

Advanced Tables: Merged Cells, Styles, Header Rows

60 minutes

ICT Specialism 1: Word processing

Outcome M1.U3.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

In this lesson you merge cells and apply styles to create clear table headers, set header clarity for long tables, and build a complex project table with at least four columns and eight rows using your own data.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
M1.U3.1	Insert and format tables, images and objects.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Merge and split cells and apply table styles
- Make the column-name row stand out on a long table (bold and shaded header in Word Online; Pin header row in Docs)
- Build a complex project table with at least four columns and eight rows

BEFORE THE BELL

- Optional: have desktop Word ready on the teacher machine for a 60-second Repeat Header Rows demo after students style headers.
- Scrap paper ready for eight row-topic jots before independent practice.
- Have one messy paragraph of sample project data ready to contrast with a clean table on the classroom screen; display the intro contrast image if available; leave space on the board to capture 3-4 student column sets
- Sketch the five-column worked-example table on the board or screen before class, plus one alternate column recipe; leave both visible for independent practice
- Students need word processor access (Word Online or Google Docs) and their Project_Portfolio folder; optional desktop Word on the teacher machine for a 60-second repeat-header demo; scrap paper for eight row-topic jots
- Confirm each student can name eight row topics or a fallback before typing; leave worked-example sketch and alternate column recipe on board

Advanced Tables: Merged Cells, Styles, Header Rows

HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Introduction
6 min	content	Key concepts
15 min	activity	Step-by-step task
4 min	content	Common issues
20 min	activity	Independent practice
5 min	content	Reflection
5 min	summary	Lesson summary

TEACHING MOVES

- NEW 15 Sep: table borders are now set by weight, about 2 minutes. Show Outside Borders against All Borders on the same table, then pick a heavier weight from the dropdown. Students accept the default and drag; ask them to name the setting they used.
- Put the contrast image from the introduction step on the screen before you ask for column names, then spend about a minute writing three or four students' column sets on the board.
- Key concepts: do not read the full HTML table aloud, because it is there for students to glance at later, point to the board sketch and name merge, split, style and clear header in one sentence each.
- Demonstrate the first cell merge and table style on the classroom screen before students begin.
- The path everyone must complete: merge the title, bold and shade the real header row, add three sample rows, set header clarity, and confirm the filename. Split is for early finishers, or a 90-second whole-class demo if the room is still on data entry.
- After header setup, spend about 60 seconds showing why headers matter on a long table, and do not send Word Online students looking for Repeat Header Rows, as that control is not in the online app.
- Common issues: project only the first two rows and re-demo those; leave the rest as a help sheet students can consult while they work.
- Before independent practice, each student shows or says eight row topics; anyone blank takes the fallback set from the board.
- Students overwrite the garage sample inside sm1_doc3_table_document.docx, so there is no second sample filename to collect.
- Keep the reflection oral: 60-second pairs, one sentence each on the reader and the first column they would look at.
- The Google Docs dialog is Table properties, not Table options. Say this once for the whole class.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students may fail to select entire cells when merging; remind them to click and drag across cell borders.
- Table styles may shade the merged title instead of the column-name row; fix with the Header Row toggle or a manual shade on row 2.
- Students may try to keep a second sample file; bank only sm1_doc3_table_document.docx with real data.
- Students may merge empty data rows 6-10 for split practise; require a newly inserted bottom row only.
- Docs students may hunt for Table options; redirect them to Table properties.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide a pre-formatted template table for students struggling with initial setup.
- Support: Pair students briefly for merge selection, then separate them so both finish their own tables.
- Support: Fallback roster columns already on the board for anyone without eight row facts.
- Extension: Split practise, a second table on the same page with its own merged title, or desktop Word repeat-header polish for print packs.