

“Compelling case” studies

Studies to present the compelling case for all school pupils to have access to ICT and the Internet.

Expert on demand; two teachers instead of one.

(This study is part of compelling case study “It will feel weird without my computer”.)

Being shown how to do something is so much easier than reading how to do it. And the success when you realise you can now do it so much better is great!

The class teacher, knowing she is not very good at art, brought in an expert to show the children how to draw portraits. The children got the expert to individually show them again and again how to do it, until they had grasped it. While the expert was doing this, the teacher was guiding the pupils in how to use the pencil artistically and helping them notice how well that they were doing, matched the best way of doing it.

It sounds expensive, having two teachers in the classroom instead of one. And to individually show each pupil as many times as they wanted must surely have taken a lot more of the teacher’s time?

Not so. The school has created the right environment for pupils to use YouTube safely. The expert was a YouTube video by an artist, who explains how to paint portraits much better than the teacher could.

But it was the teacher who helped the pupils see their learning. She first of all had them draw a portrait as they would normally do. Then they watched the video on their own netbooks, as often as they needed to. Then they drew another portrait using the techniques the expert had shown them – and could see immediately how much more realistic their second portrait was than their first attempt.

And the pupils now also know that if they want to find out how to do something, there may well be an expert on YouTube demonstrating how to do it!

The educational detail, max one page (to be added).

Quantification, or the questions to be asked of teachers to get the necessary information.

- 1) On average, how many times did pupils watch the video by the artist? There was a many-fold increase in the demonstration of how to do it, that was personalised to each pupil's needs.
- 2) How did the pupils differ in the speed with which they could understand the explanation and the number of times they needed to view it? What are the implications of this for the comparison between a teacher explaining to the whole class and this approach using YouTube videos?
- 3) Did the pupils step through the video, trying out each technique as the artist explained it, before proceeding to the next bit of the technique? How much more effective is this step-by-step way of getting an explanation than listening to the whole explanation and then trying to remember all parts of it? This would be almost impossible for a teacher to do as the pupils would be working at different rates.
- 4) In what ways did the more able pupils extend their learning of how to draw and how much did they use the Internet for this? For example having first got the proportions of the face correct, did they then start to learn techniques of shading to put in the features more subtly.
- 5) How important was the technique the teacher used of getting the pupils to draw a portrait before they saw the video? How did the impact of this manifest itself? – pupils' delight in their success? Or in desire to do more portraits?

Professional development questions/follow-up questions (to be added)