

# Successful instructional animation: More than meets the eye

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## Abstract

Hardware and software advances now make it relatively easy for animations to be generated and delivered. As a result, animation is increasingly used within computer-based instructional resources such as those available through the Internet. This is the latest stage in recent moves across all media to place far greater reliance on pictorial material for presenting educational content. Underlying this reliance are assumptions about the relative instructional effectiveness of different forms of presentation. For example, current conventional wisdom is that interactive animation is likely to be far more instructionally effective than traditional text. However, there is growing evidence that animation may not always be beneficial for learning. The research reported in this paper explored university students' extraction of information from animated instruction in terms of the perceptual and cognitive processes involved. The paper discusses reasons why animation may have negative as well as positive effects on learning and suggests practical ways to maximise the effectiveness of instructional animation.