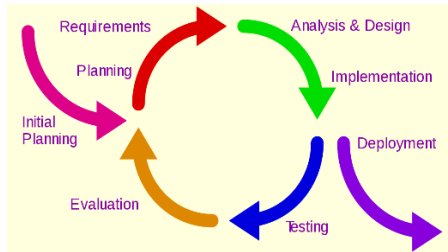


## Preserving produce design (Helen W)

### Reflections

Discovering the iterative design process was my breakthrough!



- Gave a form to what I had been doing anyway – trying out variations of recipes, making tweaks.
- Used the SADIM process to sort out the cellar and work out what I was doing with all the jars

### The goal

- Have more order and structure to my jams, jellies and chutneys
- Store things in a way that means I can use things in date order
- Keep a note of what I make, how much, what it's like
- Have control of my deep freeze (failed here!)

### The survey

I like:

- making jam
- giving homemade produce to friends and neighbours
- offering jams as a swap for other produce on the allotment
- having full shelves in the produce cellar
- using 'free' food
- experimenting with food

I have

- lots of jam jars
- large preserving pan (was my mother's)
- a cool cellar
- space in the cellar
- good old fashioned recipe books
- half an allotment I share with a friend, with lots of varieties of soft fruit
- a friend who does Suma orders for sugar
- a husband who enjoys DiY

I regularly make

- Marmalade (with bought Seville oranges)
- Currant jelly (almost too many red currants in the season)
- Jam
- Sloe gin

- chutney

On the process:

- Helped me sort out the jumble of my jars
- Helped me sort out the freezer, but not keep it sorted
- Got the cellar organised
- Made me realise why I make so much jam!
- Now have a really useful book to write everything in
- Using principles made me look at everything in a more rounded way – rather than just putting up shelves
- Works well even if I just follow a recipe without needing to make changes

Using principles (hard to expand in rhyme!)

- Observe and interact: start with a survey of the randomness of my cellar, no good shelves, no notes about what and how much I made
- Catch and store energy: preserve fruit that I grow on my allotment
- Obtain a yield: as above!
- Apply self-regulation and accept feedback – get feedback from friends on the produce; look at what isn't being used and wonder why
- Produce no waste: use recycled jars, reused wood for shelves
- Patterns to details: make something, look at it, think whether it could be better, try again
- Small and slow solutions: don't make a large quantity of something new
- Use and value diversity: try to find other uses of fruit, combinations of flavour and taste
- Use edges: look at the edges of the plot and garden – led to rosehip syrup and beech leaf gin (which won first prize at the allotment show)
- Use and respond to change: make changes according to comments made

On the poem:

- Loved writing it in verse
- Real freedom in saying things
- Not stuck at a computer except for the last part
- Could write a bit anywhere, work on things on paper
- Scored low on literacy/language in my personal learning questionnaire so good to try this
- Hard to actually say everything I did in verse!
- Gave up on the evaluation in verse, although as an iterative design process the whole thing is evaluation

The final design:

- See photos and book

- First prize in the Preserves category at burley Model Allotment Show September 2017

Evaluation:

- Enjoyed working on the design and implementation
- Realise I now do lots of different jams/jellies (recently redcurrant and hibiscus, chocolate and raspberry, raspberry and rhubarb, gooseberry and fennel seeds) in small batches, rather than lots of the same
- Can't believe I didn't make notes about what I did in the past! Seems so obvious now
- Much easier to find things as in date order on shelves
- Now keep the lids attached to the empty jars, instead of scrabbling around to find lids to go with jars
- Hasn't helped with the deep freeze – I need another sort of design for this
- Don't know why I didn't do this years ago. Maybe will start a similar system for cakes
- Tried out lots of other things – not in rhyme

What would I do differently?

Spent a long time not getting the labels sorted – again, it comes down to being in a hurry to get stuff done and not spending enough time sitting at a computer!

Realised that the deep freeze was a whole other problem waiting for a solution.

Originally I was going to include mushrooms and other foraged food, but then narrowed it down to jams and preserves (including chutney, and fruit gins).

Recently tried fermentation after attending a sauerkraut workshop. Lots of scope for different ingredients/timings here!

Tried milk kefir, but it made me fart!

Cheese making is an on-going process – I think I should concentrate on it for a while so I can learn as I am going along, rather than making something every 4 months or so.

Would like to pickle more things (only did eggs so far) – there was only one entry in the allotment show in the 'pickles' category ...

July 16