

LESSON PLAN 58: WAYS TO WORK WITH WEBCAMS

Objective: Using photos and videos in the classroom

Age range: 6-18

WHAT IS A WEBCAM?

It's a digital camera attached directly to a computer that's designed to take photos/videos for transmitting over the Internet (or simply storing for future use). Generally, any software that needs to use the webcam – such as a video calling service like Skype – will automatically access it.



YOU WILL NEED


Webcam, microphone, Internet access, recording software/application (for a selection of online tools for making videos see 'Recording video messages' on page 48).

DEVELOPING SKILLS

Communication, presentation, photography, IT skills.

METHOD

There are a number of ways to work with webcams in your classroom. Here are some you could try:

1. **Videoconferencing** – it's an obvious one but webcams are a great (and easy) way to communicate with others over distance. There are a number of programs available that you can use to easily videoconference across the Internet, such as Skype, MSN Messenger and Tokbox. 
2. **Instructions** – use your webcam to record a homework assignment, describe a project, or outline an activity. You can then post this on a blog or wiki for students to access.
3. **Demonstrations** – in a similar vein, you can record demonstrations of activities, skills, experiments, sports or musical actions – anything that involves showing how something is done. Students can then play and replay as many times as they want. This could also work for students who are absent and miss lessons.
4. **Video diary** – you could get students to create a 'video diary' where they explain what they have learned each day/week, and you could then respond. These would form a good learning record.
5. **Tip/quote/word of the day** – Send you students a daily video email. It could be an inspiring or project-related quote, a new word, or a study tip.
6. **Create a collaborative video story** – start by videoing yourself saying the first line of the story. Pass this to a student and ask them to record your line of the story and add their own, then pass it to another student, thus building up a story between the group.
7. **View in infrared** – a webcam can usually be fairly easily converted to view in infrared, so you can see things like heat, heat transfer, electromagnetic spectrum, and so on.

HOW TO TURN A WEBCAM INTO AN INFRARED CAMERA



wikihow.com/Make-a-Webcam-Into-an-Infrared-Camera



8. **Time-lapse** – there are many possibilities for using a webcam to recording things that change slowly over time: day/night, seasons, growing, the changing classroom, etc.
9. **Record students** – record students reading, reciting a poem, acting, or speaking a foreign language. They can be presenting something for you to grade, or simply recording so that they can watch and see how they're doing/improving.
10. **QR codes** – you can use a webcam to read QR codes. For more on this and how you could WIN an iPad see page 42.



VIDEO WHISPERS

Here's activity you can try to test students' accuracy. Record a short video message. Send it to a student. Ask them to write down the message and then record it themselves and send it to the next student. Each should re-record and send the message to another, until the whole class has had a go. Check the final video to see how accurately the message matches your original text.



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