



Veeting Rooms Video Tutoring Fosters Remote American Sign Language Learning

Overview

Chelsea Hammond, a Deaf Studies major at prestigious Boston University, has been signing for over 10 years and is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL). As a highly proficient signer, Chelsea has the opportunity to work with many people on a one-to-one basis as a private tutor. Most of her students are referred through BU since the school is well-known for having a strong Deaf Studies program. But recently, Ms. Hammond was asked to offer sign language lessons to a new student in Switzerland—far from her usual teaching circuit.

Challenge

Face-to-face instruction is the ideal way to teach any new language. In the sign language community, it's not just nice to have the visual component—it's a necessity. Handheld mobile devices with video can offer some functionality. But the small screen size can pose a problem since facial expression and body language are as important as hand gestures in communicating the full richness of ASL.

Chelsea needed a reliable WebRTC (Real Time Communication) application that would work on a desktop, laptop, or tablet sized device to effectively tutor her long-distance student.

Key Benefits

- Accessible from anywhere with a web connection on devices with audio/video functionality
- Smooth video communication makes it possible to comprehend hand signing in real time
- Simple to use for scheduling lessons with one or more participants
- Document upload supports sharing of supplemental lesson materials as-needed
- Rich, collaborative feature set adds depth and enjoyment to lessons

Solution

The Veeting Rooms web-based videoconferencing application provides an interactive, virtual educational experience without installing software or purchasing hardware. The document upload function allows Chelsea to offer worksheets and other materials for her student in various file formats without switching to email. A particularly fun aspect of the Veeting Rooms is the shared whiteboard. Tutor and student use this collaborative tool for ASL Pictionary to enliven the educational experience and aid learning retention.

As an educator, Hammond appreciates the ability to connect with parents. Up to 5 participants can join a Veeting via video call at one time. This makes it easy for Chelsea to host a quick parent/teacher conference to coordinate scheduling and keep parents up to speed on their child's progress. Parents could even sit in on a session to learn a few common ASL phrases themselves, giving the student more opportunities for at-home practice. In the end, this technology proves its usefulness in improving communication regardless of location.

"The student I'm currently working with is overseas. But I also think the videoconferencing is absolutely a good option for local students. It eliminates the need to travel and makes it easier to schedule a convenient time for lessons." —Chelsea Hammond, ASL Tutor



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