

The Gifted and Talented Millennium Wheel Trip

Part 1 – the making of our own Millennium Wheel

Our trip on the Manchester Millennium wheel was a prize for designing and making the best millennium Wheel. Not only did we have to design the wheel but also make it out of nothing except A4 and A3 paper, a hole punch, a stick, masking tape, string, a rectangular piece of Styrofoam, two hollow plastic pipes, a weight, and nuts and bolts. This challenge was entertaining and fun.

The first thing that we needed to do was assemble some paper tubes. We did this by tightly wrapping paper around a stick and taping it at the end. It was quite surprising to find that the tubes we had made were actually really strong and could be used to assemble the rest of the wheel. The next thing the instructors told us to do was to punch holes in the end of each tube to allow the tubes to be connected to construct the eight segments that would make up the final wheel. While we were doing that the team had volunteered two people to make the stand that the wheel would be supported on and eventually spin. To create this they used the two plastic pipes which needed drilling to fit together and eventually placed into the Styrofoam. To keep it up a weight was used tied to a piece of string, this balanced the weight of the wheel it would have to support.

Four hours later after much concurring and hard work the wheel was assembled. And then the hard bit, letting the judges do what they were best at, judging. The wheel was judged on a number of categories; pipe quality, teamwork, the pod design, and tidiness. Well, we were quite tidy, our teamwork had been good with only a minimal amount of arguing, the pod was excellent and the pipes were acceptable but the overall wheel was wonky and we had our doubts about winning.

When the results came through from sixth position through to first each time we were expecting to be next. We got to second place and once again our name was not called out. We had done it Chapel-en-le-frith High School had won. The mini bus ride home was something to remember with everyone's spirits high and an awful lot of free orange juice we had gathered during the trip.

Part 2 – the prize

The prize was a trip to Manchester and was scheduled for the following Tuesday. Tuesday came around quickly and before we knew it we were back on the minibus travelling to Manchester. We arrived about eleven o'clock on a cloudy and cold morning. Despite this we were still in high spirits and the Millennium Wheel was in sight. A short trip across the centre of Manchester brought us right to the Millennium wheel and to the horror of some people in our group the entrance to the Arndale. The next few minute were tough. Unable to travel to the warmth and shopping pleasure of the Arndale centre, we stood waiting for the other school to arrive.

Our patience and determination were soon rewarded as around the corner appeared the other school that had come second in the competition we had attended the week before. Ten minutes later we were standing outside the capsules waiting for our chance to go on. As our Pod reached the top of the wheel we could see for miles around, with the prison in one direction and the prominent Plateau of Kinder Scout. You got an unreal sense of city and rural life. The on wheel commentary and the free compasses we had been issued with made it quick

and efficient to find the many landmarks in Manchester. The millennium wheel itself was spectacular. With its majestic structure and classy design it was the most prominent structure around.

After our time on the wheel we made our way back to the minibus and travelled the short distance to the Museum of Science and Engineering. There we had a guided tour around the various engines showing the history and progression of the Industrial Revolution. Next we had a great time in the hands on section in the museum. We pressed countless big red buttons and pulled endless levers. A quick lunch and a muffin from the canteen and we returned once again to the minibus, finishing our prize. On the way home in the minibus the general feel was of happiness as we thought of the day we had had.

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