Web page: the low-down on our town

21ˢᵗ Century Skills	Tools and resources: critical thinking
Key Competences	♻ Learning to learn, 📶 Digital competence, 👥 Social and civic competence
Useful language from the units	4A food, countable and uncountable nouns, 4B *there is / there are*; *some* and *any*, 4E adjective + preposition, 5A places, prepositions of place, 5B comparatives, 5D superlatives, 5E travel collocations, 5G asking for and giving directions, 6E prepositions of movement

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE TASK Work in pairs. Read the task. What are you going to produce? Who is going to read it? What do you need to include?

> **TASK** The tourist website for your town has a lot of information in English for adults, but your town council wants a page just for teen tourists. Who can write it better than YOU? You need to design a web page to tell teenagers about all the best places to go and things to see and do. Don't forget to add a lot of photos to make it attractive.

STEP 2: ANALYSE

1 Read part of a web page that some students in Birmingham wrote about their city. What information does it give? Tick (✓) the correct boxes.

parks and outside spaces	☐
museums and galleries	☐
cafés and restaurants	☐
markets	☐
swimming pools	☐
tourist attractions	☐
shops and shopping centres	☐
theatres and music venues	☐
cinemas	☐
skateparks	☐
how to travel around the city	☐
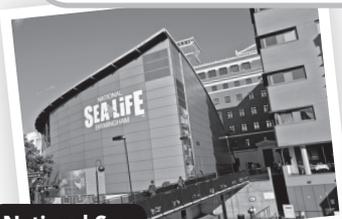
National Sea Life Centre
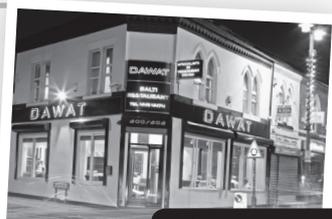
Indian restaurants

Birmingham city centre

2 Answer the questions with a partner.

1 What can you do in Spark Hill?
2 Where can you see a penguin?
3 Which famous writer was from Birmingham?
4 Do you need to catch a bus for the National Sea Life Centre?
5 How can you get a cheaper ticket for Cadbury World?
6 What can you eat in the Art Gallery café?
7 Why should you go to the library?
8 How many cinemas are mentioned on this web page?

3 Which things in Birmingham are the most interesting to you? Why? Tell your partner.

STEP 3: PREPARE In a group, make a list of all the interesting places to go and things to do in your town or city. Then discuss which you want to include on your web page for teen tourists and why. Use the key phrases to help you.

> **KEY PHRASES**
> I think … is important.
> I think we should include …
> My favourite place / activity is …
> I prefer … because …
> The most interesting / most exciting / biggest / cheapest place(s) is / are …
> … is better / nearer / more expensive / more impressive than …

STEP 4: CREATE Decide who in your group will write each part. Talk about what photos, drawings and maps you need. Who is going to find them? Write your part(s) for the web page.

Remember to:
- use a lot of interesting adjectives.
- use comparative and superlative adjectives.
- explain the location of places and give directions.
- check your finished work for mistakes.

STEP 5: PRESENT AND DECIDE Read the web pages of other groups. Did they choose the same places as you? Which web page do you think is the best? Why?

The low-down on **Birmingham**

Fantastic facts:

Birmingham is the biggest city in Britain after London. JRR Tolkien (who wrote *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*) was from Birmingham.
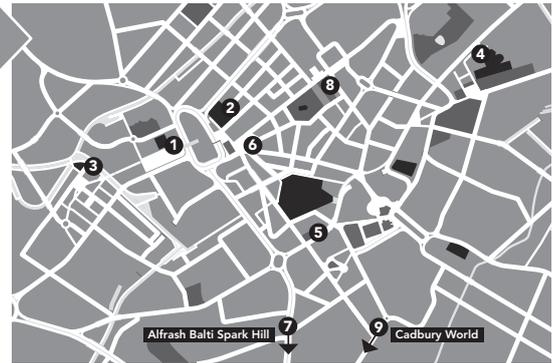
What is this impressive building? Is it a theatre? Is it a music venue? No, it's Birmingham library ❶! We think everyone should see it because it's the largest library in Europe and it's incredibly modern. Then, after looking in the library, cross the road and go into the Museum and Art Gallery ❷. There's a lot of different art to see, and you should definitely try the amazing cakes in the café, relaxing on the comfortable sofas.

Tasha and Isabel say, 'There isn't a zoo in Birmingham, but we love the National Sea Life Centre ❸. There are a lot of fish, animals and birds too. The penguins are the cutest, in our opinion!' Getting there is easy because it's in the centre – only six minutes on foot from the library. It's next to the canal and opposite the Barclaycard Arena (where you can see sports events and also the best music artists when they are on tour).

Ethan recommends: If you're keen on films, Birmingham has two huge IMAX cinemas ❹. Or for a different experience, you can also watch a movie at the UK's oldest working cinema, called The Electric ❺, which opened in 1909. The cinemas are all in the city centre, not far from the main train station.

There are about twenty different walking tours of the city, and they're all good, but our favourite is the Ghost Walk ❻. You meet a strangely dressed guide behind the theatre at nine o'clock at night and follow him down dark streets. His stories are amazing and quite frightening – but are they true?

Birmingham is a multicultural city, and it's famous for Pakistani and Indian food. For the best curry, take the number 13 bus and get off in Spark Hill ❼. Alfrash Balti restaurant doesn't look special from the outside, but the food is the most delicious in Birmingham, and it's cheaper than in the town centre too!

One advantage of living in Birmingham is that there are two excellent sweet shops ❽.

For another sweet treat, you should visit the famous tourist attraction Cadbury World where you can go round a chocolate factory. Remember to book a ticket online because it's cheaper. Cadbury World ❾ is in an area called Bourneville, outside the city centre. You can go by train which takes fifteen minutes, or catch a bus in front of the train station. Of course you can also go by taxi, but that's a lot more expensive.

STEP 6: SELF-EVALUATION Copy the statements into your notebook and score yourself from 1–4.

a I can read and understand a web page about a city.
b I can discuss, compare and select items from a list.
c I can write a web page including places of interest and how to get there.
d I can read, evaluate and give feedback on web pages written by people in my class.

4	very well
3	well
2	needs practice
1	not very well

Web page: the low-down on our town

WARM-UP EXERCISE

To help students engage with the topic, ask them to brainstorm vocabulary for places in a town or city (which they studied on page 52). They will need some of this vocabulary for the project and a number of extra words too (highlighted in Step 2 below).

STEP 1 UNDERSTAND THE TASK

- Ask students to read the instruction and check they understand the three questions they need to find answers for. You might need to pre-teach the meaning of *the low-down* which is used in this context to mean the most important facts to know about a place, thing, situation, or person. In a sentence we use it with the dependent preposition *on*.
- Put students in pairs to read the task and discuss what they are going to do. Check answers to the questions together.

  ANSWERS

  They are going to produce a web page. Teenage tourists (and the town council) are going to read the web page. The web page needs to include information for teenagers about where to go and what to do, and a lot of photos.

STEP 2 ANALYSE

- This step offers a clear model of how to approach the project. Students focus their attention on a web page created by some students from the British city of Birmingham.
- Before they do any reading, ask them to look at the web page list with tick boxes to check they know the vocabulary. You might need to pre-teach the meaning of *gallery*, *tourist attraction*, *theatre*, *music venue* and *skatepark*.
- If necessary, check they understand what they have to do. Give students enough time to scan the texts in the web page, but they shouldn't use dictionaries at this stage.
- They can compare their answers with a partner to see if they have ticked the same information. If they have different answers, they should read the web page again to check. With a stronger group you could also elicit what other things the web page gives information about: *library, walking tours, sweet shops*. You could also elicit how many different ways of travelling around are mentioned: *on foot, bus, train, taxi*.

- There are some words that students may not know. You can pre-teach them now before they answer questions 1–8 or check understanding afterwards: *impressive, incredibly, definitely, cute (the cutest), canal, multicultural*.
- Students now read the web page again to find specific information to answer questions 1–8. With a weaker group, make sure they understand the questions first and then give them plenty of time to re-read the web page. With a stronger group, if they like competition, you could set it up as a reading race. Check with the first person to finish that they have the correct answers. Then check answers together.
- Finally put students in pairs to discuss which places or activities from the web page they think are interesting and why. Elicit some answers from the class.

  ANSWERS

  1 There is information about: museums and galleries, cafés and restaurants, tourist attractions (the National Sea Life Centre and Cadbury World), music venues (Barclaycard Arena), cinemas and how to travel around the city. (The theatre is mentioned, but there's no information about it. Similarly, the sweet shops are mentioned, but there isn't any further information.)

  **2 1 have a curry 2 at the National Sea Life Centre
  3 JRR Tolkien 4 no (because it's in the city centre)
  5 book it online 6 cake
  7 it's the biggest in Europe and incredibly modern
  8 3 (2x IMAX and one old cinema)**

- As an optional extra activity, you could ask students to circle all the adjectives in the texts, including the comparatives and superlatives, in order to focus them on this specific grammar point and to encourage them to use the structures in their own writing.

STEP 3 PREPARE

- This is the groupwork stage. Students produce a long list of items and then discuss the items and make a selection. It is a good way to practise critical thinking.
- Focus students' attention on the key phrases first and drill them with the whole class to ensure natural pronunciation. Point out that these are just examples of comparatives and superlatives, and remind them that they have studied many more. If you wish, conduct a class brainstorm of useful adjectives and their comparative and superlative forms before putting students in groups. A weaker group may benefit from a list of adjectives on the board.
- Put students in small groups of 3–5 to make a list of places and activities in their home town or city. Monitor, and make sure they write down as many options as possible. They don't need to discuss which they prefer at this stage.
- Monitor, and when the different groups have a substantial list, ask them to discuss which places and activities to choose for their web page and why. If necessary, remind them of their target audience (teen tourists), and also remind them to use the key phrases.

STEP 4 CREATE

- Tell students that they need to decide who will write about each place or activity they chose in Step 3. Students can work individually or in pairs. Focus students' attention on the points in the *Remember to* section.
- When they know what they are writing about, they need to decide which photos, drawings and maps they will need and find them.

  Students will need internet access to find photos to use in their web page. They could also use the internet to do further research and find interesting facts for their writing.

  If they have the knowledge and the technology is available, they can produce a real web page design. Otherwise they will need to produce a page using Word or a similar program. This can then be printed or projected onto a bigger screen during Step 5.

  Students can be encouraged to visit and take photos using their phone of the places/activities outside school hours if you think it's appropriate. This helps to give them more ownership of the project.

- Monitor and assist with this creative step. When they have finished a first draft of their writing, ask the group to get together again and check each other's work for mistakes. They also need to make decisions about layout and which photos and maps to include. (A stronger group could be encouraged to make improvements by adding more adjectives, comparatives or superlatives or writing fuller directions, etc.) Make sure they work together as a group to put together the final web page.

STEP 5 PRESENT AND DECIDE

- Number the web pages for ease of reference.

  Groups of students present their web page to the class. This can be done by printing them and making a gallery of work around the classroom. If the technology is available, students could display the web pages on computers or tablets or project them onto the IWB.

- There is no need to have oral presentations, but if you wish to maximise speaking, you could ask students in each group to take turns to stand next to their web page and answer any questions as their classmates read all the different web pages.

- When they have looked at all of them, conduct feedback, either in small groups or as a whole class where students talk about which web page they think is best and why. With a weaker group, you could write some sentence starters on the board to help them, for example:
  I think web page 2 is the best because … (it has more interesting photos than the other web pages.)
  I like web page 4 the best because … (there are a lot of good directions, and teenage tourists can understand how to get to different places.)

- You can also prompt responses by asking questions: *Which web page has the best directions? Which web page is going to attract teenagers the most? Which web page uses the best English? Which web page has the best information? Which web page is the most different from the others?*

- As an optional extra activity, put students in pairs and ask them to choose two of the web pages (not their own). Tell them to compare them. They could just do this orally and then you elicit some ideas, or you could ask them to write 4–6 sentences about them using comparatives and superlatives.

STEP 6 SELF-EVALUATION

- Ask students to copy statements a–d. Then they decide individually how well they can do each thing. Point out that number 4 is very positive and number 1 is the least positive.

- You can also use the key competences evaluation rubric to evaluate how well students have done in the key competences associated with this project.

- You could then conduct a class discussion on what the students found easy and difficult about doing the project, and what they might do differently if they did the project again.

2 Elementary 21st Century Skills Project **Web page: the low-down on our town**

Key Competences Evaluation Rubric

Student's name: .... Class: ....

KEY COMPETENCE	**4** EXCELLENT	**3** GOOD	**2** ADEQUATE	**1** NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Learning to learn In step 5, the student shows an ability to reflect on the level of success of the web pages, in terms of clarity, interest and appeal. The student is proactive and reasonable in offering constructive criticism and a balanced evaluation. In the self-evaluation in step 6, the student shows a real understanding and awareness of his/her own learning which is reflected in the scoring.				
Digital competence In step 4, the student demonstrates a confident use of the internet as a research tool in order to research appropriate content, photos and maps for the web page. In step 5, the student demonstrates an understanding of technology and digital formats, and their uses and benefits, when giving the presentation to the rest of the class.				
Social and civic competence The student participates well and is supportive in all the pair- and groupwork activities. In the group discussion in step 3 and in the distribution of the tasks in step 4, the student demonstrates respect for others and an ability to work cooperatively as part of a team. In step 5, the student demonstrates a real interest in other students' web pages and this is evident in the choice of feedback.				