



Introduction

Close Reading in Intermediate 1 English does not immediately spring to mind as an area suitable for online assessment, but there are benefits to the approach.

One teacher describes her experiences in using online assessment with an S3 class.

The teacher's experience

In my teaching, I have used a commercial learning environment that provides targeted, individualised instruction for pupils. My class was also familiar with the local authority standardised tests on computer, so it seemed natural to try the online Close Reading NAB.

I have found there are several practical considerations when thinking about online assessment:

- computer rooms usually don't have enough computers for pupils to work individually
- it's not always possible to book the room when needed
- I prefer to have someone who knows about computers on hand ... just in case!

Any disadvantages, however, are far outweighed by the advantages:

- because the computer marks the pupils' work, this is a more controlled way of assuring standards
- reduced marking means reduced workload
- online assessment can give an accurate analysis of results, and can give useful feedback to pupils and teachers

Pupils like using computers for assessments — many find it less intimidating than pencil and paper tests. I have found that boys in particular prefer online assessment — it levels the playing field for those boys whose written presentation is poor.