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Zebra finches, a social songbird, use social information when faced with uncertainty: females copy males foraging on novel foods and males copy the nest-material choices of familiar, but not unfamiliar, males. Here we used a one-demonstrator paradigm to test social learning, but, in place of live demonstrators, we used video demonstration. Video demonstration allowed us to examine whether social interaction between the knowledgeable demonstrator and a naive observer was necessary for the transfer of social information. Using a between-subjects design we found that social interaction is not necessary (video playback with no sound) for information transfer to and use by the naive observer. Live streaming video demonstration, where demonstrators and observer could vocally interact, was similarly effective to the no interaction condition, yielding the same results as live demonstrators. When video demonstration with sound (vocalizations but no interaction) was played back, however, the naïve observers did not consistently use social information in their novel foraging decisions. Taken together these results suggest that social interaction is not necessary for social learning, and in some cases 'poor' interactions may inhibit transfer and/or use of social information.