



MAPS Case Study: Ridgeway Middle School

The Assessment of ICT: Finding a way using MAPS!

I was asked to take part in the pilot for MAPS a year ago. Initially, I used it with one of my Year 8 classes but quickly realized the potential and began to use it with all the Years 7 and 8 classes, 200+ pupils in all. Now that the full version is online, it has become a natural part of our assessment system for ICT.

Students find their way around MAPS with ease

The students find it easy to access the system, to download any resources they require and to upload their work for interim and final assessment.

Many of them have been accessing MAPS from home, initially to edit their profiles (the front end of their portfolios) and more recently to work on their tasks. It has been their choice to do this homework in this way - the homework does not require the use of the computer or the Internet as we still have a proportion of pupils who do not have access at home.

Built in messaging

The messaging system is proving to be most helpful. This is an additional opportunity for the teacher and pupils to engage in dialogue outside lesson times. The messaging system has enabled me to comment on their work as it progresses which the pupils find most helpful.

I have already created a considerable number of digital resources for ICT and these were available on the school intranet. It is very easy to upload these resources onto the MAPS system. There is complete range of Key Stage 3 tasks linked to the QCA Units and some linked to the Key Stage 3 Strategy. The LEA is also creating tasks which are available for subscribing schools to download.

Moderation 24/7

A major strength of MAPS is the opportunity it provides to moderate work. Historically, ICT has been one of the more difficult subjects to assess. The facility to assess and record the process as well as the final piece of work makes assessment much more reliable. The system enables you to put all the stages of the task together with any annotations, messages and moderation notes, and then 'share' the work, so that it can be moderated by other teachers as well as the LEA, and used as an exemplar of a level. The pupil's

portfolio will contain all the work which contributes to their final level at the end of the Key Stage.

MAPS lightens the work load

One possible worry was that MAPS would increase the workload of the teacher. In fact, it is making a demanding workload much easier to manage. I am not spending any more time on assessment, either formative or summative, but the amount of time recording and filing is reduced dramatically. I also believe that the cost of the system will be covered by the reduction in printing and filing costs!

I am very excited about MAPS! It makes so much sense to store ICT work electronically and to access it through the Internet so it is available anywhere anytime. When the Key Stage 2 system comes on line* we are hoping that all our feeder schools, both First and High, will use the system as it will make the transfer of information so much more efficient. Most of them are subscribing already and we are planning to develop bridging tasks which will be particularly useful for our situation as a Middle School where we receive our children mid Key Stage 2 and send them to High School mid Key Stage 3.

Helen Wilkes,
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*Editor's note: since Helen wrote this article, the MAPS Key Stage 2 system has been launched.