



DUAL CODING WITH TEACHERS

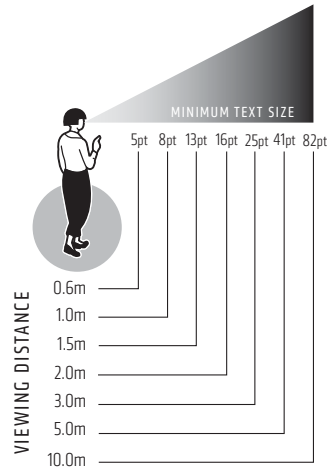
THE COURSE



DISPLAYS

Familiarise yourself with guidelines and tips that can quickly improve the quality of your next display board creation.

SCALE



RESEARCH

In 2015 the University of Salford Manchester published their report *Clever Classrooms* that examined several design factors that affect learning and behaviour. Two studies showed that learning scores were higher in sparse classrooms than in decorated ones (Fisher et al 2014), and time on task along with learning scores were more favourable in low visual distraction rooms than in high visual distraction ones (Godwin and Fisher 2014). Conclusions, you might be surprised to know were of the Goldilocks type – both too much or too little stimulation produce poorer learning conditions. This is surprising because I found no studies of low visual stimulation producing lower learning scores, only lower levels of (hard to measure) cooperation.

LETTERING

When I first started teaching in the mid '70s, most teachers were adept at lettering, at any size. Get hold of some very wide felt tips and try it out (using the grid to ensure a horizontal line).

Printing out individual letters onto A4 is a good idea. But think about their *Kerning* – a technical word to describe the individual spacing between them. It's not regular, as you can see below.



SQUINTING

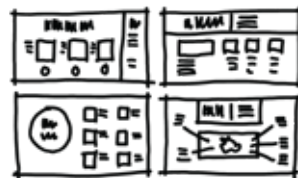
1



As David Hockney does, squint. It helps you see the bigger pattern. Stepping back and squinting helps you see – maybe for the first time – the overall shape of the display. This can give you feedback about what stands out, what is too small for the scale of a display board, and where the eye is led.

THUMBNAILS

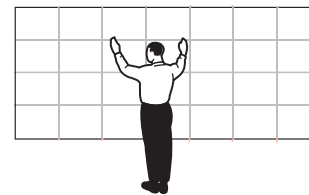
2



Sketching up some thumbnails has a similar purpose as squinting. With only bold shapes possible on the small size available, you are forced to look at the core design. What will become apparent is the need to establish a simple order that makes the information displayed look accessible and inviting.

TAPE UP A GRID

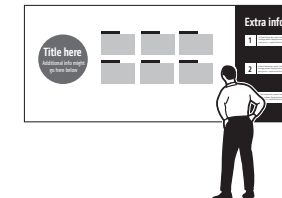
3



Use masking tape to establish your grid. After the first time of measuring up, it's a good idea to make some marks on the edge of the wooden border for the following times. You might find using your thumbnail sketches a good time to decide on your grid's ratios. Masking tape is cheap and easy to use.

CREATE GEOMETRY AND HIERARCHY

4



Use the grid to place and align your content. Resist the urge to fill every space. Create contrast between areas that have items close together, with empty space. Use repetition to show order which helps the reader scan the display quickly. Have different sized letters to indicate hierarchy of information.



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GETTING BETTER



DO

- Focus on clarity and readability
- Decide if part is to be read close up – how will this happen?
- Don't use too many colours
- Let pupils' art work stand alone (large) for EY especially

DON'T

- Work from assumptions of school aesthetics
- Use wavy corrugated cardboard borders unless relevant
- Assume you need borders at all
- Use too many colours – keep it simple

TRY

- Visit IKEA and museums to study their displays
- Add some 3D effects
- Build some interaction into your display
- Explore how to update the display with minimal effort