[teacher] “What go on here might have to be totally different, and just using some of the ideas and re-thought for something that can be done by Year 6s. It doesn’t have to look like the old trail at all. It can be creative, but that’s up to you guys. See what you come up with. So that’s what I want you working on, while we’re going around. And I need it to be done properly, and be finished. And I do expect some of that will be thinking time, like ‘how is that going to work?’ Sort that out, fix the problem. Oh, and in enough detail so that I can actually see what you’re doing - so not just scribbled in some kind of language I can’t recognise. So reasonably neat. So I asked you to make your work public, to bring your share codes as well”

[...]

[teacher] “Make sure in your notes that anyone reading will know exactly where that task is (takes place)”

Technical issues + issues surrounding activities not being made public, share codes not being brought in = activities inaccessible

[students talking about making a pen and paper version of their activity, ways to make simple tasks more engaging]

[child1] “We’ve listed our things and how to change them for the pen and paper version. So it says take a picture of an area of interest, and we’ve just said draw a picture of an area of interest. Instead of finding the church in a location hunt, we’ve said follow these directions to the church. Would that work, for this? Because it’s the same instructions, but it’s...”

[researcher] “Yeah, so you’re converting it. In terms of like, making it useful for a trail though...so, ‘and area of interest’ is very general, isn’t it? I wonder if... are there particular areas of interest where you could maybe give hints as to what it might be, and then they have to find and draw it? Like make a puzzle out of it or something.”

[child1] “Yeah I guess. So, instead of saying ‘and area of interest’, give something more specific?”

[researcher] “Yeah, or like, clues towards it. If you’ve got a specific one in mind.”

[child1] “We did that” [shows researcher a clue leading to a statue of a horse]

[researcher] “Find this...?”

[child1] “Animal”

[researcher] “Ahhh. Right, I see, that’s cool.”

[child2] “We also gave a hint saying it’s not real, so they don’t photograph a seagull or something”

[child1] “Yeah that was our worry, that they could take pictures of seagulls, instead. But instead of just saying ‘take a picture of the grey horse’, we thought we’d give it a bit of a riddle instead.”

[...]

[researcher] “Were you able to get yours open? Oh, you were the ones who had the spaghetti hoops!”

[child3] “Sorry, didn’t have any other pictures on my phone...”

[researcher] “Ok, shall we walk through what you’ve done?”

[child3] “It’s not very good, we didn’t finish...we only got a couple of questions”

[researcher] “Is there anything from it which you do like, which you would want to be in something that got made?”

[can’t really hear]

[child5] How do I log out of my Google? If I tap it, it just logs me in.

[teacher] “Right, we’ve got 4 groups who identify themselves as being pretty good. Let’s have a look. These guys have given themselves a 9.235 out of 10, so you might want to check them out...”

[child6] “Sorry to make it awkward....”

[researcher] “So you like yours then? Alright, shall we go through it? What have you got?”

[child6] “An information...

TOO MUCH NOISE :(

[....]

[researcher] “You’ve done a large variety of things, which is good. But there’s not much there in the way of ...learning?”

[teacher] “It might have all the bells and whistles, but if you’re not learning anything, it’s pointless”

[researcher] “So how have you found converting from the app to pen and paper?”

[child7] “I think we’ve found it easier than other groups because we focussed more on the content than using all of the different interactions. So a lot of the content can be the same, it’s just changing how to interact with it.”

[researcher] “So do you think having more in-depth content has helped you then?”

[child7] “Mm hmm. Things like Match Photo - there’s not much there if you take the camera away”

[researcher] “So what might be worth doing is making sure that you write the answers to your questions down, so that if stuff gets used the person making it will know what the answers will be”

[researcher] “So where abouts do you start, where in the village is it?”

[child8] “Just outside the school gates”

[researcher] (reading) “make your way down to the coast to learn about the treacherous water in the area - and then is this location hunt down by the shore then?”

[child8] “And then it has follow up tasks”

[researcher] “Oh right, yeah. Cool. (Looking at multiple choice) What are your options... ah ok. What’s the right answer?”

[child8] “There isn’t really a right answer, it’s...”

[researcher] “Ah ok, like an opinion poll?”

[teacher] “it seems to me that some of you have got the basics of the technology, I think. I think that there’s some good stuff technology-wise. I think what needs some further thought, is what you’re actually asking them to do in terms of the content. They’ve got to be learning something - now, it doesn’t have to be historical, but that’s the obvious this. You know, the village is full of it. It could be geographical too, that makes sense. But, what are they learning? Next, what are they doing in order to get that information? For example, they can’t pluck things out of thin air if they have no idea. You can’t get someone to guess something that’s completely random. So, feed them some information, then wherever they are at they can work out the rest. Or send them specifically to somewhere where they can work out the answer to something. You know, that’s pretty basic really. But it’s there, or they have to then work it out. Practicalities: the church is a mine of all sorts of useful things, but you know, you can’t have classes of year 7s clambering over gravestones to find them. So think about those things, and how they might adapt. Use of old images in this technology I think might work. You know, send them to a place with an image, an old photograph. Get them to do some comparisons. But then get them to think about why things have changed. And, if necessary, feed them a bit of information to help them along the way. Anyway, I think it’s obvious that a bit more work is needed on that.”

[researcher] “Yeah, it was a bit all over the place”

[teacher] “You’ll learn from that experience though, won’t you. If you think about why that - that was quite a basic set of parameters to work with, wasn’t it? I know that if that had been more freeform and open-ended, that would have been rather worse. So, they had a village trail which was highly structured, and they had the opportunity to deviate and go as far as they want away from it, within the parameters of making it workable and interesting. It’s nowhere near the point where any of those could be used in the stead of a bespoke trail. It might be - with a lot of work - possible to draw some good ideas out to bind things. However, I don’t know about you but the thing I was coming across again and again was the lack of challenge, the lack of depth, and the kind of things they were asking was really just playing with the technology rather than...”

[researcher] “Engaging with the history”

[teacher] “It would be a shame to jettison what they’ve got. You took me to Henry’s, and Henry’s looked coherent in terms of the actual structure. But when he was asked about what he was asking them to do, he had no thought. I thought the girls at the back also had something coherent in terms of you could follow it, but again the tasks... So what I think is, for some of them, there is potential if they rethink those tasks and put actually much more thought into it. You could get something out of it, because the structure of the technology is actually set out alright. The route that they’re going makes sense. Maybe not what I expected, actually - in some ways maybe the opposite. These lads here, he put some work into it. But again, needs a really thorough thinking through of what’s been asked. But I think those ones would be fixable, if they got it. Some of the others I think are maybe not at that point. I didn’t see any where I thought ‘Oh, that’s a good idea’, it was the other way around. Where it was patchy, it could be worked into something good. I didn’t see any where I thought ‘Oh, that’s a good task’, but they only had a bit of the thing finished, nothing like that cropped up. But I didn’t see them all, because I was looking at the ones who evaluated themselves highly. Now self evaluation of course is not ideal, and it’s not necessarily going to be accurate at all, but it’s a good place to start. So yeah, interesting. It’s worth cogitating about what parameters you probably need to introduce, to guide them towards deeper thinking. I think it’s more of a success for the technology, the medium, than the actual content. It needs to be worth doing, there’s no point in having all of the bells and whistles if there’s no substance.”

[researcher] “Some of them said they found it a bit easier than others did to convert to the pen and paper, because they were less reliant on the app’s features. I don’t know how true that was.”

[teacher] “I think it depends on how they were thinking about the task in the first place - maybe, if they’d been highly creative, obviously they’d struggle, but if they were highly creative and lost their focus, then they’d be miles away. If they were less creative, but focused on the nature of the content they’d probably find it easier to transpose. What we want is something in-between.”