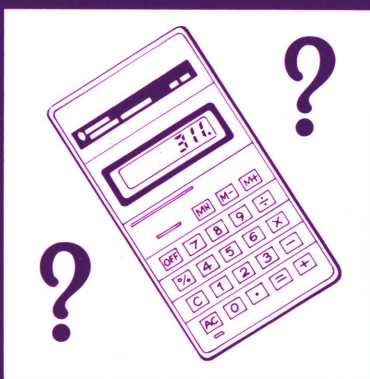


Be a Shrewd Chooser



Shell Centre for Mathematical Education

Joint Matriculation Board



Be a Shrewd Chooser

This booklet is about

- how people choose things to buy or do,
- how people could make better decisions,
- making consumer reports to advise people.

As you work through it, we hope that you will see ways of making better choices in *your* life.

There are four stages involved.



Stage 1
Learning from experience
Pages 2 to 8



Stage 2
Preparing your research
Pages 9 to 17



Stage 3
Carrying out your research
Pages 18 to 22



Stage 4
Presenting and evaluating the reports
Pages 23 to 24

Stage 1 Learning from experience



We all have to make choices.

Have you ever made a choice that you later regretted?

In this stage, you will listen to the 'Shrewd Chooser Radio Show' and consider

- how the method of choosing depends on the item you buy,
- how different people go about choosing pairs of training shoes,
- how a group of students produced their consumer report called 'Drinking Orange!'

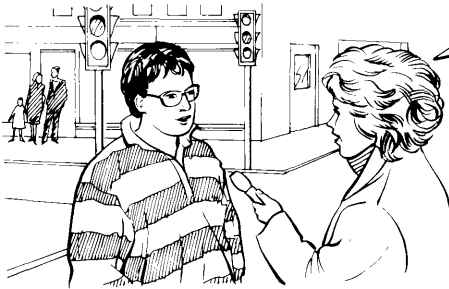
You will then discuss your own experiences

Later on, you will write a consumer report about an item of your own choice.

The Shrewd Chooser Radio Show

Part 1: People making choices

Listen to the first part of the radio show. Five people are being interviewed about things they have just bought.



Excuse me, but I'm doing some consumer research for the Shrewd Chooser Radio Show. Would you mind answering a few questions about your purchase?

As you listen, think and make notes on the 'People making choices' sheet. Leave the last column blank for the time being.

What factors were important to the people being interviewed? (For example, price, size.)



How did they go about making their choices? (For example, looking in catalogues.)

STAGE 1

The Shrewd Chooser Radio Show

Part 1: People making choices

Name:	Important factors and specifications	How the choice was made	How you would choose a similar item
Philip Coles			
Item	Occasion (wedding)	Went into one shop, tried on a few and	I would go into 3 or 4 shops and
Suit	Price Weight (light)		I would make sure that I knew

After you have made notes on all five interviews, discuss what you have written and then fill in the final column.

The Shrewd Chooser Radio Show

Part 2: Choosing a pair of training shoes

Now listen to the second part of the radio show.



Three people are being interviewed to find out how they went about choosing pairs of trainers.

As you listen to each interview note down the factors that each person took into account.

After each interview, in your group,

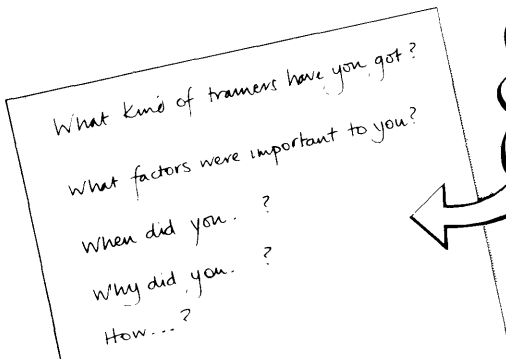
- agree on the list of factors used,
- describe how the person went about making the choice,
- describe any mistakes made and suggest how they could have been avoided.

After hearing all the interviews, as a class, try to make a *complete* list of the factors that may affect a person's choice of training shoes. Can you decide which is the most important factor?

You are now going to interview a friend to find out about

- the trainers he or she already owns,
- what he or she will look for when next buying a pair.

Begin by writing down the things you will ask.



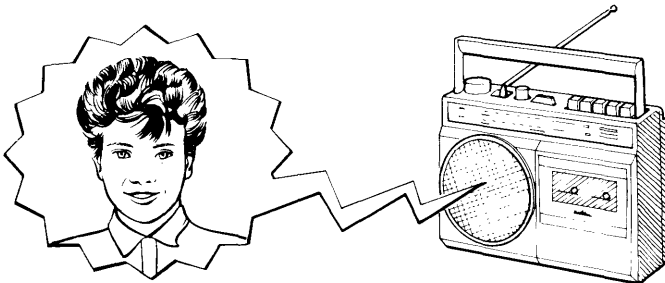
Try to use questions that start 'What did you ...?' or 'Why did you ...?' etc. You will find out more that way.

Now interview your partner.

Make notes of the replies, and any follow-up questions you ask.

Then let your partner interview you.

You could tape your interviews and play them to the rest of the class, or perhaps you could act them out



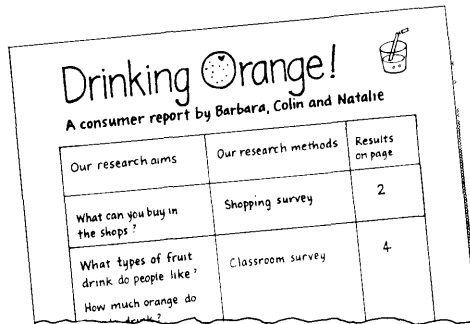
Finally, as a class, compare the different ways you went about choosing your trainers. Try to give reasons for any differences.

The Shrewd Chooser Radio Show

Part 3: Looking at a consumer report

Three students have written a consumer report called 'Drinking Orange!'

You will need to refer to it as you listen to the tape.



Our research aims	Our research methods	Results on page
What can you buy in the shops?	Shopping survey	2
What types of fruit drink do people like? How much orange do people drink?	Classroom survey	4

In the radio programme the students describe how they

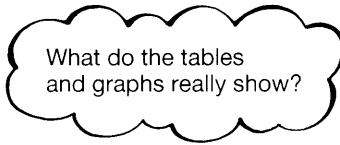
- visited shops and looked in the public library,
- carried out a classroom survey,
- carried out some classroom 'taste' experiments.

After hearing about each section of the report, you will be asked to

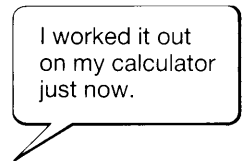
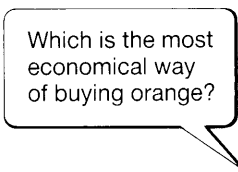
- describe *exactly* what the students did,



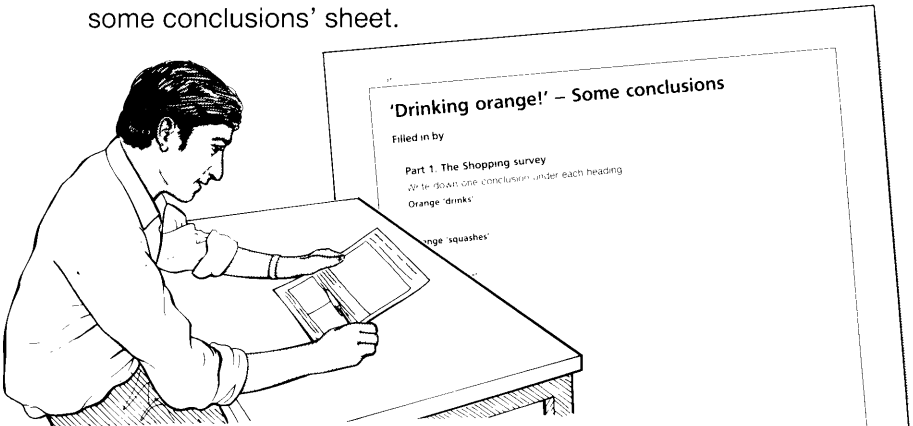
- get to grips with their report,



- answer some discussion questions about the report,



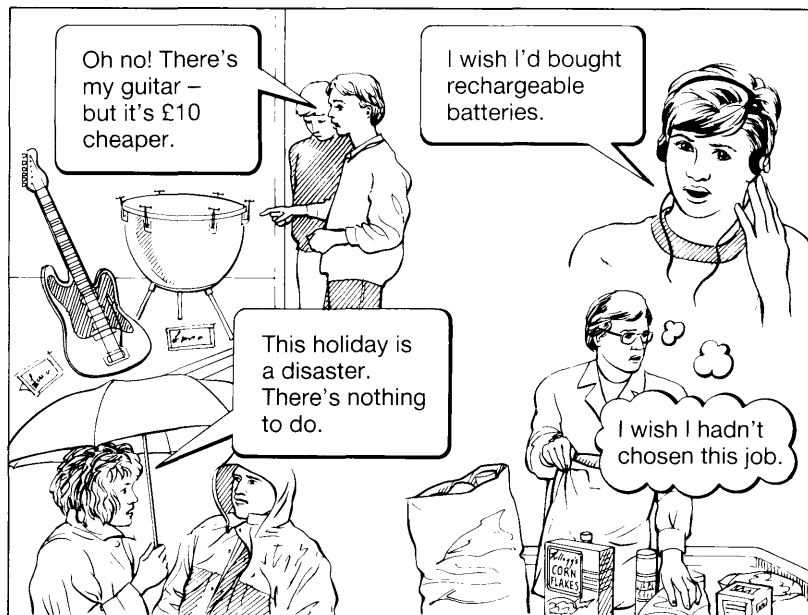
- write down what you learn from the report on a 'Drinking Orange! – some conclusions' sheet.



Soon you will be asked to produce your own consumer report. Will you be able to produce a better one than this?

Learning from your own experiences

We all make mistakes



Note down your own experiences on a 'Learning from mistakes' sheet.

STAGE 1

Learning from mistakes

Filled in by *Sanjay Masram*

What did you choose?

A November holiday in Wales

Now in your group, take it in turns to describe what you have written.

Stage 2 Preparing your research



In this stage your group will begin to work on your own consumer report.

You will need to

- choose an item to research,
- decide what people want to know,
- plan how you will carry out your research,
- share out the research tasks and make final preparations.

Choosing your item

You should try to make your report as interesting and useful as possible.

So you have to choose your item carefully.

Make sure that

- people in your class have some experience of choosing or using the item,
- you can carry out some tests on it in the classroom,
- the item is cheap enough for you to bring samples to school.

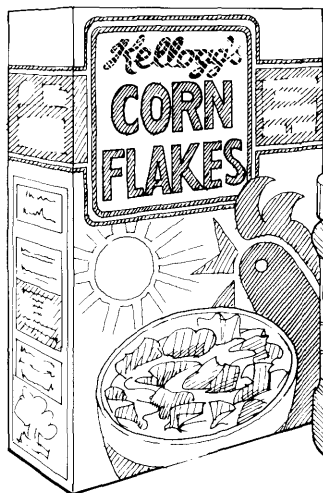
Here are some ideas to start you thinking.

In your group, think of other items that you, your family or your school often choose.



Let's do a consumer report on crisps. Everyone buys them, and there are lots of different kinds. We can do surveys, taste experiments,



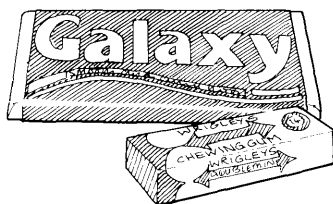
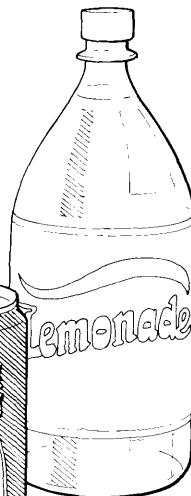
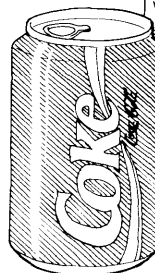


Breakfast cereals



Coffee or Tea

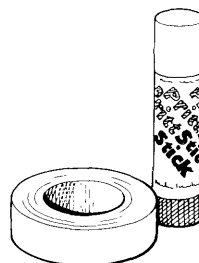
Soft drinks



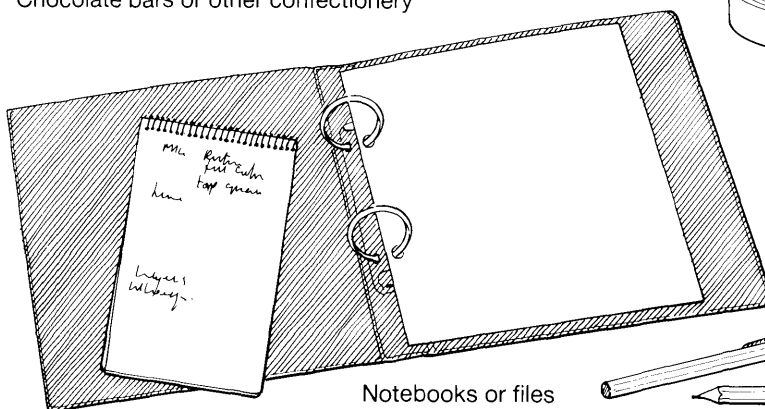
Chocolate bars or other confectionery



Batteries

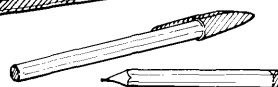


Sticky tape or glue



Notebooks or files

Pencils, pens



When your group has chosen an item, tell your teacher about it.

Deciding what people want to know

On a 'Possible aims of research' sheet,

- list the kinds of people who may be interested in your report,
- list the factors that they may want to know more about.
(For example, prices.)

TUCK SHOP

The person who runs the school tuck shop would want to know about prices and brands of crisps.



A parent of a young child would want to know what ingredients they contain.



STAGE 2

Possible aims of research

Name *Rami Hussein*

Kind of person who may be interested in your report

School tuck shop

Parent of a young child

Item for research *Crisps*

Factors that the person is interested in

*Prices, Brand names, Flavours
ingredients, fat, salt
colouring etc.*

Now, at the bottom of the sheet,

- write down a list of research aims that you might like to work on.

Research aims	Suitable research methods
To find out which flavours people say they prefer	Questionnaire around the class.
To see if people really can tell one flavour from another	Get people to taste crisps and guess the flavour
To find out which crisps give you most for your money	Go round the shops on the way home and do a survey of prices and weights check the weights on classroom scales

BE A SHREWD CHOOSER
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M25

In your group, discuss how you could achieve your research *aims*.
What research *methods* could you use?

Read through the ideas on the next two pages before you fill in the
'Suitable research methods' column.

Planning how you will carry out your research

Your research methods may include

- carrying out a survey in the classroom,



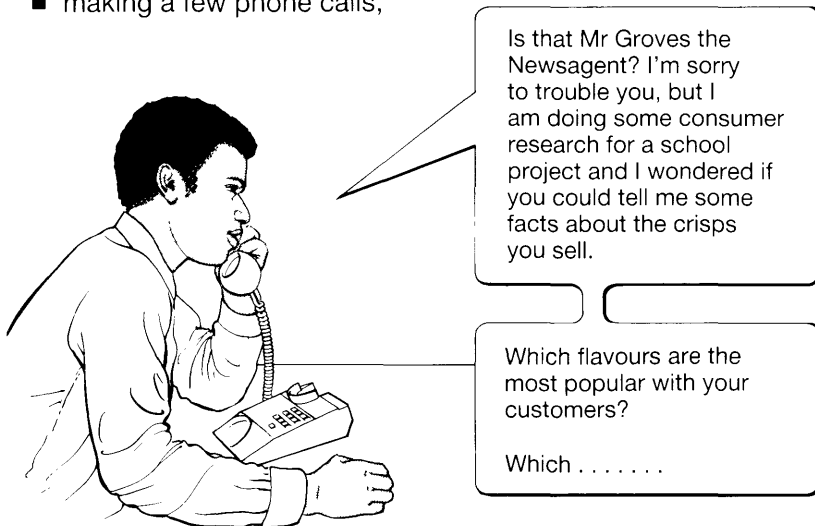
- carrying out an experiment in the classroom,



- making a short visit to some local shops,



- making a few phone calls,



- visiting the local public library and looking at consumer reports.

In your group, decide which methods are best for achieving each aim.

Describe the methods in the 'Suitable research methods' column.

Sharing out the research tasks and making final preparations

Each member of your group should choose one or two research aims to explore. (Try to make sure that everyone in the group has something they can do in the classroom.)

On a 'Final plan' sheet

- write down the particular aim(s) that *you* will explore,
- write down *your* research methods.

Attach to this sheet

- any questionnaires or survey sheets you plan to use,
- lists showing *all* the equipment you need for your experiments and the names of those responsible for bringing it,
- any tables or charts you will use to help you record information.



Look back at the 'Drinking Orange!' survey for detailed ideas on questionnaires, methods, tables and charts

Final plan

Filled in by Philip Swan
Subject for our consumer report Crisps

Research aim(s)

- To find out if people can tell one flavour from another
- To find out how much people like the different flavours

Research method(s)

Describe in detail how you will achieve your aim(s)

- Arrange 9 different flavours in a row Blindfold
30 people and ask them to taste each flavour and
- say what flavour they think it is
 - say which flavour they like best

How will you collect

Attach to this sheet

- any questionnaires
- lists showing responsible
- any tables

Table for recording our results

REAL FLAVOUR	WHAT PEOPLE THINK THE FLAVOUR IS								
	Plain	Bacon	Cheese and Onion	Chicken	Salt n Vinegar	Beef	Prawn Cocktail	Herb	Worcester Sauce
Plain									
Bacon									
Cheese and Onion									
Chicken									
Salt n Vinegar									
Beef									
Prawn Cocktail									
Herb									
Worcester Sauce									

List of what we need to bring
Crisps- Plain, Bacon, Cheese n Onion,
Chicken, Salt n Vinegar, Beef,
Herb, Worcester

This would mean that 3 people think that they are tasting what they are really tasting chicken crisps

Stage 3 Carrying out your research



In this stage, your group will carry out your final plan, and prepare a consumer report on your chosen item.

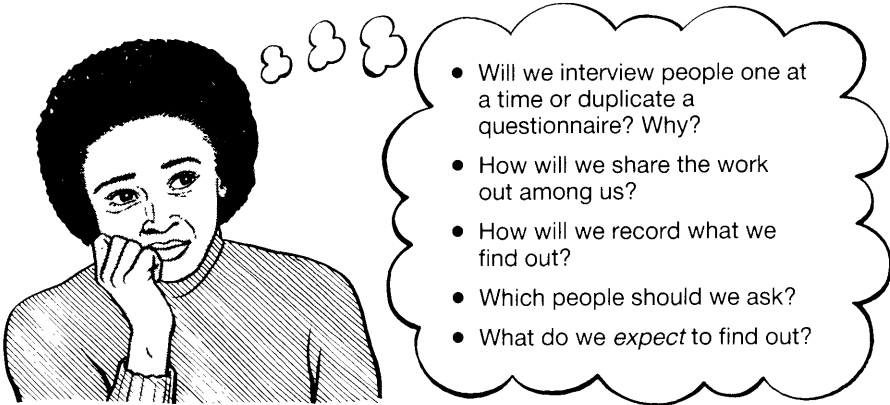
You will need to

- collect and organise your data,
- decide how to present your report,
- complete your final report.

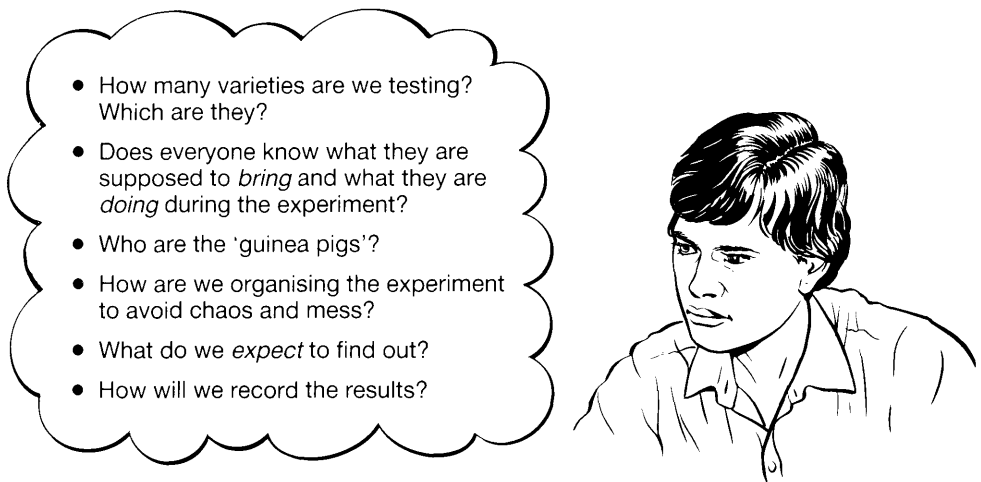
Collecting and organising the data

As a final check, answer the questions below that apply to your group, then carry out your final plan.

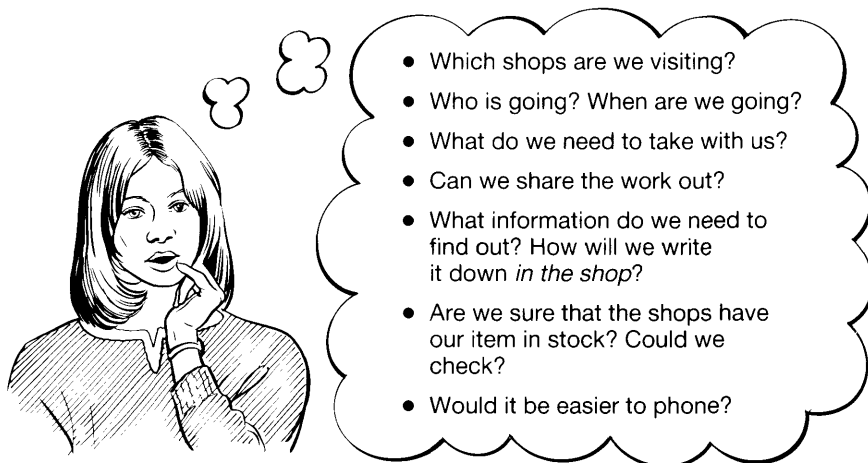
- If you are doing a classroom survey, ask yourself . . .



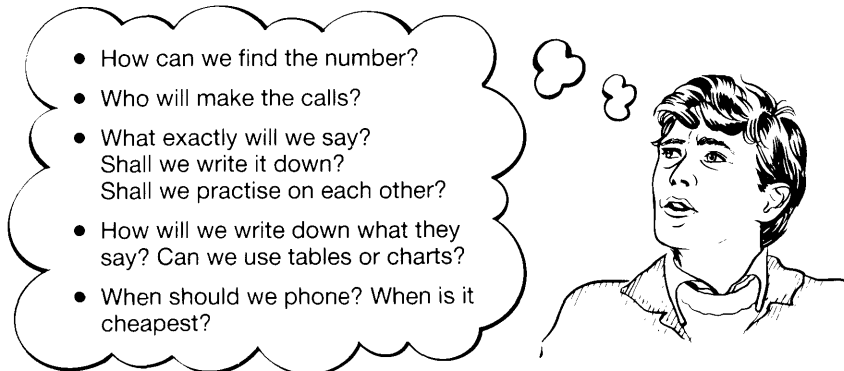
- If you are doing a classroom experiment, ask yourself . . .



- If you are visiting some local shops, ask yourself . . .



- If you are making phone calls, ask yourself . . .



- If you are using consumer reports, ask yourself . . .



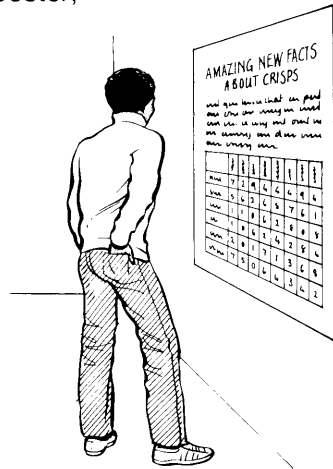
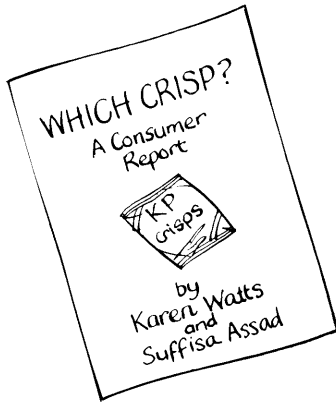
Now carry out your plan

Deciding how to present your consumer report

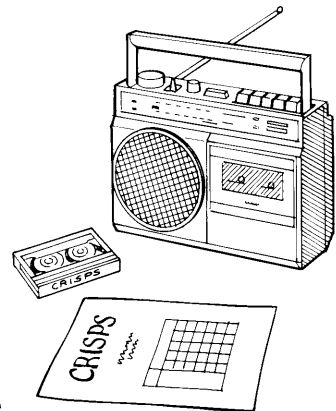
You can present your report in many ways.

You could produce

- a written report,
- a poster,



- an oral presentation with written handouts,
- a taped radio show with written handouts.



Decide which of these methods you will use.

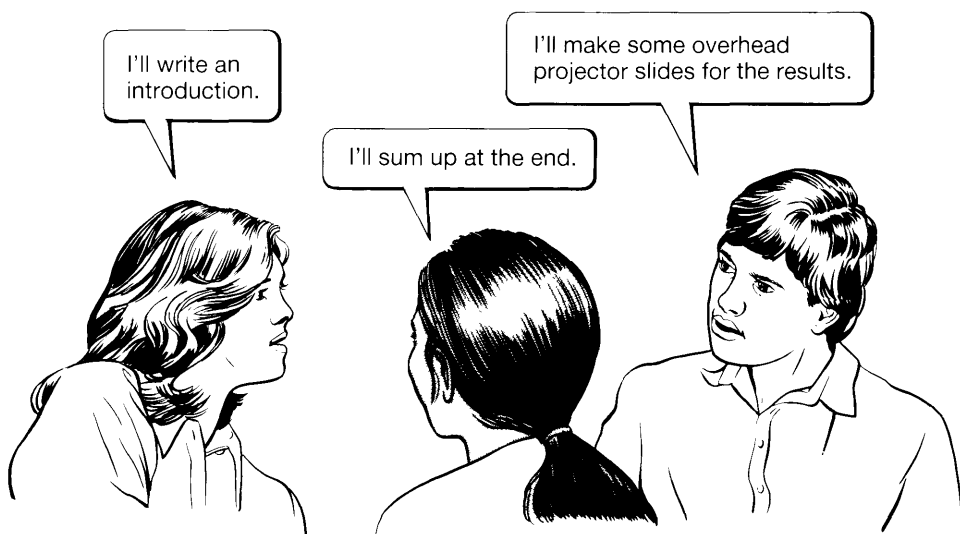
Completing your consumer report

Your report will need to include

- Your research aims,
 - what were you trying to find out?
- Your research methods,
 - how did you gather and organise your information?
- A summary of your data,
 - can you make this clear with pictures, tables, charts, graphs etc?
- Your conclusions.
 - what answers did you find to your questions?

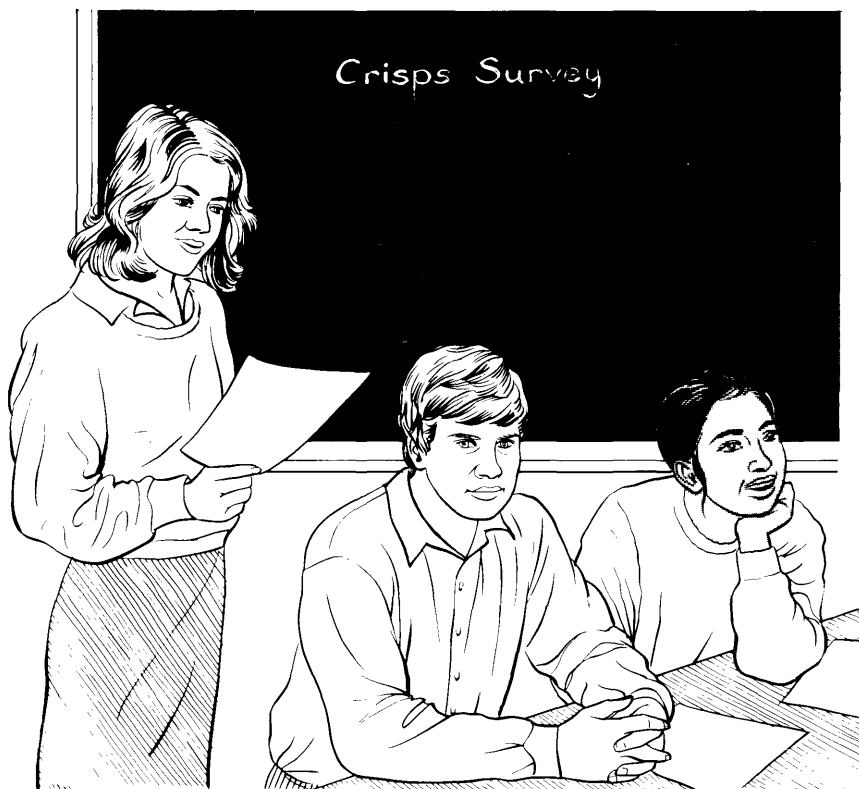
Share out this work among your group.

If you are giving an oral presentation or making a tape recording, then have a run-through to make sure that your report is clear, interesting and won't take too long.



Be prepared to answer questions about your report from the rest of the class.

Stage 4 Presenting & evaluating reports



In this stage, each group will present its report to the rest of the class.

You will

- read and listen to each report, ask questions and evaluate it,
- evaluate your own report in the light of comments made by other groups.

Evaluating other groups' reports

As you read or listen to a report, think



Was the report clear and interesting?
Were the surveys and experiments well organised?
What can you learn from the report?
How could the report be improved?

Afterwards, note down your opinions on an 'Evaluating a report' sheet.

A hand-drawn illustration of a rectangular sheet of paper with a wavy bottom edge. It contains the following text:

Organisation (Were the surveys and experiments well organised?)

Good points
+ was neat and the results were clear

Ways of improving the organisation
They could have explained what the numbers mean in the table on page 3 and included a copy of their questionnaire

Evaluating your own report

Read through all the comments that other people have made about your report. Underline the comments you agree with. Fill in an 'Evaluating a report' sheet about your own report, and, if you can, try to improve your report.

Now that all the reports are finished, think how you might use them . . .

Let's produce a consumer magazine for the school.



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