

# ICT

## Study Module 7

# Combining and presenting information

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# 7 Combining and presenting information

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

-  plan a publication
-  devise criteria for judging the success of a publication
-  create page- and screen-appropriate layouts
-  select and combine different types of information
-  check and amend your publication at each stage of a task

## Introduction

In this module, you will learn how to plan and produce effective publications for print and for screen, bringing together content from a number of sources – some you have created and some you have selected from secondary sources.

### Skill Standards covered

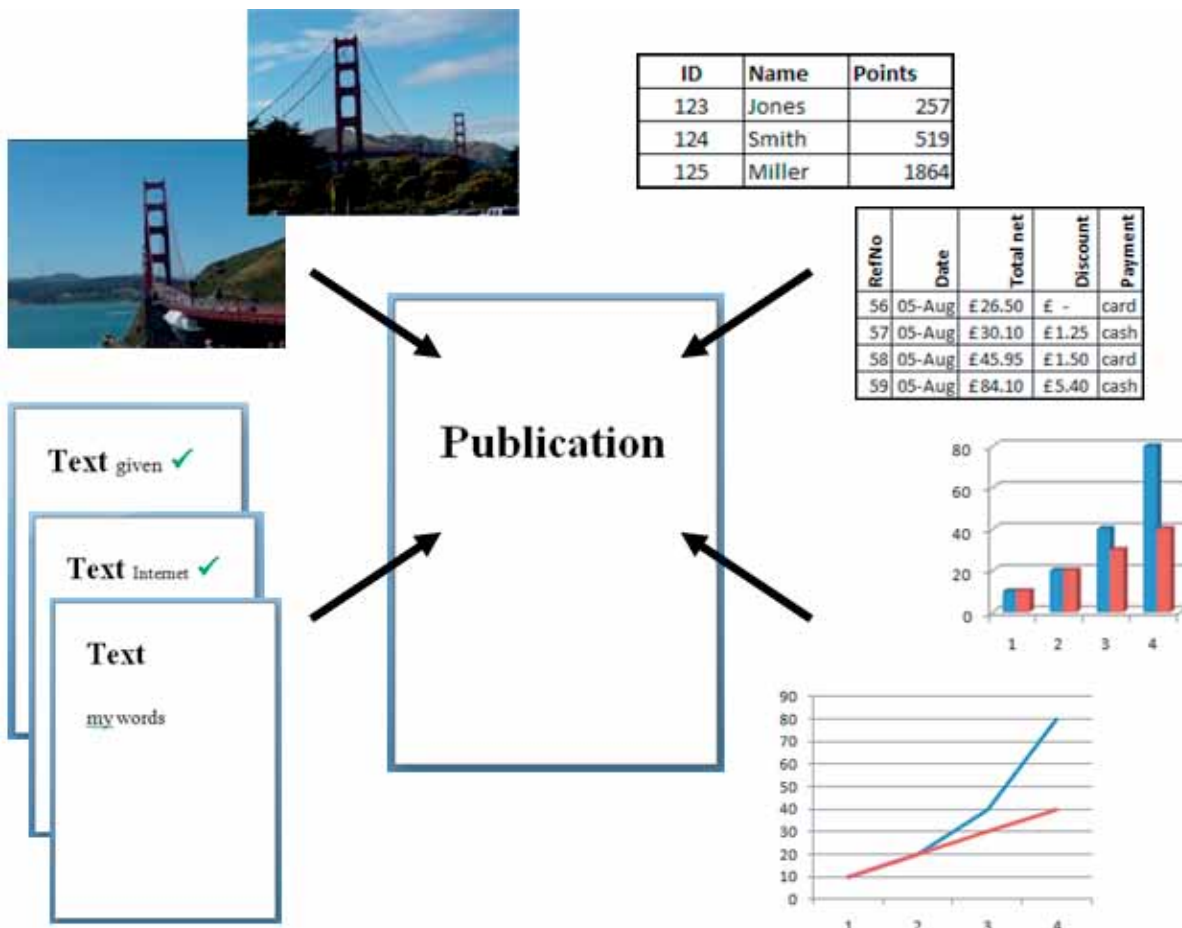
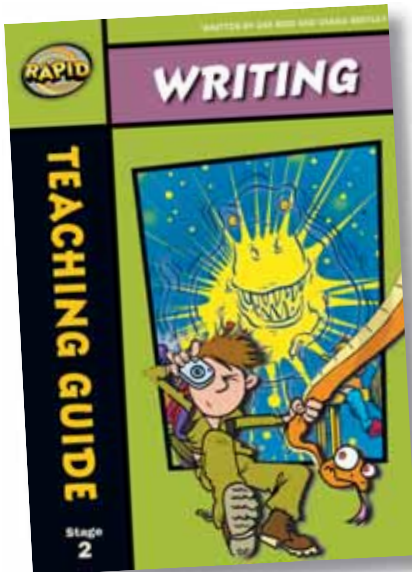
At Level 1, you can...		At Level 2, you can...	
<b>1</b>	Identify the ICT requirements of a straightforward task	<b>1</b>	Plan solutions to complex tasks by analysing the necessary stages
1.1	Use ICT to plan and organise work	1.1	Use ICT to plan and analyse complex or multi-step tasks and activities and to make decisions about suitable approaches
<b>2</b>	Interact with and use ICT systems to meet requirements of a straightforward task in a familiar context	<b>2</b>	Select, interact with and use ICT systems safely and securely for a complex task in non-routine and unfamiliar contexts
2.1	Select and use software applications to meet needs and solve straightforward problems	2.1	Select and use software applications to meet needs and solve complex problems
<b>10</b>	Combine information within a publication for a familiar audience and purpose	<b>9</b>	Combine and present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience
10.1	For print and for viewing on screen	9.1	Organise and integrate information of different types to achieve a purpose, using accepted layouts and conventions as appropriate
10.2	Check for accuracy and meaning	9.2	Work accurately and check accuracy, using software facilities where appropriate
<b>11</b>	Evaluate own use of ICT tools	<b>10</b>	Evaluate the selection, use and effectiveness of ICT tools and facilities used to present information
11.1	At each stage of a task and at the task's completion	10.1	At each stage of a task and at the task's completion

## A


## Effective publications

Producing an effective publication involves making decisions:


- Who is the publication aimed at? (the target audience)
- Why is it needed?
- What must it include?
- What type of publication is best? Will it be on-screen or printed?



## Skill Builder 7.1

-  Different publications suit different purposes and audiences. Open digital asset SB7.1.1.
- Read the purposes described in column A, then drag and drop the examples that match them into column B.
- In column C, write down characteristics of each type of publication.
- If you have or know of examples, note them down in column D.
- What sort of publication is this Module? Think of one word to describe it. Add it to the collection of publications – if it does not match one of the given purposes, create a new one in column A.
- If you can think of more types of publication, extend the table and add them.

## Skill Builder 7.2

-  Look at the publications below (reproduced as digital assets SB7.2.1-3). Describe them in terms of their:

- audience and purpose
- content and layout
- use of colour
- use of images
- writing style







## Planning

Make sure you understand exactly what is required before you start.

Even when pressed for time, it is well worth spending some time planning what you will produce before you start making it.

- What content do you need? Where will you get it from?
- How much time will it take to prepare it?
- How long will it take you to combine all the components?
- How will you know if your publication is a success?

Don't forget to allocate sufficient time at the end to review what you have produced and make any last minute changes you think are necessary.



## Getting started

A publication starts off as a blank or 'white' space - a rectangular area of paper such as A4 or a computer screen. The width of a computer screen is usually greater than its height. Consequently, screen-based publications use landscape orientation to achieve the best fit. Print-based publications can be portrait or landscape.

Print-based publications must have margins because many standard printers cannot print right up to the edge. There is no need for screen-based publications to have margins since they are not intended to be printed. Indeed it would look very odd if they did, just as print-based ones would if they did not.


If a publication consists of more than one page or screen, the likelihood is that there will be some items of information repeated on each page/screen, for example the running number of the page or slide, the date, a company name/logo or the copyright symbol.

Word processing software lets you put such information into a header or footer. When using presentation software, you can create your own sub-areas on the 'master' slide or select the template that best fits your task.

### Tip

When working on a paper-based publication with very narrow margins, select the printer you want to use early on and send one page to it. If you get the warning message that margins are outside the printable area, cancel the print job, adjust the margins and try again. Remember, some software applications will allow you to reduce the 'page' to fit into the physical margins for printing.

**Skill Builder 7.3**

-  Can you transfer a layout from paper to screen?
- Take a sheet of A4 paper and fold it in half. (A5 size)
- Open digital asset SB7.2.1.
- With your A5-sized paper, cover the lower half of the publication.  
Could the upper half be:
  - a web page?
  - a presentation slide?
- If so, what would you expect to be repeated on subsequent pages/slides?
- If not – why not?
- Do the same with digital assets SB7.2.2 and SB7.2.3.

**Selecting content**

You are likely to find yourself with quite a collection of items – text, images, tables, charts – that you would like to include in the publication. You may well end up with more than you can fit into the available space.

You must decide: what is ‘headline’ material and what tells the rest of your story? Start by ranking your information. Which one is the clearest and best suited to the audience and purpose? Which ones support your key messages or main points? Which ones must you include? Which are optional?

**Text**

This is likely to come from more than one source and be written in different styles.

- Only include text that is relevant.
- Make sure the style is consistent. Be prepared to rewrite or reword.
- Stick to short, snappy bullets if you are producing a presentation or poster.

**Images**

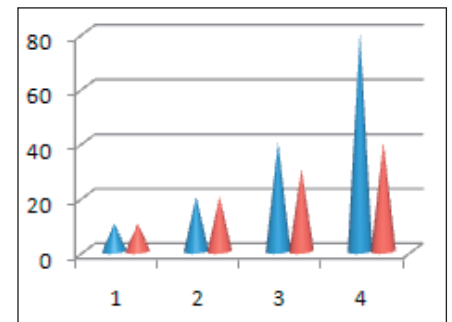
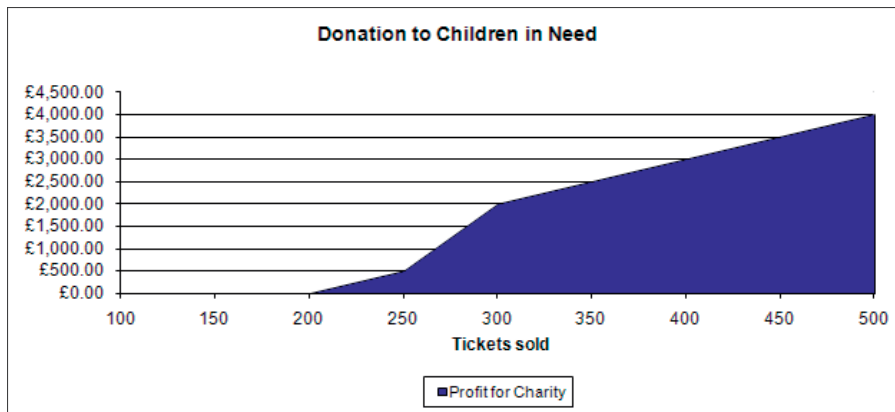
These can be very effective at attracting people’s attention. Never use images just for the sake of it. Make sure that images are appropriate for the topic and send out the right message. Make sure the images you select have a suitable resolution. An image designed to be displayed on screen may not look good when printed.

## Table

Use a table whenever a grid of rows and columns will make the information clearer. If you import a table into a publication, be prepared to re-size it so that all the column headings are displayed in full. Consider using just part of a table if the whole thing would be too overwhelming.

## Graphs and charts

Use a graph or chart to provide numerical information.



## Where will they go?

Position key information prominently and make it stand out from everything else. Fit less important information into the remaining space. Leave items out if they are not essential. Provide links to sources of further information for those who want to know more.

Keep related items together – don't put numbers, a graph or an image 'out on a limb', away from the text that gives them meaning.



A headline or title is usually positioned at the top of the page or screen. Its size and formatting must give it impact. It should be short and succinct!

## Positioning images

When using images and text together, each image must relate to the text nearby, but there should be enough space around the image to separate it from the text. You may want to wrap text around an image, but check that the text is not so broken up that it is difficult to read.

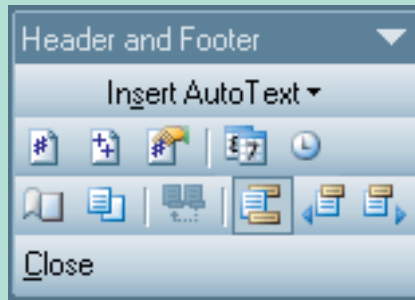


### Skill Builder 7.4

-  Open digital asset SB7.4.1.
-  Insert the picture digital asset SB7.4.2 into the text. Drag it to roughly the centre of the block of text. Format the picture so that the text wraps tightly around it. If necessary, drag it to a position where it is completely surrounded by text.

**Skill Builder 7.5**

- Open a new blank document in a word processing application. This will have default page layout settings. Make sure the document view is 'Print layout', so that you see the page on the screen as it will appear when printed. In Microsoft Word, the page view settings are in the 'View' menu.
- Open the 'Page Setup' dialogue (in Word this is in the 'File' menu). Use the dialog to set up an A4 size landscape format page with 2.5cm margins all round.
- Open the 'Columns format' dialogue (in Word this is in the 'Format' menu). Use the dialogue to set up three columns with a gutter width of 1.5cm (spacing) and a vertical line.
- Open the 'View header/footer' dialogue (in Word this is in the 'View' menu).
- This will open the top margin and allow you to enter a header (usually a small amount of text and/or a small graphic). Enter the text 'Page header'.
- Scroll down the page so that the footer area is visible. Click in the footer (again, this is normally a small amount of text, often with the page number) or use the icon on the toolbar. Click on the 'Insert page number' button in the dialogue to insert the page number.
- Close the 'View header/footer' dialogue box.
- With your cursor anywhere on the page (except the header/footer), press Ctrl and Enter to enter a page break and create a new, empty page. Do this a few times. Look at the header on each page – the same text should appear on each page. Look at the footer on each page – the page number on each page should be one greater than the previous page.
- Edit the page footer on any page to include the date. Check that the date now appears on all pages.
- You might want to save this document as a three-column template file.





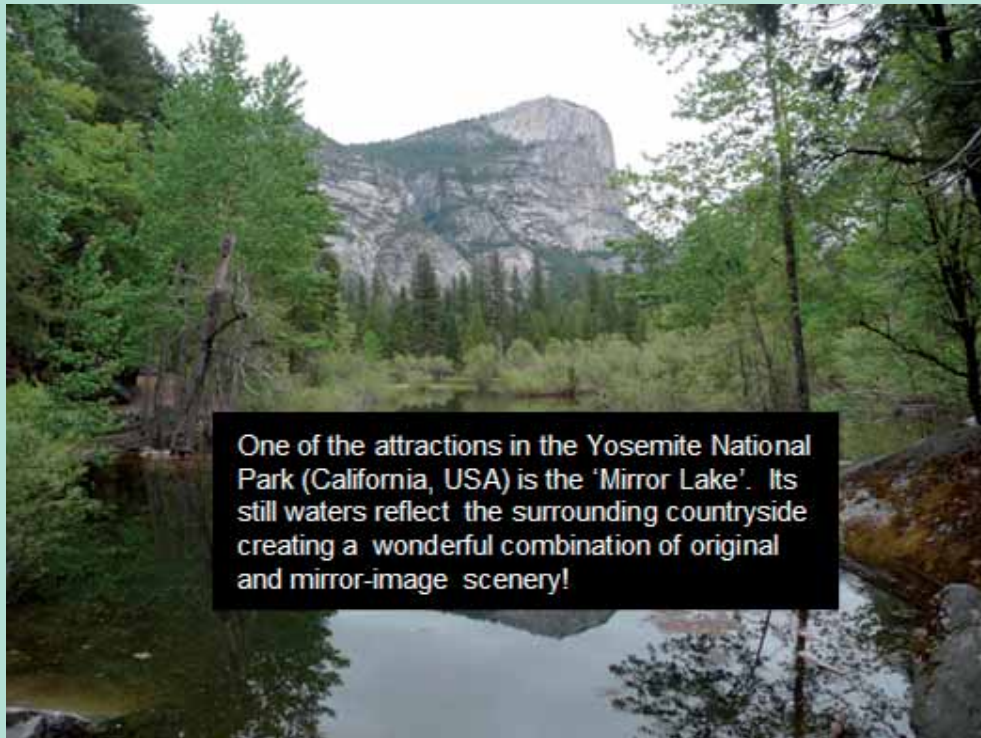
## What style?

Having decided on the layout, you need to decide on the style of the publication.

Think carefully about what style you will use. What are you trying to achieve? Should the publication attract attention, appeal to children, look professional, impress someone?

### Skill Builder 7.6

Look at the page about the Mirror Lake below. What is wrong with this design?



### Colours

- Don't use too many colours – it can look messy.
- Use light pastel shades as well as bright or dark colours. They can be easier to read if you have text on a colour block.
- Choose background and foreground colours that work well together. The foreground and text should stand out.
- Headings can be highlighted by using different colour combinations.
- Be aware of people with colour vision deficiency when choosing colours.

### Tip

- Make the most of the space you have, but don't try to squash in too much.
- Keep the layout balanced – headlines alone don't tell the full story!
- Use headings and sub-headings to help people find information they want to read.
- Use bullets to make a list of points easier to read.
- Don't be afraid to have some white space. It helps the reader see each part clearly.

## Fonts

- Choose a font that is easy to read.
- Use as few fonts as possible! Too many font types look messy.
- Choose the size according to the importance of the text.
- Do not use all UPPER CASE type in your publications. It can make the text difficult to read.

Choose a clear font	<i>Choose a clear font</i>	Choose a clear font
choose a clear font	<i>Choose a clear font</i>	<b>Choose a clear font</b>
Some fonts are clearer than others		


## Alignment

Try right and left alignment as well as centring information to see what looks best.

## Borders

Page borders sometimes look effective. However, if there is already a lot of information on a page, the border can make it look crowded. Borders and lines can also be used within a publication to make a particular section stand out.

### Skill Builder 7.7

-  Look at digital assets SB7.7.1 and SB7.7.2 (below). Are they fit for purpose?




- Why has each of the posters been produced?
- Who is the target audience for each poster?
- How does each poster attract attention?
- Is the information clearly presented?
- Which poster do you think does its job best? Why?





**Skill Builder 7.9**

 For a big event to be successful, such as the Bentley Charity Ball, it needs to be advertised widely and in different ways.

- Create a printed poster, a digital poster and a flyer to advertise the Bentley Ball using the information in the 'zipped' folder *Bentley Charity Ball*.
- In addition, produce a five-slide presentation for members of the council. The presentation must include:
  - details about the organiser
  - details about the taxi firm's special offer
  - a graph about income and expenditure, showing the break-even point (when the organisers start making a profit)
  - a graph showing how much money the event can raise for Children in Need
- There is a text document with information, as well as other files you can use, or you can search the internet for more.

**Keep on checking**

No matter how pleased you are with what you've produced, there is always room for improvement. Keep checking your work as you go along and especially when you think you have finished. Pay attention to:

**Success criteria**

What did you set out to achieve? Look back on the success criteria you set yourself at the outset. Can you tick them all off? Think about the quality too. How well does your publication meet its purpose?

**Language**

Is text clear and easy to read? SMS-style spelling might be just right to get a message across to teenagers, but think twice before using it in a publication aimed at older generations. And certainly never use it in formal documents or letters.

**Content**

Have you included all the required content? If you have missed out anything essential, add it!

**Accuracy**

Are facts, figures and calculations correct? Check them all. You don't want to risk embarrassment and blame by getting things wrong!

Have you spell-checked it? Is the meaning clear? Most spell checkers ignore the context in which a word appears. Very few can handle 'meaning'. So it is up to you to check that your publication makes sense.

## Look and feel

Are the colours appropriate? Do the combinations clash? If so, change them!

## Tip

If your spell checker also checks sentence structure (grammar), note the colour coding: red for spelling, green for grammar.

## B Wrapping up

### Skill Check – make sure you know how to:

- ✓ plan a publication
- ✓ devise criteria for judging the success of a publication
- ✓ import, size and position images and other components
- ✓ size and position images
- ✓ align text and other components
- ✓ use headings and sub-headings
- ✓ use styles for headings, sub-headings and body text
- ✓ adjust line spacing
- ✓ wrap text
- ✓ use bullets and numbered lists
- ✓ use lines and borders
- ✓ *use columns (L2)*
- ✓ insert page breaks
- ✓ use headers and footers
- ✓ insert page numbers
- ✓ adjust margins
- ✓ change page orientation
- ✓ use a spell-checker
- ✓ check for accuracy, meaning and fitness for purpose

## Test Tips

- Task 3 focuses on bringing together information from a number of sources. This task is worth the most marks, so plan what you need to do before you start. Keep in mind audience and purpose when selecting what information and images to include. If you haven't been able to produce all the information that is needed, put in a place holder to indicate where you would have put it.
- Check out the sample tests. What information is required for the poster and where does it come from? What information is required by the leaflet? In the Level 2 test, how does information provided by the chart in Task 2 influence the content of the leaflet in Task 3?