Year 5 – Programming A – Selection in physical computing

Unit introduction

In this unit, learners will use physical computing to explore the concept of selection in programming through the use of the Crumble programming environment. Learners will be introduced to a microcontroller (Crumble controller) and learn how to connect and program it to control components (including output devices — LEDs and motors). Learners will be introduced to conditions as a means of controlling the flow of actions in a program. Learners will make use of their knowledge of repetition and conditions when introduced to the concept of selection (through the 'if...then...' structure) and write algorithms and programs that utilise this concept. To conclude the unit, learners will design and make a working model of a fairground carousel that will demonstrate their understanding of how the microcontroller and its components are connected, and how selection can be used to control the operation of the model. Throughout this unit, learners will apply the stages of programming design.

There are two Year 5 programming units:

- Programming A – Selection in physical computing
- Programming B – Selection in quizzes

Overview of lessons

Lesson	Brief overview	Learning objectives
1 Connecting Crumbles	In this lesson, your learners will become familiar with the Crumble controller and the programming environment used to control it. Learners will connect a Sparkle to a Crumble and then program the Crumble to make the Sparkle flash different colour patterns. Learners will also use infinite loops, which were introduced to the learners in the previous school year.	To control a simple circuit connected to a computer • I can create a simple circuit and connect it to a microcontroller • I can program a microcontroller to make an LED switch on • I can explain what an infinite loop does

2 Combining output components	In this lesson, learners will connect a Sparkle and a motor to the Crumble controller. Learners will design sequences of actions for these components. They will then apply their understanding of repetition by using count-controlled loops when implementing their design as a program.	To write a program that includes count-controlled loops • I can connect more than one output component to a microcontroller • I can use a count-controlled loop to control outputs • I can design sequences that use count-controlled loops
3 Controlling with conditions	In this lesson, learners will be introduced to conditions, and how they can be used in programs to control their flow. They will identify conditions in statements, stating if they are true or false. Learners will be introduced to a Crumble switch, and learn how it can provide the Crumble controller with an input that can be used as a condition. They will explore how to write programs that use an input as a condition.	To explain that a loop can stop when a condition is met • I can explain that a condition is either true or false • I can design a conditional loop • I can program a microcontroller to respond to an input
4 Starting with selection	In this lesson, learners will develop their understanding of how the flow of actions in algorithms and programs can be controlled by conditions. They will be introduced to selection and then represent conditions and actions using the 'if…then…' structure. Learners will create algorithms that include selection. They will use their algorithms to guide their program writing. Learners will see that infinite repetition is required to repeatedly check if a condition has been met.	To explain that a loop can be used to repeatedly check whether a condition has been met • I can explain that a condition being met can start an action • I can identify a condition and an action in my project • I can use selection (an 'if…then…' statement) to direct the flow of a program
5 Drawing designs	In this lesson, learners will apply their understanding of microcontrollers and selection when designing a project to meet the requirements of a given task. To support their understanding, learners will identify how selection might be used in real-world situations, then they will consider how they can apply this	To design a physical project that includes selection • I can identify a real-world example of a condition starting an action • I can describe what my project will do • I can create a detailed drawing of my project

	knowledge to design their project. Learners will produce design sketches to show how their model will be made and how they will connect the microcontroller to its components.	
6 Writing and testing algorithms	In this final lesson of the unit, learners will develop Crumble programs to control the model of a fairground ride they built in Lesson 5. First, learners will identify how they are going to use selection before writing an algorithm to meet the requirements of the given task. They will then implement their algorithms as code. Learners will run their programs to identify any bugs, and then return to the code or algorithm to debug it where necessary. Finally, to conclude the unit, learners will evaluate their designs.	To create a program that controls a physical computing project • I can write an algorithm that describes what my model will do • I can use selection to produce an intended outcome • I can test and debug my project

Progression

This unit assumes that learners will have prior experience of programming using a block-based language (eg Scratch) and understand the concepts of sequence and repetition. The National Centre for Computing Education key stage 1 units focus on floor robots and ScratchJr, however, experience of other languages or environments may also be useful.

Curriculum links

Computing

- Design, write, and debug programs that accomplish specific goals, including controlling or simulating physical systems; solve problems by decomposing them into smaller parts
- Use sequence, selection, and repetition in programs; work with variables and various forms of input and output
- Use logical reasoning to explain how some simple algorithms work and to detect and correct errors in algorithms and programs
- Select, use, and combine a variety of software (including internet services) on a range of digital devices to design and create a range of programs, systems, and content that accomplish given goals, including collecting, analysing, evaluating, and presenting data and information

Science – Electricity (Year 4)

- Construct a simple series electrical circuit, identifying and naming its basic parts, including cells, wires, bulbs, switches, and buzzers

Design and Technology (Key stage 2)

Design

- Generate, develop, model, and communicate their ideas through discussion, annotated sketches, cross-sectional and exploded diagrams, prototypes, pattern pieces, and computer-aided design

Make

- Select from and use a wider range of tools and equipment to perform practical tasks [for example, cutting, shaping, joining, and finishing], accurately
- Select from and use a wider range of materials and components, including construction materials, textiles, and ingredients, according to their functional properties and aesthetic qualities

Evaluate

- Evaluate their ideas and products against their own design criteria and consider the views of others to improve their work

Technical knowledge

- Understand and use electrical systems in their products [for example, series circuits incorporating switches, bulbs, buzzers, and motors]
- Apply their understanding of computing to program, monitor, and control their products