

Title of Session: Arts and Literacy - Cultural Identity Box

Moderator: BJ Berquist

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Room: After School Online Room

BJ: We usually start discussions in Tapped In with introductions

BJ: I'm an art teacher at a male juvenile correctional facility in Pennsylvania

MelissaLi: I am a Pre-service teacher at U of H

KelseyD: Hi, I'm Kelsey and I'm a masters of ed student in California

BJ: can you each please tell us what you teach and where you are located?

EdeeS: I am an art teacher in Phoenix, AZ

TanaM: Hi my name is Tana, and I am a student teacher. I am currently working on certification and masters at U of H

BJ: thanks

DeedeR: Pre-service teacher in DC, getting Master's at George Mason in ESL

MariselaA: I am a Pre-service teacher at U of H

KelseyD: Currently, I'm also teaching special ed in a private school

SarahBS: me too

ErinAW: I teach in alternative partnership middle and high in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

KarenHC: I am a pre-service teacher in the PUMA program at the University of Houston.

MarielleP: At the moment, I'm a doctoral student at Harvard Graduate School of Education and a consultant with PBS TeacherLine, though I have had many other roles, including middle school teacher.

MeganES: Karen Me TOO!

BJ: looks like a good group!

TanaM: I am teaching Kindergarten, and I am in Houston

BJ: Tina, can you please introduce yourself?

BJ: Hopefully, the Cultural Identity Box will give you some ideas to use for all the various disciplines you teach

TinaCl: I'm a graduate student working on a masters in special education. I'm trying to get into the calendar event for tonight that started at 7pm

BJ: . o O (and maybe a few other ideas too!)

BJ: Tina, you made it

BJ: I'm going to start out by describing how the box project was conceived...

BJ: it was a long gestation period!

TinaCl: This is it???

BJ: nods to Tina

BJ: the first glimmer of an idea actually started here in Tapped In

BJ: an art teacher in North Carolina wanted to do a digital quilt project based on the theme of peace through the resolution of conflict

MelissaLi: wow

MariselaA: That sounds cool!!!

BJ: she got together in Tapped In with several art teachers and we developed the Blanket the World with Peace project

BJ: <http://www.cedarnet.org/emig/peace/>

BJ . o O (click on the blue link to open a new window)

BJ: the peace blanket is still open for submissions, although we've been a bit negligent in actively seeking digital quilt squares

BJ: everyone get the website?

MelissaLi: yes

KelseyD: yep, got it. sounds like a neat idea

MeganES: yes

MariselaA: yes

KarenHC: yes

MarielleP: very cool

BJ: the top hat was my classes' submission

DeedeeR: nice. Are then black squares open for submission?

BJ: please click on the top hat to see the Hats Off to Peace Project

MelissaLi: amazing

MariselaA: Very nice

TanaM: could you please show the link again.

KarenHC: I like the family one.

BJ . o O (I got the idea for making the newspaper hats was from a local arts festival)

SarahBS: that is a very good idea

MarielleP: beautiful pictures

MariselaA: Those are great hats!

TanaM: could you please post the link again?

NanW joined the room.

TanaM: I got kicked off for some reason

BJ: the lesson plan for the hats starts with cultural identity and education as a means of combating prejudice

BJ: <http://www.cedarnet.org/emig/peace/>

MarielleP: Did the kids explain why their hats represented/symbolized peace?

BJ: Yes, Marielle...there was a whole series of lessons building up to the actual hat making

BJ: the kids had create a list of cultural identifiers...

BJ: <http://tappedin.org/archive/projects/hatsoff/culturalid.htm>

MelissaLi: what a unique idea

MarielleP: oh - I just saw the journal postings - that's what I was after.

BJ: everyone still with me?

SarahBS: yes

MelissaLi: yes

MeganES: yes

MarielleP: yes

ErinAW: just returned from site

MariselaA: yes

TanaM: yes

DeedeeR: yup

KarenHC: yes

TinaCl: yes

KelseyD: yes

BJ: the other idea that was rattling around in my mind was an idea that I also learned about in Tapped In when I invited Adrienne Fritze to be a guest during one of my discussions

BJ: Adrienne does the Empty and Meaningless: the box project

BJ: <http://www.urbanesque.com/empty/>

MelissaLi: I have heard about this

NanW . o O (there are a couple archived transcripts of Adrienne's visits at www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

BJ: Adrienne went to a higher level of thinking with the boxes ...

MarielleP: intriguing title!

BJ: but she also plumbed the depths of the artist's soul...a dangerous place to go when you're dealing with adolescent boys

SusanR joined the room.

BJ: I wanted desperately to reach a happy medium and use the box as a vehicle for a more meaningful experience.

BJ waves hi to Sue

TinaCl: "plumbed the depths of the artist's soul?" please clarify

MelissaLi: I am reading the steps and I would be curious how some students would answer them

SusanR listens

BJ: Introspective thinking, dealing with very sensitive issues that can become very explosive in my setting, Tina

KarenHC: That would be interesting to see

BJ . o O (abuse, abandonment, mental illness, etc)

TinaCl: OK...I understand now...I know what you mean, as well..I worked with gang kids.

BJ nods to Tina.

KelseyD: This must be a difficult process for students

MariselaA: I think so too.

BJ: yes, it can be...and unless you've had a lot of background in counseling and have someone else in the room with you, it's dangerous ground to tread

ErinAW: I also work with boys who experience emotional defects. They love to be involved in art projects (18-21 yrs)

KarenHC: Very intense, I imagine.

MelissaLi: I would agree, this higher order thinking for these students

KarenHC: But art can work as great therapy as well.

MelissaLi: true

TinaCl: The boys in juvenile hall were fine artist, and when given the opportunity, communicated well through their art work.

BJ: Erin, that was the happy medium I was looking for...have them use the art to communicate their ideas so that it was not as threatening

BJ . o O (and the art tends to reveal a lot that the students are not even aware of)

KelseyD: Do these students embrace the project, or are they reluctant to participate.

ErinAW: They could not believe how fun crayons were once again, they laugh....

MariselaA: I can imagine

BJ: I had had a quotation in my files by Emerson...

TinaCI: I agree

SarahBS: it's a non threatening way for them to express themselves

BJ: "what lies before us and what lies behind us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us

MariselaA: That is a very good thing Sarah

MelissaLi: well with art only you know what you are creating means to you

MelissaLi: it protects you in a way

MarielleP: nice quote!

BJ: Melissa, after you see enough of it you can pretty much read the child's mind!

TanaM: that's pretty cool, never thought of using art that way.

BJ: thanks, Marielle. A student was using the quote to make a poster.

BJ: I looked and looked...and suddenly the idea of what lies within us seemed to blend perfectly with the empty box

BJ: . o O (very serendipitous!)

MeganES: yes

MariselaA: Great word!!!! I like it!!

BJ: I started developing the lesson by discussing communication, symbols, and Identity

ErinAW: BJ, I will save that quote, thank you much

BJ: . o O (communication is an expression of feelings, thoughts, ideas, viewpoints and opinions))

BJ: the kids also had some problems comprehending symbols

BJ: so we had to come up with a definition for them

TinaCI: explain

MarielleP: So how did you help them with that?

TinaCI: ok...putting words to images...like putting words to feeling?

TinaCI: feelings?

MelissaLi: what age group was this for?

BJ: I try to get them to think of symbols that they are familiar with...like the Nike symbol or a peace sign

BJ: My kids are 11-18

BJ: they entered the communication and the symbol definition in their journals

BJ: they also had to understand identity...what makes each person the individual that they are

KarenHC: I like how your ideas bounce off of other ideas. It sometimes helps start great new projects.

BJ: smiles. Thanks, Karen...or makes for a very scatter-brained art teacher!

ErinAW: Were the journal sketching and doodles or writing as well?

KarenHC: Yes! It can go both ways!

BJ: we started out with the writing, Erin

BJ: then we moved to the list of cultural identifiers

BJ: <http://tappedin.org/archive/projects/hatsoff/culturalid.htm>

MelissaLi: oh okay

EdeeS: I need to leave, I will look at the transcript later. thanks for all the great ideas.

BJ: each student had to choose four identifiers that described who he was
BJ waves bye to Edee
MariselaA: This is a nice way to break it down
MelissaLi: did you come up with the identifiers or did they come up with them on their own
BJ: then the sketching started...and research.
KelseyD: This list seems more concrete for some students
BJ: they had to do a sketch for each identifier that they had listed
KarenHC: It's sometimes hard to describe yourself, I've learned.
BJ nods to Karen
ErinAW: I have a hard time defining peace
BJ: once they had the sketches done, they drew each symbol in a 4" square on a piece of copy paper and colored it with markers or colored pencils
BJ: I was doing the assignment along with them...always a good idea to do that.
BJ: It helps them to buy into the work when they see you doing it
MelissaLi: I have heard that
BJ: that goes for writing as well as the other parts
TanaM: so does the symbol represent their identities?
BJ: I cheated with the boxes and ordered them pre-made from a carton company
MariselaA: Modeling is always beneficial
BJ: yes, Tana
ErinAW: How many students do you work with at one time?
BJ . o O (I made the first few boxes and it was too time consuming)
BJ: I have about 10 students in a class
MariselaA: I can imagine
SusanR recalls her best lessons/projects when she did them along with her students
KelseyD: How long does a project like this normally take to complete?
MariselaA: Would it have been too time consuming to let the students create the boxes?
BJ: It's been going on for over a month...I'd say from start to finish would take at least 2-3 weeks
KarenHC: I was wondering the same thing. I wonder if there is any quick, easy way to create a box.
BJ: you can draw a box on tagboard and cut it out
BJ . o O (but then you have to assume that your students can measure, can cut, can fold)
MelissaLi: that might be a disaster
DeedeeR: preorder sounds good 2 me
BJ: and can use a T square and triangle to draw a square box
BJ laughs...you got it!
BJ . o O (it was worth every penny)
DeedeeR: focus on cultural id's not making boxes
BJ: Adrienne said she gets local businesses to donate the boxes
MariselaA: I can see your point
MariselaA: That is always a good thing
BJ: One thing I forgot to mention is that I did introduce the Emerson quote to them at the beginning of the project
SarahBS: wow

MelissaLi: put everything in perspective I am sure

BJ: when the students had their four symbols drawn on the copy paper and colored in...

BJ: I had them cut them out and glue them on the four sides of the box

ErinAW: thank you so much for allowing me to join I saved the sites and value the information

ErinAW: have a nice evening

BJ: I then took their digital photo and they cut that out and put it on the top of the box

BJ waves bye to Erin

BJ: and, as a finishing touch...

ErinAW left the room (signed off).

BJ: they cut out the quote that I had copied in a variety of lettering styles...

BJ: and put that on the inside top of the box

MelissaLi: I bet they are so proud of their final project

BJ: The best part came when I had the students write reflections about the project

BJ . o O (they are all displayed in the lobby of the school)

DeedeeR: was there anything on the bottom? 6 sides on a cube...

BJ: they had to tell me what the quote meant and why the box was a good vehicle for the quote

MelissaLi: that's creative

KelseyD: Is anything ever put in the box?

BJ: and they had to write about their symbols and what the project meant to them

MelissaLi: that way they can reflect

TinaCl: awesome...were the quite kids open to expressing themselves.

BJ: their name is on the bottom of the box

TanaM: that's what I was thinking as well Kelsey

MariselaA: Me too

BJ: I kind of like the idea of an empty box...representing the potential of what lies within us

MarielleP: yes, that's a nice metaphor

KarenHC: Did any of the students question that? Just wondering if they asked the same thing-whether they could put something inside.

BJ: another source of inspiration for the project came years ago when I read a book, 10 Birthday Surprises...

BJ: all the surprises were empty boxes and the authors each wrote a different story

KelseyD: I was thinking that objects could be put in the box to represent what kind of person they want to be in life, in the future, etc.

MelissaLi: thats a good idea too

MariselaA: Did the stories go in the box?

KarenHC: Sounds like a good idea.

TanaM: the reflections?

BJ: they can, Marisela...each teacher could suggest a different way to work with the empty box

SarahBS: there are great ideas...I am taking notes

BJ: today I had another journal assignment where they had to write at least three sentences about what they would change if they could change one thing about the project

KelseyD: Great feedback

BJ: no one said they wouldn't do the box!

MelissaLi: that's a good thing

KelseyD: Student comments are the best way to fine tune your instruction!

KelseyD: That's great.

MariselaA: I think getting feed back from the students really helps for the next time you do the box

BJ: here's the link to the book I mentioned

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0688152953/qid=1099356506/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/104-5568352-6089554?v=glance&s=books

SarahBS: yes...you know what they want to get from it

KarenHC: Cool! I've seen that at the bookstore.

BJ: I agree...it also gives them an opportunity to develop their writing skills

MelissaLi: which we all need

BJ: and you can include social studies in the cultural identifiers

KelseyD: Seems like a neat book.

MelissaLi: yea I am Social Studies

MelissaLi: I was thinking this would be a great project to use

BJ agrees with Melissa

MariselaA: I think so too Melissa

BJ: the cool thing would be that you could integrate an art project into your social studies class

MelissaLi: of course

BJ . o O (or language arts class)

MelissaLi: and it is something other than what they are use to

BJ nods

BJ: any questions?

MelissaLi: no, great project though

SarahBS: no...it sounds really good

KelseyD: Thank you for all of the great ideas. I will be sharing those websites with my classmates.

SarahBS: me too

KelseyD: Have a great evening.

MelissaLi: Thanks BJ

BJ: If you are able, please join the ArtsSites discussion on Thursday

TanaM: I can see a lot of great uses for this project

SarahBS: Goodnight

BJ: it promises to be a real barnburner

BJ: anyone familiar with Jason Ohler?

KarenHC: It ties in with things we've learned this semester in social studies.

MariselaA: Thanks for the great idea BJ

BJ . o O (www.jasonohler.com)

KarenHC: Not familiar with Jason.

BJ: Jason originated the 4th R

MariselaA: No I am not

KarenHC: Oh. Okay .Thanks for the site.

TanaM: Thanks for the information

MarielleP: Thanks, BJ. Cool project!

BJ: Kevan Nitzberg will also be here...he leads the artsconnected discussions

BJ: you're welcome, everyone. Thanks for joining me

SusanR: . o O (Kevan's session..not to be missed)

BJ agrees with Sue

DeedeeR: The 4th r...interesting. Art is like ketchup- goes w/ everything

BJ smiles

DeedeeR: Thanks BJ!!!! See you soon. Dee

BJ: Jason feels that because our culture is so visual, we need to teach about multimedia

BJ waves bye to Dee

DeedeeR left the room (signed off).

KarenHC: That site has a lot of useful information on how to use technology appropriately. That is important for pre-service teachers. We could use this site.

BJ: yes, Karen...like I said, the Thursday session should be very informative

KarenHC: Thanks. I may stop by.

SusanR: . o O (checks the calendar once more)

SusanR: and marks her calendar

KarenHC: Thank you for your time BJ. Everyone- have a great evening. Goodbye!

BJ waves goodnight

MariselaA: Thanks Bj I would love to try this in my own class one day

BJ: let me know how it turns out if you do get to do it, Marisela

MariselaA: Ok, I will.....good-bye

TinaCI: When you say teach about multimedia do you mean how to use it? techniques used to communicate?, etc...

BJ: did you look at Jason's site, Tina?

TinaCI: not yet...

TinaCI: I'll look.

BJ: take a look at the video clips he has

BJ: www.jasonohler.com

SusanR: "Teachies are from Venus, and Techies are from Mars"

SusanR: That caught my eye

TinaCI left the room.

TinaCI joined the room.

BJ: I enjoyed the video clip where he says that teachers who don't learn from their 10 year olds will be eaten alive

BJ: and those that do will survive

BJ: . o O (technologically speaking)

BJ: Jason has a wonderful sense of humor

TinaCI: I'm having difficulty looking at the video clips..the speed on my computer is too slow. I think I will look at it when I am in school.

SusanR: I am looking at that clip now

BJ: the url will be in your transcript, Tina

TinaCI: will the transcript be emailed to me?

BJ: yes, when you log out

TinaCI: Ok...thank you !!

BJ: thanks again for participating in the discussion, Tina

TinaCl: Thank you for sharing your ideas...sorry my participation in discussion was sparse...I'm having technology difficulty

TinaCl: thanks again