

Using video in *Eyes Open*

Using video in the classroom can often appear to be something of a challenge, especially if the necessary equipment isn't always available. But teachers who use video report increased levels of motivation and enthusiasm in students.

Eyes Open offers four video clips per unit, a total of 32 sequences in the course. These high-quality clips have been produced in collaboration with Discovery Education™. The Discovery Education™ footage has been edited by Cambridge University Press to meet the needs of the secondary classroom and the audio has been specially written to fit the syllabus and level of the students.

The clips maintain the appeal and exciting content of all Discovery Education™ videos, featuring a wide variety of countries from around the world (both English and non-English speaking). The themes have been carefully selected to appeal to learners in the target age range. They often focus on aspects of teenagers' lives around the world and inspire learners to continue to explore the topics in the videos outside the classroom.

The videos can be used as much or as little as the teacher chooses. In the Teacher's Book, each video is accompanied by a number of suggested exercises which can be completed in a short time within the course of a normal class. The Student's DVD-ROM, which accompanies the Student's Book, contains all 32 videos from the course as well as interactive exercises which students can complete while watching the videos. Extra ideas for building on the content and themes of the videos are provided in the Teacher's Book. If the teacher prefers to make a full lesson out of the video, he/she can print out the corresponding worksheets from the *Presentation Plus* software.

Video in the classroom: Ben Goldstein

Why video?

Video is becoming the primary means of information presentation in digital global media. Recent statistics suggest that 90% of Internet traffic is video-based. Because of this, teaching a language through text and image alone may not completely reflect how many of today's teenagers communicate and receive and transmit information. Due to the increasing prevalence of video in all walks of life, being visually literate and knowing how to process visual data is an increasingly necessary skill in today's digital world. So why not use video in the language classroom?

How to exploit video

Video can be exploited in a variety of ways in the language classroom. Primarily teachers may use video for listening skills practice. Video is an ideal tool for practising listening comprehension. The obvious advantage it has over audio alone is the visual support it can offer the viewer. Students are sometimes able to see the speaker's mouth, facial expressions and gestures, as well as being able to see the context clearly and any visual clues which may aid comprehension. All of the essential micro-skills such as listening for specific information, predicting and hypothesising can be taught very effectively through this medium.

Video can also act as visual stimulus. Here the moving image acts as a way to engage interest and is a catalyst for follow-up classroom tasks, such as summarising the video content or post-viewing discussions. Teachers can also make use of the visual image alone to practise prediction or encourage students to invent their own soundtrack based on what they see rather than what they hear.

Finally, video can be a great source of information and provides learners with the content for subsequent tasks such as project work. The factual nature of Discovery Education™ provides a very useful tool when teaching CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), in which students learn academic subjects in English. For more detailed information about use of videos in *Eyes Open* and extra worksheets, see pages 124–139.

Videos in *Eyes Open*

Our approach to integrating video into Cambridge's new secondary course, *Eyes Open*, was to adapt authentic material from Discovery Education™. The content and subject matter of these videos is ideal for the secondary school classroom. Learners of this age are curious about the world and keen to learn about different cultures, natural history and people of their own age around the globe. Many teenagers also watch similar documentary-style programmes outside the classroom. The videos in *Eyes Open* are short and fast-paced, with plenty to engage the teenage viewer without overloading them with information.

The voiceovers in the videos are delivered in a clear, concise manner with language specially graded to match the syllabus and to reflect what students have learned up to each point on the course. By providing subtitles in a simplified storyboard format, we have added an extra aid to student comprehension which teachers can make use of should the need arise.

There are four videos in each unit of *Eyes Open*. Video sections can be found on the *Language focus 1* page, the *Discover Culture* page, the *Speaking* page and the *CLIL* page at the back of the book. Discovery Education™ video supplements and extends the unit themes throughout the course. With a strong cultural focus and a variety of topics from countries around the world, these videos act as a way to encourage intercultural awareness and lead students to seek out similarities and differences between their own culture and other cultures around the world.

The videos which accompany the *CLIL* pages at the back of the book are an ideal complement to the content being taught in class. Subjects such as Science, Maths and History are brought to life in informative and highly-educational videos which are a natural progression from the lesson on the page.

Of the four videos, the only one not to feature documentary material is on the *Speaking* page. These *Real Talk* videos include interviews with British, American and Australian teens in which the young people talk to camera on a variety of subjects both relevant to the topic on the page and to teenagers' own lives. These voices are fresh and act as sympathetic role models for the learners.

The future of video in class

Who knows where we will end up with video? New video genres are being born all the time. Software is being developed constantly which offers the latest innovations in interactive video work and, before long, it will be possible to show a video in class that your students will be able to change as they watch.

We are living in an age in which digital video reigns supreme. For this reason, try to make video a central part of your lessons, not just an added extra. Hopefully, courses with integrated video content such as *Eyes Open* will make it easier for teachers to do this. It's hoped that working with video in this way will bring the classroom world a little closer to the world our learners are experiencing outside the classroom walls. That must surely be something motivating.