

Advice for teachers considering using the Near Space Launch resources

We wanted to base it around on the space project that was provided by LGfL, that was a really nice hook for the children.

They loved the idea of this robot going up into space and thinking about the different emotions that he was going through.

Dan: Right. We're going to do a countdown to link the two things together.

We started by kind of putting the children into the situation and thinking about how

Picoh would feel about it if he'd heard that that was what was going to happen.

And that led into discussions around those emotions and what he would say and how he would act.

Have you checked? Everything is working.

Ohbot: This aircraft seems to be held together with tape

And then we build on that again to have conversations with one another leading to the final lesson where they reenact the space launch and they go through the different stages of launch and with the hope of getting the green screen out and literally re-enacting the moment they happened.

Ohbot: Starting to have second thoughts about this whole thing.

It's really exciting footage. It just takes the whole journey of setting up the hot air balloon with the robot suspended from it and then the launch of the Ohbot Right up into near space.

Actually, you can see the Ohbot actually going above the clouds. It's very exciting.

Make sure there's enough helium in the balloon and then that mad chase to retrieve the robot when actually it lands in a field in Norfolk.

So it's a really exciting project, just one of like a couple of hours of footage broken down into and really bite sized activities. So actually what we've done is looked at those little individual footage

and thought, OK, how can we make this accessible to the classroom?

What can we do? What cross curricular links can we use?

So when we introduced the code to the students, first of all, we showed them the videos of the near space launch and it just really showed them some of the things you can do with physical robot devices.

Some of those ideas, for example, creating narrative stories, creating a fictional event was very easy, especially because the videos allow themselves to be interpreted that way. I think one of the most exciting part of this project, actually,

The live robot launch was that we didn't know what's going to happen. It was a real one off situation. There was real jeopardy. There was the Ohbot going to land somewhere where it could be retrieved.

Was it the robot going to go into the sea? And I think that is a really exciting curriculum aspect actually, for creative writing.

Have that Jeopardy aspect. Is it going to make it? I'll be able to find it. And it was real time. You know, we actually have footage of the dash in the car to try and get that robot back. So we've got that real. Is it going to work? Are we going to be retrieved at that jeopardy, that sort of creativity is really there?

The children are going to be inspired by that. They're going to want to think about, OK, what else can I write? What else can I mirror that in a creative perhaps a piece of writing, a cliff-hanger they can really think about Jeopardy! And, it brings that spark of imagination in, doesn't it?

So the Ohbot launch materials actually helped us to be able to say the maths can influence what's going to happen with the Ohbot and you can change the story based on the maths.

So although maths doesn't necessarily always look at the story, we can influence the story by using the maths and just generating lots of different outcomes based on things like the angles or the speed or anything like that. So using those maths skills in that real life context makes a real big difference to children.