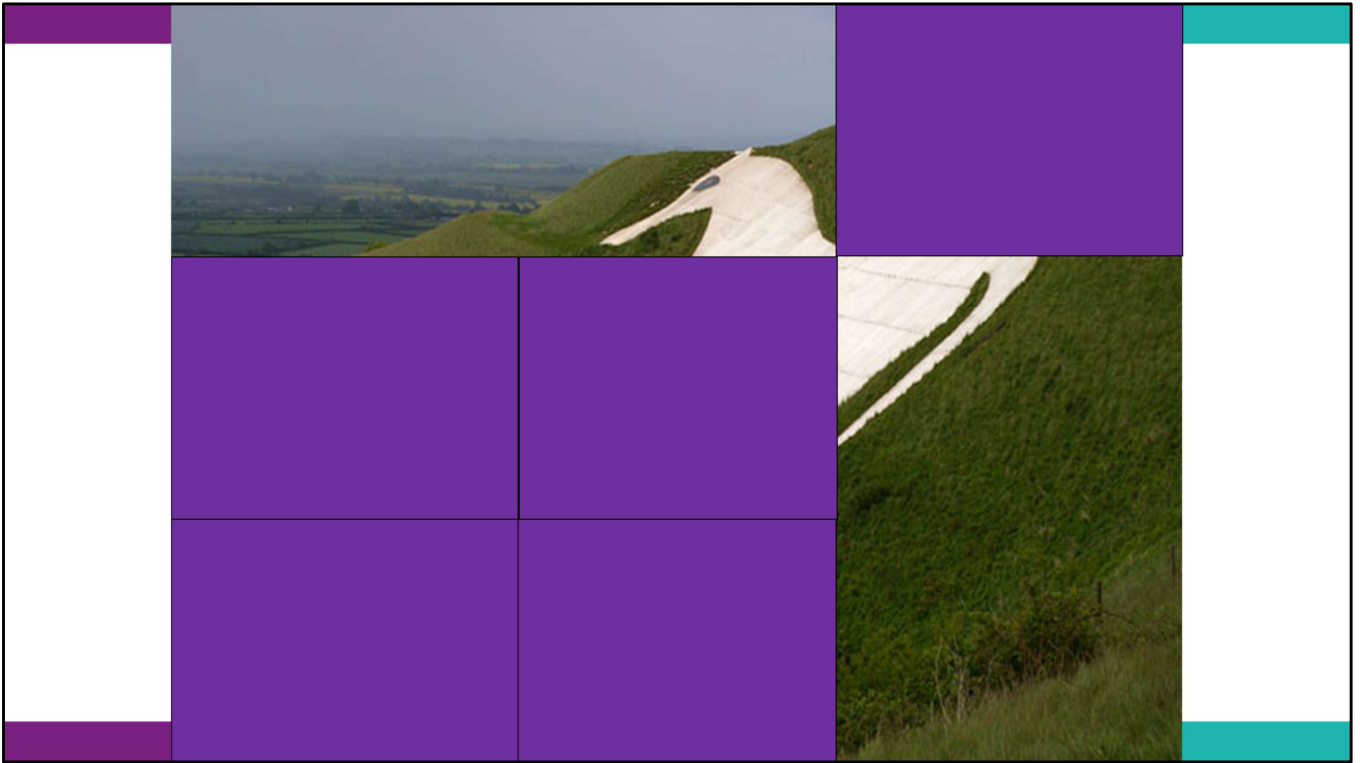


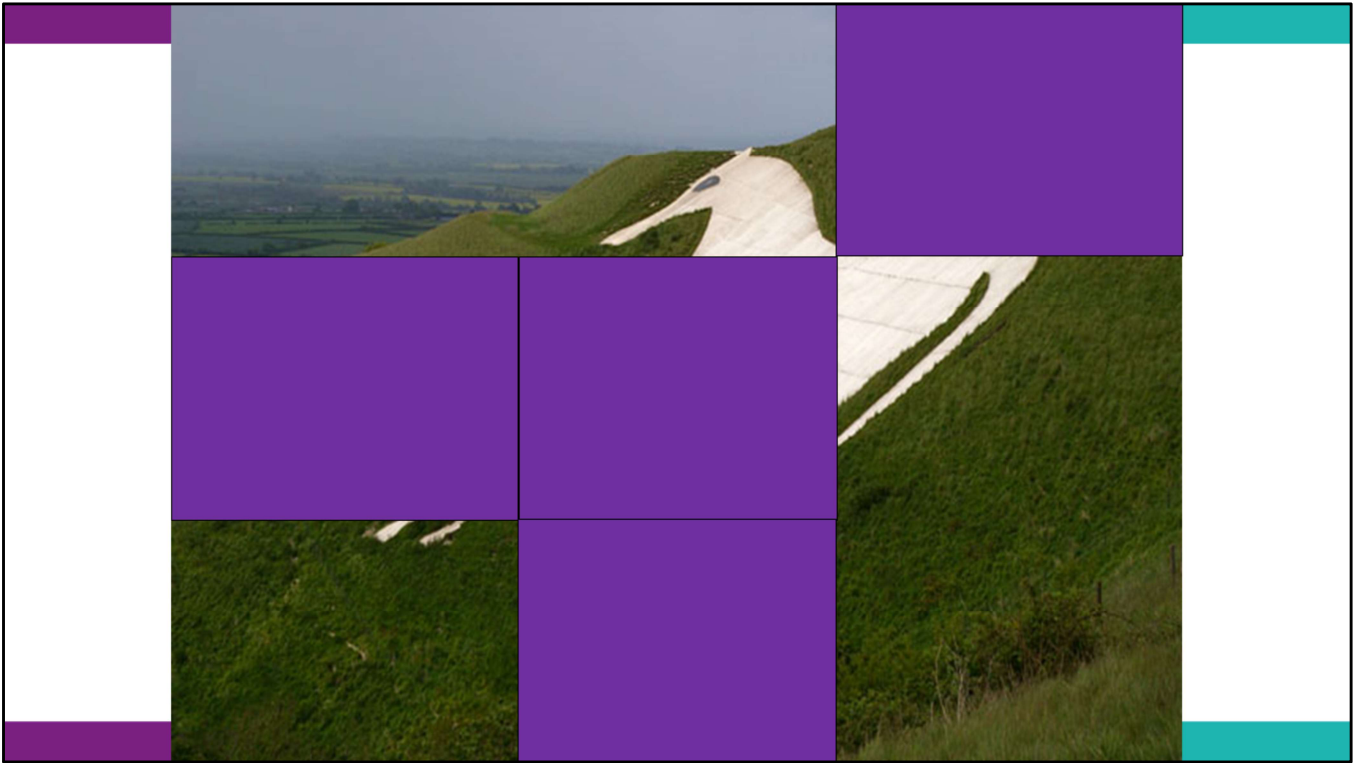










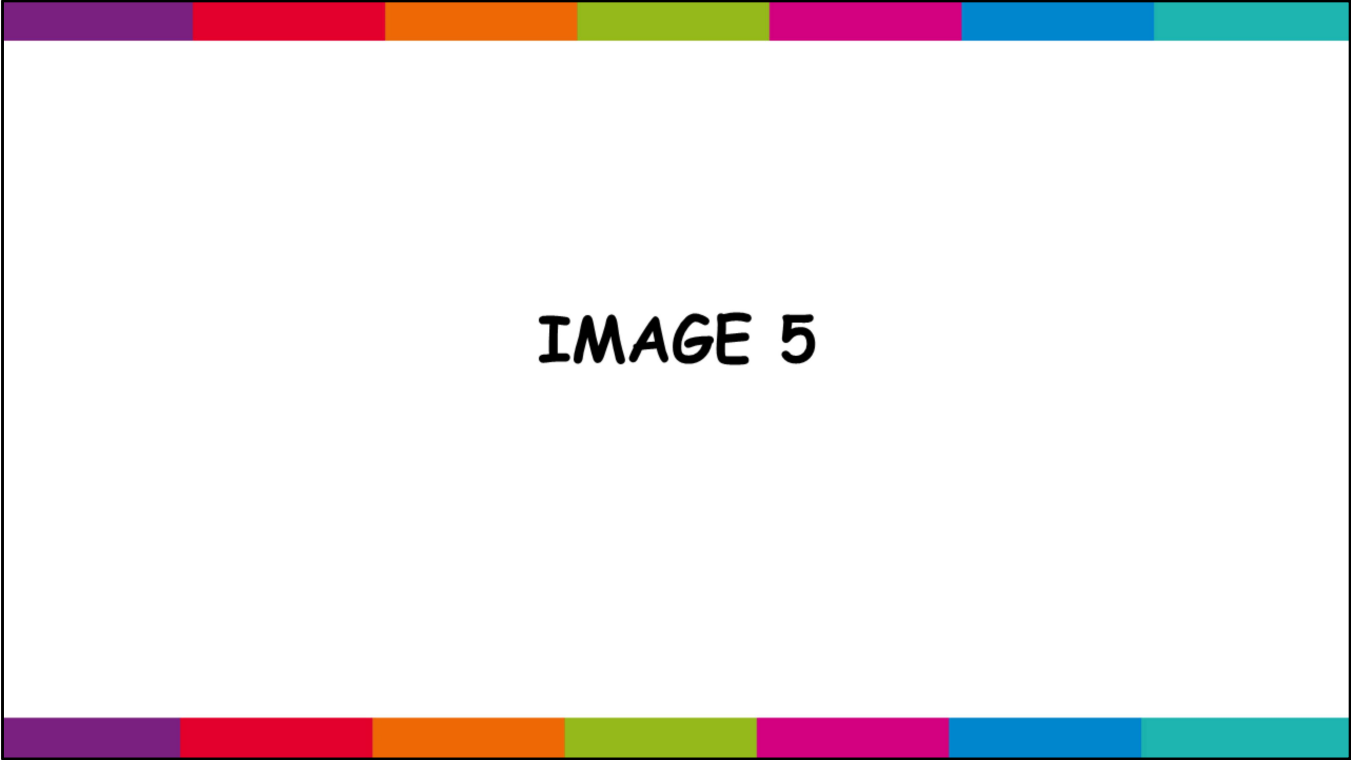




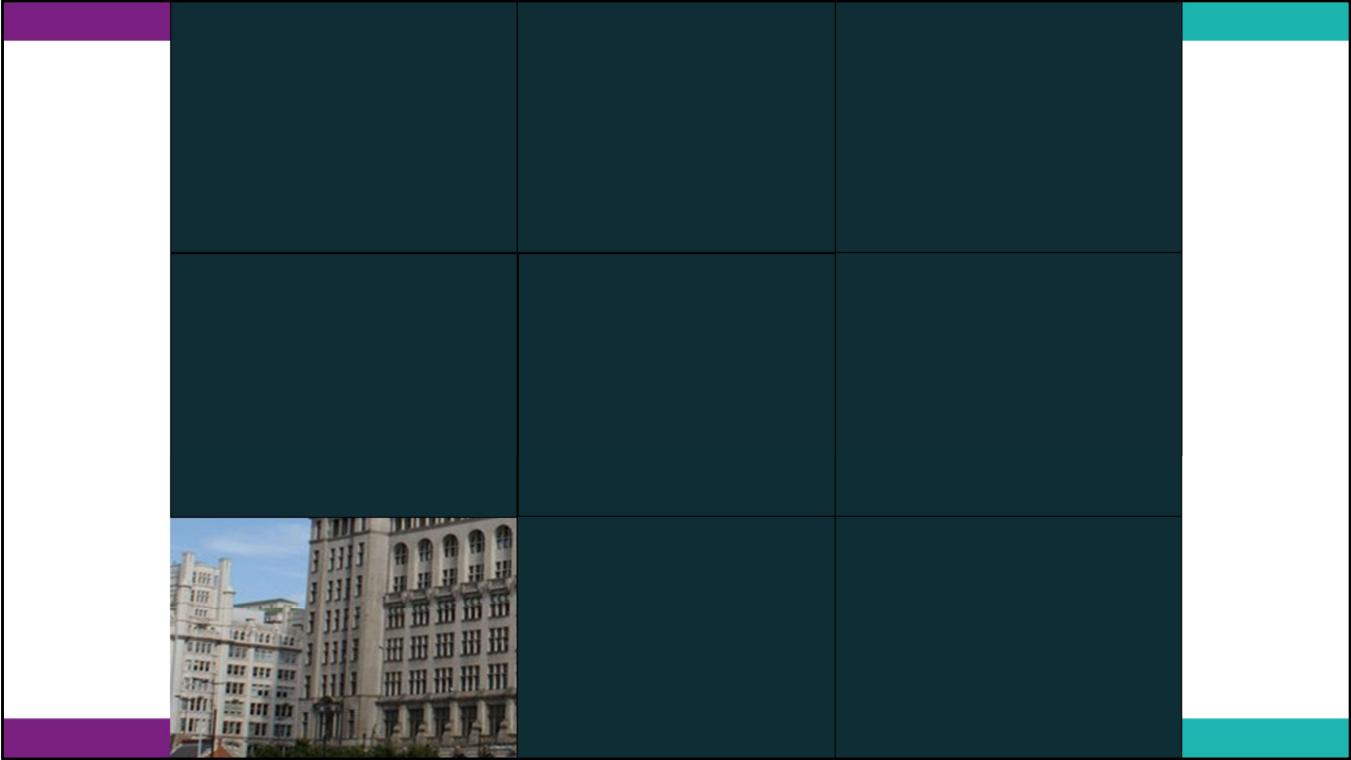


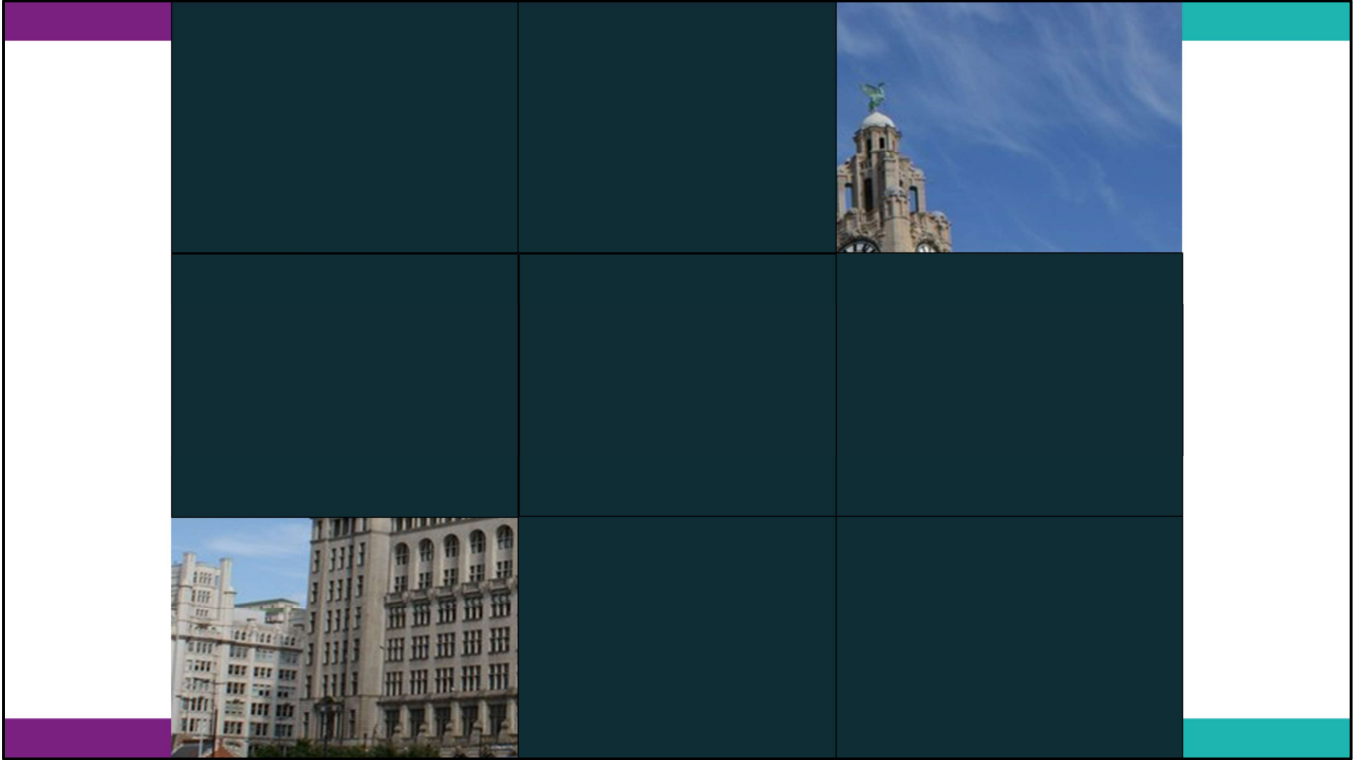


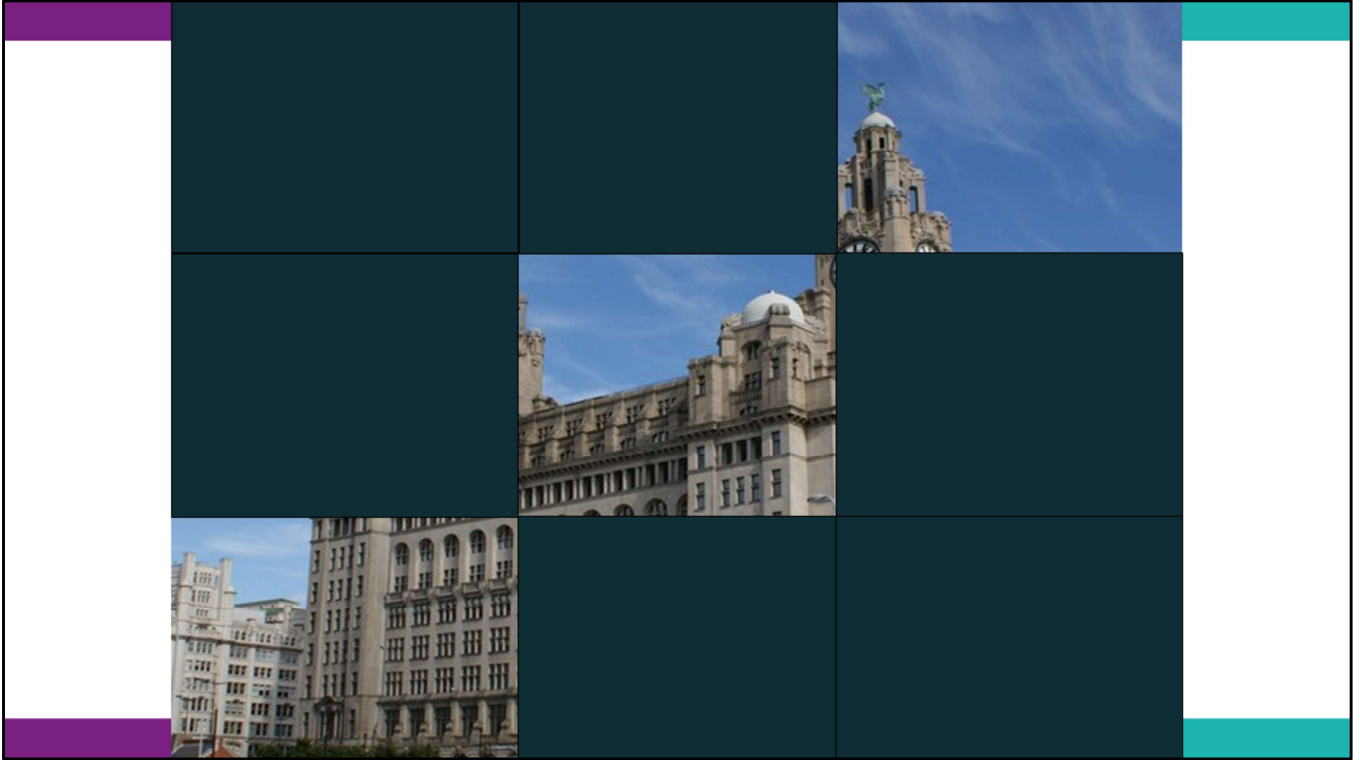


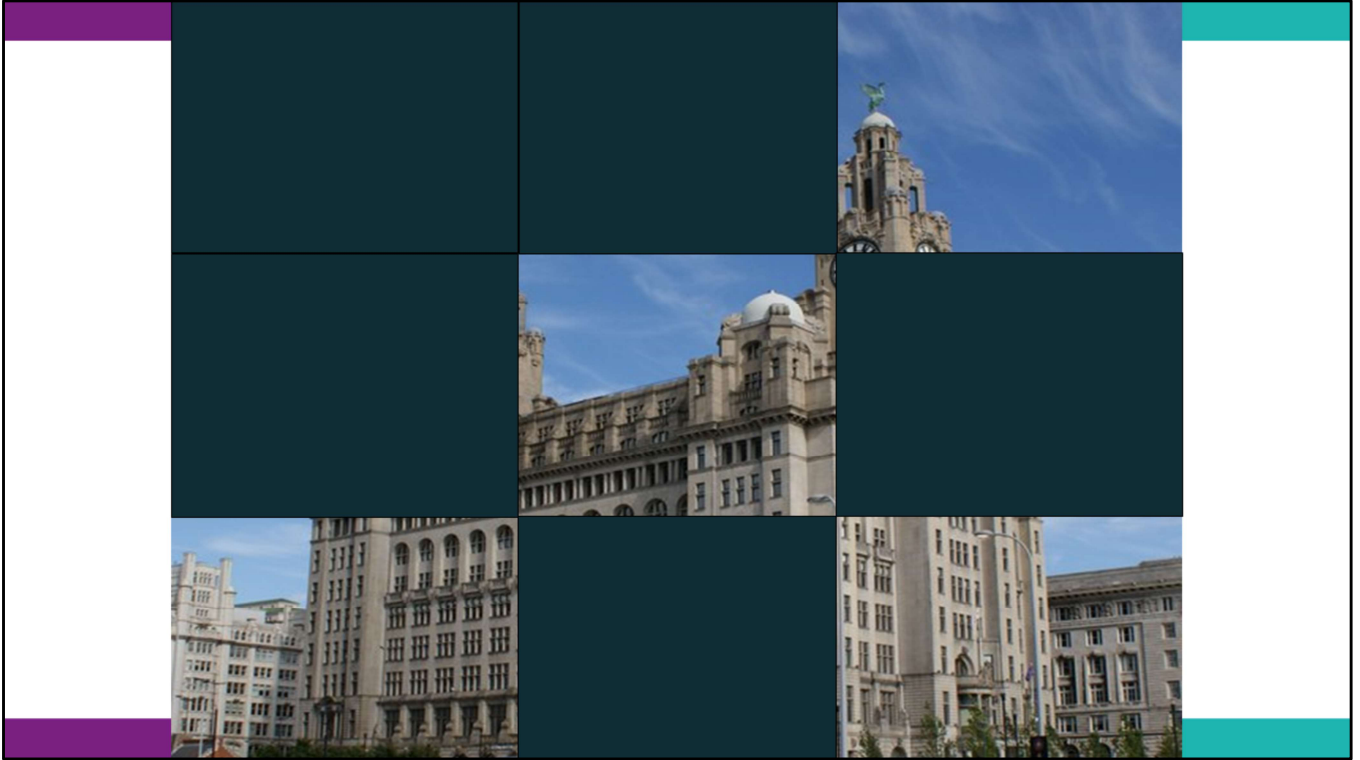
























## **ANSWERS**

1. Great Orme (Llandudno, North Wales)
  2. York Minster (York)
  3. Loch Ness (and monster!) (Scotland)
  4. Westbury White Horse (Wiltshire)
  5. Liver Building (Liverpool)
- 



# HOBY UK



## HOBY UK

Emma Robinson (11DY)

Grace Rowlands (11JW)

HOBY UK is a registered charity working with 14-18 year-olds, helping them to become more self-aware, confident and resilient, encouraging them to be more aspirational and to play an active role in their community, helping others through volunteering and leadership.

It is a 4 day seminar currently at Lancaster University.

We had to apply to attend HOBY through a letter and an interview explaining what kind of skills we had and what we wanted to develop. Mrs Bryan chose which 5 learners would receive a place and we were delighted to be one of them.

When we first got to HOBY, we were hoping to be placed in the same group but everyone from our school was placed in different groups. It seemed daunting but we managed to get into the team spirit and met lots of new people.

We did many activities at HOBY such as quizzes, volunteering and we even skyped with HOBY Iraq. It was an overall amazing experience and we are glad we got the opportunity

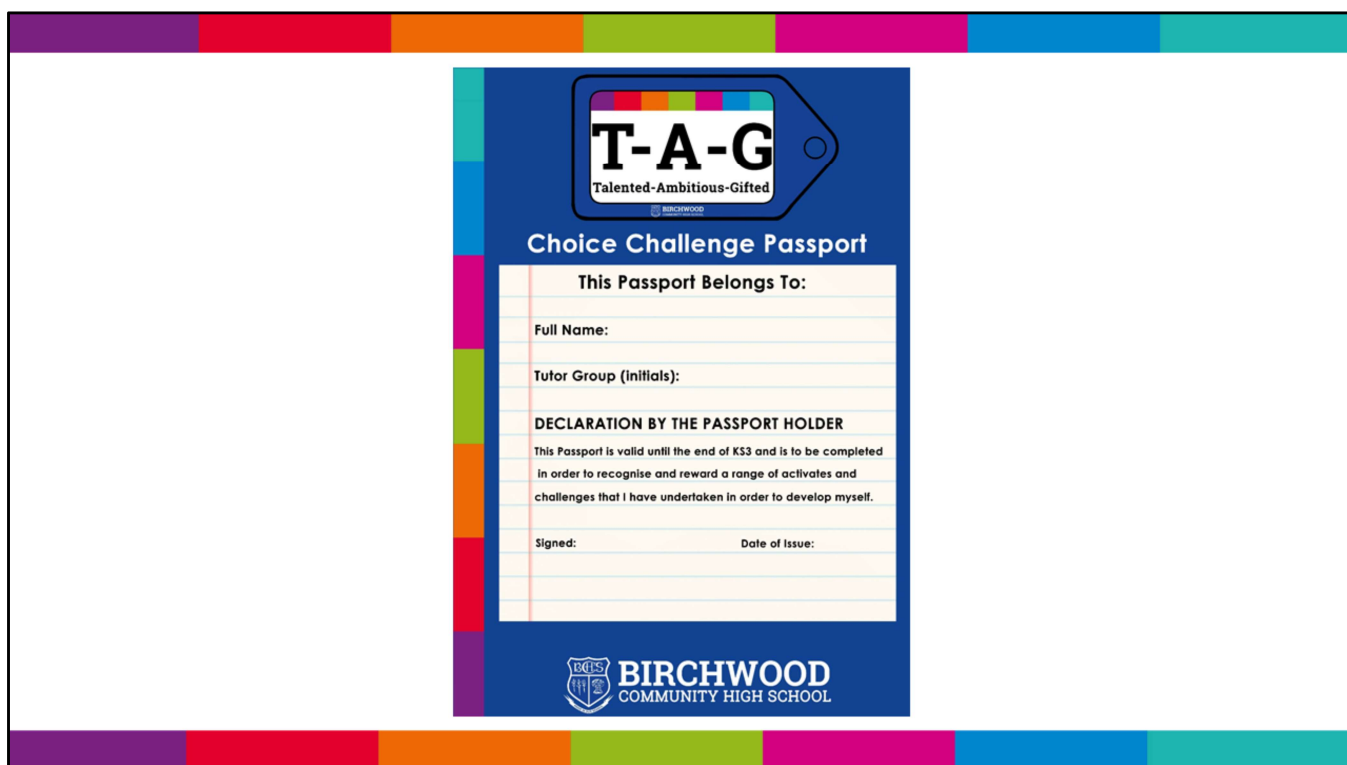
to attend.

We also did a fun event at the end called 'HOBY's got talent' where as seen on the slide, the blue team had to do 'Blindfolded house of parliament I'm a celebrity get me out of here while one person in the team was continuously hopping.'

HOBY taught us a lot about leadership and developing our skills while helping other people. We left feeling like better versions of ourselves with new friends who we still talk to to this day.

We would recommend it to anyone who is interested in developing their skills and confidence.

Thank you.



Lucy Baxter (8MJ)

Harrison Bird (8MJ)

Tonight we are really excited to launch our TAG passport. A small group of Year 8 learners including ourselves have been working with Mr Grimmer to produce this KS3 Passport.

It is our opportunity to show the wide range and depth of our skills, attributes, knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of areas.

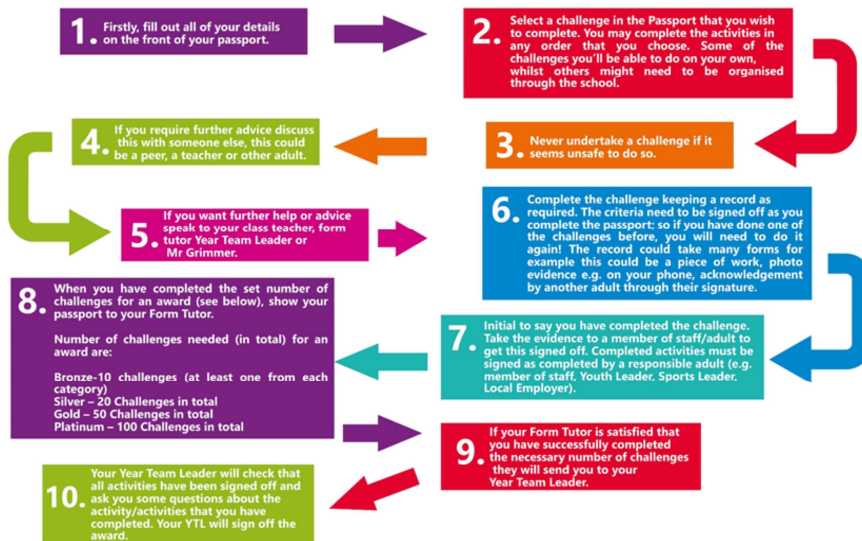
There is more to education than just passing examinations. The passport aims to allow us to develop ourselves as a rounded and successful learners and receive the recognition for doing a range of different activities.

There are 4 levels of award and the passport will be valid throughout Key Stage 3. If you complete the challenges and get them signed off you will receive a certificate through the post; points added to you My stickers account e.g. 20 points for bronze; 40 points for silver and 100 points for gold and 200 points for Platinum.

As well as this you will receive a TAG gift.




## 10 Steps to Success



The passport works like this, you fill out all of your details on the front and select a challenge from the tasks. If you want further help or information, for a task, you can speak to your class teacher, year team leader or your form tutor. After completing a challenge, sign off the criteria to show you have done it. Take it to a member of staff or an adult to show the evidence you have completed a task. When you have completed the set number of challenges for an award, show your passport to your form tutor. For Bronze you need to complete 10 challenges, at least one from each category, for silver you need to do 20 in total and for gold 50 and 100 for platinum. If your form tutor is satisfied that you have successfully completed the assigned number of tasks they will send you to the year team leader. Your year team leader will check that all activities have been signed off and ask you some question about the activities you have completed. Your year team leader will sign off the award. This passport will run throughout KS3.




## Beyond the Curriculum



There are so many opportunities outside of the classroom that if you take part in will bring even greater success within it. The following challenges are just some suggestions that we have made. There is room for you to add your own ideas. Just speak to a teacher to check if your own challenge can count towards your passport.

Beyond the Curriculum	Learn or initiate	Start/pursue when at school
1. Visit the media centre at the BBC. Complete a review of your visit - what did you find out?		
2. Produce an @Safety video suitable for a year 10 audience. Include the dangers of sharing too much information and how to be safe on social media.		
3. Devise a campaign to support refugees and raise awareness of their situation. This could involve contacting your MP, using social media or emerging a dothing collection or fundraising activity.		
4. Research the history of the UN OCHA. Produce an information leaflet/PowerPoint or video explaining why it came about, what it is meant to achieve and whether it is effective.		
5. Visit the Houses of Parliament in London.		
6. Create a personal budget for yourself including all of your income and expenditure. Plan how you will save money.		
7. Use the NSPCC and Childline websites to produce an information leaflet on online exploitation for your year group. Include ways to keep yourself safe and where to go if you have a problem.		
8. Write an assembly on a health issue of your choice. Be prepared to deliver it to your year group.		
9. Come up with 5 suggestions of new issues you think we should cover in Learning for Life.		
10. Does anyone in your family wear a uniform? Do they like their uniform? Why? Are there benefits to be had by wearing a uniform? What decisions do they make when choosing their everyday clothes?		
11. Find out about University Summer School.		
12. Perform a piece of work completed in a lesson or at an extra-curricular activity in an achievement assembly.		
13. Complete a Future Learn activity ( <a href="https://www.futurelearn.com/join/your-school">https://www.futurelearn.com/join/your-school</a> ).		
14. Make something while by doing something nice.		
15. Learn something about a subject that your teacher does not know.		
16. Write down 10 business ideas using a simple business plan, selling banana smoothies at a school event.		
17. Build a tower higher than you using only spaghetti and marshmallows.		
18. Design a new front cover for the school planner.		
19. Give up something unhealthy for a month.		
20. Volunteer to help people in your community (e.g. in an old people home or Youth Club).		
21. Learn 10 facts about the Highway Code that you weren't aware of.		
22. Learn 10 road warning signs.		
23. Learn all of the road signs in the 'Highway Code'.		
24. Make something out of recycled materials.		
25. List the five achievements that you are most proud of and five that you would like to achieve.		

Here is an example of one of the pages of activities. As you can see, some of the activities include: visiting the houses of parliament, making something out of recycled materials or taking part in a charity fundraiser.



Good evening  
Have a safe journey home  
Please leave your evaluations as you  
leave in the tray outside.

So that concludes the evening.

We hope that you have enjoyed listening to the wide variety of presentations and that this has inspired learners to get involved in these or some of the other opportunities on offer.

So thank you for joining us tonight. Senior staff will be available now should you have any further questions or please add them to the evaluation form and we will get back to you.

Have a safe journey home.