Success Story No.12 – Creating Video to Teach Young People

May 2020

I had the pleasure of speaking with Simon Warner from Heron Hall Academy Secondary School and he shared the school's success using video to teach their young people.

What is your school context?

We are an 8 form entry secondary school in years 7 & 8, with less forms as you go up the school. I am Assistant Head and head of year 8, I was previously head of humanities.

What has been the biggest challenge?

The biggest challenge has been having to adapt our teaching and learning so quickly. When you think that education is a relatively slow moving environment, the last few months have involved so much change over a very short period of time and has involved new technology, new ideas and a whole new way of thinking in terms of approaching education.

Can you share your success creating video to teach young people?

I've been using a software package to record video which means I've been able to more easily give kids access to learning outside of the classroom. It records what's on your screen, so I can talk over the PowerPoint. We have ActivInspire so I can use that and highlight using the built in tool when I want to pause and go through an aspect of learning. This software saves as an mp4 file which makes it easy for students to access on their phone. So for ease it has made sense.

In subjects like History and RE we have been trying to have more of a multimedia focus. The videos have providing human interaction, which is really important. It's been really successful in terms of engaging both the more and less motivated. It has been good to share the video creation with other teachers who aren't as experienced, it has

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encouraged them to have a go. It's also flexible in that you can record the video whenever it suits you, some teachers have other commitements, so recording the video in the evening works well.

The experience of making videos has given us an insight into how we can use technology and multimedia like this in the future for example when there are snow days. But also we've been discussing how this will get used as part of our teaching and learning long term. We've been thinking and looking forward to producing videos supporting revision. We could be creating 10-minute revision videos focussing on an area they're struggling with. I've realised the resources we're creating are not just for now, although its time consuming, they can be used in the future if a child is struggling or is off, I can give this resource. We're going to end up with a bank of resources and we can make more, it will be a great resource for our students and we can use them in different ways.

The videos will be good to use going forwards with the year 10s, providing meaningful activity that they can easily engage with. It's going to help fill in some of the gaps for years 7-9 too.

It's been important that we are able to meet kids with a medium they're happy with, giving them bite sized videos on content.

The videos have included a mixture of resources. I've done some where I've been explaining a concept. Now we've branched out so we're recording what would be a 50-minute lesson with pause points for students to go away and complete activities. We'll get them to pause e.g. for history, we might show an image and ask them to go away and analyse, then we'll give them the feedback that we would give in class then I give a more open ended task at the end of the video so they're asked to go away and do a longer piece of work.

We've also put placeholders in the videos which enable the students to reflect and for me to then feedback.

Now every department will be rolling out videos they have created, most deptarments

will aim for 2 a week. It will depend of levels of IT literacy, and what individual teachers are comfortable with. Staff have adapted brilliantly, so integrating video will be something they also adapt to. We have put a lot into supporting staff and we've worked with heads of department so that each team is on board. Videos will be different for different subjects, we need to be flexible to make sure the format suits the content, but there's enough tools and ideas out there that there will be a way of working that works for everyone.

I think its really going to change how we teach as a department and how we set work outside of the lessons.

This will become a new normal. Google Classroom where we've posted the videos will now become a vital part of our teaching, and we hadn't used it before Covid-19.

If I'm putting up resources, making a 5 min video for students will be part of that.

What has engagement been like?

Students appreciate this being a different resource. They appreciate that they can access it whenever they want and fit it around their routine. Students might not read a page of A4 but would watch a 5-minute video.

What are you thinking about next?

It's going to be interesting to get students feedback when the Y10s come back in. We want to find out if they think the videos are working; are they useful? The dialogue with students is important. They can tell us if they want anything tweaking; they can say whether I am explaining things simply enough.

We really want to gauge with the kids as to what is useful and what isn't.

Any final thoughts?

Everyone has been really flexible, sometimes in teaching we can be stuck in our ways, we don't know how long this is going on for.

It changed my view of how teaching happens outside and inside the classroom

There are so many options, so many ways of doing things, just have a go!