

Title of Session: Global Learning Communities

Moderator: Jim Oliver and Linda Ullah

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Room: After School Online Room

CarlosA: While you wait for the session to start, please read the 10 steps above this chat window if you haven't already

TeresaD: hello, everyone from Lisbon, Portugal!

PaddyG: Hi from Viseu Portugal!

DavinaP: Hello Paddy, I am from the University of Maryland with a class joining today

DoloresGst15: Hello I am at St. Raphael School in St. Louis.

PatGst14: I teach Science to 5-8 in St.Louis

HelenK: I am an adult educator from British Columbia, Canada.

RoseGst16: I am a teacher in St. Louis. I have a 7th Grade homeroom and I teach math to grades 5-8

LindaU: Hi, I'm Linda Ullah. I teach a Global Project Based Learning course, and I lead a GPBL monthly discussion in Tapped In. For this session I'd like to introduce Jim Oliver from Bedfordshire UK director of Global Learning Communities. I've been helping Jim find teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area to partner with teachers in Bedfordshire UK on global projects

LindaU: I'll let Jim formally introduce himself and his project

PrincesGst8: I am a senior at Northwestern High School in Baltimore, Maryland

JimOl: Good morning America - and I see other places! It's tea and cakes time here in Bedford UK. What I thought I would do is a bit on the WHY, then WHAT then HOW of Global Learning Communities and then share a few current issues - does this sound OK Linda?

TeresaD: I am Teresa Almeida d'Eca, an efl teacher in the greater Lisbon area, Portugal, and a member of the webheads in action online community of practice

JimOl: First of all WHY? Our starting point for this work is answering the question "what should we be teaching a five year old now to be an educated person in twenty years time

JimOl: Before you start answering this, look at this answer...

LindaU: perfect, Jim and I'll take that cup of tea...it's breakfast time in California

AnnyS: we should be teaching manners

PeggyKL: critical thinking skills

BryanGst12: the ability to teach themselves

DavinaP: problem solving, learning to learn

MaryellenM: common sense

SusanneN: I'm Sus Nyrop, another Webhead and an occasional helpdesk here in TI, I live near Copenhagen, Denmark

LornaB: communication skills.

LydiaO: everything around them

JimOl: Chris Yapp of Hewlett Packard says "Communication Skills, personal knowledge, creativity, numeracy, citizenship and a love of learning - does that cover the bases for you?"

DanitaC: what about HOW to acquire knowledge?

LindaU: great thoughts.. for me it is the cultural awareness and understanding to allow our children to grow up in a world based on peace

PeggyKL: I like somebody just mentioned: learn how to learn

DavinaP: Jim yes but why someone from HP do you choose

SusanneN: a five year old should first of all have the right to play and not be imposed with schooling too early!

JimOl: OK - anyway - Chris Yapp's thoughts are very much the agenda for our Global Learning Communities work

HelenK: they work for me - true life long learning skills

PeggyKL: Game based learning then.

ChrisGst3: you have to model exploratory play

BryanGst12: aren't there statistics that state that most children do their most formative learning before 5 years?

JimOl: Later on, you could look at our mission statement etc in the 'about us' section of the GLC web site www.glc.me.uk

SusanneN: I think the most important when it comes to young children, that they live in a stimulation and interesting environment they can explore

BryanGst12: more so at home or more so at school?

SusanR: and no formal assessment or testing until the upper grades

PeggyKL: they are too YOUNG to relate to anything?

LornaB: I heard Chris Yapp talking at an eLearning Conference at the University of Greenwich England where he was very keen for students to be taught how to learn and felt teachers would in 20 years time be facilitators and not sages upon the stage. Any views?

JimOl: Sure - some great points here and the whole thrust of GLC is 24:7 learning for people of all ages

LindaU: You might click on this link to look at a rationale for global projects:

<http://www.garlic.com/~lullah/gpbl/topic1/t1read1.html>

PeggyKL: what's GLC?

JimOl: The first year of the work has focused on Schools

JimOl: GLC + Global Learning Communities

PeggyKL: silly me

PeggyKL: global in the sense of international?

JimOl: Anyway, let me get onto the WHAT of this work

RoseGst16: I believe we are partially sages now rather than full time teachers

ChrisGst3: That is a great point, Susanne. When I did my ECE hours, I observed 3-5 year olds at play. The teachers needed to show them how to connect their imaginations to their environments.

JimOl: We aim to replicate the global economy in learning through sharing learning projects through three time zones around the world in a 24 hour period. For example..

LindaU: yes Peggy.. international

PatGst14: Children grow up too fast in today's world.

LornaB: Wow how do you do that?

SusanneN: where I come from, in Denmark, children do not begin formal school before the age of six, but they're almost all in public daycare from the age of one or two years old. And a new law imposes on the preschool pedagogs to work more goal oriented towards learning

JimOl: A group in Grade 3 will send their creative writing to a school in San Jose and they will review the stories and send on additions to a school in New Delhi. Then the next day, all the work will return to the UK school

SusanneN is now listening to Jim, this sounds exciting!

BryanGst12: Do Denmark schools focus primarily on essay and open-ended questions for assessments?

JimOl: We find this is hugely motivating for learners of all ages - and sometimes the most unlikely students are collaborating with others well into the night!

LornaB: Do you send the essays via a web site?

PaddyG: grade 3 is what age roughly?

SusanneN: Schools in Denmark have not been teaching to the test (until recently), as our kids do not get grades before grade 8

DavinaP: Do all the students have computers and access to work "well within the night"?

JimOl: Work tends to be transmitted via e mail but there is quite a bit of use made of MSN messenger, video conferencing and the like

PeggyKL: are we still talking about a 5 yr old?

RoseGst16: grade 3 students are usually 8 yrs. of age

LornaB: Does a teacher see/vet what's sent?

JimOl: About 85% of UK students have access to the internet at home but you raise an interesting point about 'inclusion' which is very dear to my heart

PeggyKL: Jim, can u share w/ us about your program: best practices/lessons learnt?

JimOl: We are talking about all ages of students including advanced level Physics students sharing problem solving.

PaddyG: Is all the work sent from home or from a school?

ChrisGst3: Wow, only 10% of my low income San Jose students have net access at home.

PaddyG: In my area possibly 50%

JimOl: There is an issue about security. Most work is sent via schools but increasingly, communication links are going beyond school.

JeramieJ: you said the low income what about the rest of the students

JimOl: Given that this is fairly leading edge work, we are exploring the safety aspects carefully

PaddyG: Even with a school based project sts are free to work from home I guess

ChrisGst3: I teach in a low income area, 70% of my kids are on free lunch.

SusanneN: will students get a protected personal email address, Jim?

DanitaC: would it be appropriate to allow student to choose to participate globally--- or choose not to?

DavinaP: safety issues in what respect--viruses or harassment?

PeggyKL: how to make a GLC effective?

JimOl: It seems to me that much of this is about teaching the responsible use of the internet and computer

LydiaO: harassment I guess

DavinaP: Cybersecurity, cybersafety and cyberethics?

LornaB: How did you go about setting up the community?

DavidwGst18: . o O (The 3 "C's")

BryanGst12: Does anyone feel that the internet only encourages a further schism between students and other "real" people (face-to-face)?

JimOl: We are developing a programme to use with parents and children called HIT (Honesty, Integrity, Trust) which is about getting rid of filters and embracing the responsible use of the internet and having a real communication agenda between the generations about it

SusanneN: I agree - instead of fearing the dangers "out there" in the real world of internet, and over protection our kids with restrictions of all sorts, we should teach them to use it responsibly

PeggyKL: developed your own software?

HelenK: responsibility is the key - both to the process and the tools being used

PaddyG: that sounds very promising

PaddyG: parents and kids working together

PrincesGst8: that's smart

BryanGst12: when should students begin to learn this responsibility?

TeresaD: I agree. that's what life is all about

MaryellenM: I like the idea of parents and kids working together.

PaddyG: and spending TIME together therefore

JimOl: We don't think we need to spend huge money on new software but are researching the existing programmes and then running evening meetings in our schools for the parents and children together

TeresaD: fabulous!

PaddyG: and the parents are involved in children's school work

TeresaD: even better, Paddy

PrincesGst8: I think, as a student, there should be more parent and kid interaction

JeromeGst17: yeah it should Princess

DavinaP: What or how can we reach those students without parental support?

JimOl: Yes, exactly - some parents have said to me that they really welcome having a framework to discuss with their child about their use of e technology which they know so little about

BryanGst12: I see problems in the ways schools have for guaranteeing this

MaryellenM: If the program starts at a young age, we can continue the program throughout their educational careers.

TeresaD: and the children can be such good teachers!

SusanneN: what about having open after school club houses with access to OPC's and responsible adults?

BryanGst12: ...the interaction

PaddyG: and depending on the nature of the work the discussion won't only be about technology

PeggyKL: with the dept of health and Services, we spent only 10K to set up a CoP but as members increase, we need to locate more funding for maintenance.

CarolynDE: OPC's?

RoseGst16: What is OPC?

PrincesGst8: The cities spend so much on non-learning materials, the deeper the students feel less educated

BryanGst12: what are non-learning materials

TeresaD: do you mean you're having resistance from school boards, Jim?

DavinaP: so the focus now on this global project is cyberawareness

JimOl: Absolutely but schools are anxious because it only takes one abuse of the internet in school for them to be plastered all over the local paper

RoseGst16: What is OPC??????

PrincesGst8: Materials that do not help out the children to learn, Brian

JimOl: Anyway, I'll get onto the HOW bit now

PatGst14: Please answer Rose

LindaU: Jim, I think this may be universally true

BryanGst12: ohh

ChrisGst3: Can one of the dedicated email only machines (about 100 US dollars) be used, or is net access required?

LindaU: We need to find save internet space for students

DavidwGst18: . o O (safe*)

JimOl: Firstly, we only meet on a face to face basis - once per year - so there aren't loads of meetings - attractive eh?

BJ listens to Jim

LindaU: Are you all aware of <http://www.think.com> ?

DavinaP: who is we in the meet once a year

JimOl: Sorry - I get fed up with meetings which don't seem to move us forward - I guess you do too Anyway...

LindaU: think.com is a safe intranet space for teachers and students to collaborate on projects

LindaU: It is run by Oracle.

PrincesGst8: I think there are many sites for children to visit, but the matter is trying to enforce them to go to these educational sites

SusanneN: Think.com allows teachers to build and run interactive lesson activities on their own My Class Sites

JeromeGst17: oh, I remember that site now. We used it for email in middle school

PrincesGst8: Once again, I am speaking as a student

PaulaCP: fun

BryanGst12: Can schools easily set up things there?

JeromeGst17: then we had 2 do a short website on ourselves on think.com

JimOl: We run a monthly virtual meeting on line - in fact in the Autumn - sorry Fall, Linda doesn't know it yet but I hope to run a few on line meetings specifically for our link schools in California

PeggyKL: lesson learnt from your project?

DavinaP: but again sometimes I think we (educators) spoon feed thinks- "pre made" website templates, "sites" for students etc... and then no one really LEARNS on their own

JimOl: Couple of query response - OPCs - Suzanne first mentioned these - not sure what she meant

HelenK: is it possible to attend one of those meetings to observe?

BryanGst12: I think a larger problem is checking what students learn on their own.

JimOl: Yes, anyone can join our online meetings and read our e newsletters - go to the communications section of www.glc.me.uk

LindaU: good point Bryan...

HelenK: thank-you

ChrisGst3: Jim, how do you manage the logistics for the project? Is there a project manager or does each teacher structure the work for that class independently?

JimOl: The lessons learnt - I've got about 5...

PrincesGst8: I agree Bryan

BryanGst12: thanks

JimOl: Top of the list is to get the technology working robustly for the teachers!

BryanGst12: Current assessments in Maryland are appalling.

LindaU: When my students worked with students in Brazil we used a variety of assessments to assess student learning, Bryan.

LindaU: That project is still posted at: <http://www.garlic.com/~lullah/brazilus/water.html>

BryanGst12: like what?

BryanGst12: I will look at that.

LindaU: Look at the Evaluation links

PeggyKL: what about teaching training? Train teacher to use technology and apply technology in their teaching

LornaB: What do you mean 'robustly for the teachers'?

JimOl: Chris, I basically run the programme but we do have a named co-ordinator in each of the sixty seven UK schools involved in our area and their job is to facilitate the work with their colleagues

LydiaO: technology without disappointment

BryanGst12: In other countries, is there legislation like the No Child Left Behind Act raising standards for teachers.

PrincesGst8: I feel like we are being left behind

BryanGst12: we are

PrincesGst8: See, I thought I was the only one.

PeggyKL: I would not say raise, it's minimum standard

JimOl: Second issue would be conquering the logistics of three schools in three time zones covering the same work at the same time!

MarleneM: how do you do that - message boards?

SusanneN: Linda, what an interesting project -actually, I've seen several other Water projects in collaboration projects over the years, very good to encourage local awareness and global understanding

JimOl: We have not achieved this yet although bilateral links are well developed and the three way links should start in the next school year

CarlosA: do you do synchronous communication?

JimOl: Actually the emphasis of most of our work is not communication in real time - it is passing on work to be developed while the first learner is asleep - like the global economy

PeggyKL: work with project at the same time? apart from chat room, what tools are being used?

PeggyKL: e-Project?

LornaB: What is the content of the projects?

SusanneN: Is so sorry for creating a confusion with a silly typo earlier - I was talking about just plain PCs, not OPC (excuse me for clumsy typing!!!)

MaryellenM: Are we still working with young students or can middle school students participate?

JimOl: Our site now allows all registered schools to update their own details with special features, plans and - most important - offers/requests for learning links

JimOl: We are working with all age groups from ages about 5 to 19

BryanGst12: When does compulsory education end--19?

JimOl: One of the attractions for USA schools next year will be that, hopefully, you can pass the work on to a names school in Asia on its way around the world

JimOl: compulsory schooling in UK ends at 26 but of course most stay in education and training beyond this

CarlosA: do you work across the same age on all 3 international groups (like 8 year olds in the US, UK and India), or do you work across ages?

DavinaP: we are confused what is the project? is their only one project water pollution or more and what are they passing along?

LornaB: How long does each project take to complete?

PeggyKL: I was in another discussion at 7am and the leader talks about the Japanese students are very motivated but it's not the case in Hong Kong.

CarolynDE: Compulsory schooling in UK to age 26?

JimOl: Increasingly, I think chronological aged teaching and learning will die - there seems so little justification for it with technology allowing students to progress at their own speed

SusanneN: kids in India would not have English as their first language, so their level of comprehension will be lower at the same age

ChrisGst3: Is one of the goals to introduce students to the concept of piecework where each country group completes a portion of a project and then to draw the parallels for the students to current high tech trends where call centers may be in the Philippines, manufacturing may be in China, and marketing may be in the US?

BJ: PLEASE LET JIM ANSWER SOME OF THE QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU ASK MORE

JimOl: Sorry - compulsory school to 16 - missed a number

SusanneN: bravo Jim!! I completely agree, age segregation is old school!

JimOl: I have two new projects which will be on line by the beginning of your new year which anyone can join in...

LornaB: What are they?

JimOl: Firstly, within a few weeks now we will have launched our 24:7News which is an international continuous on line newspaper written by and for children and young people

DavidwGst18: . o O (a blog?)

MaryellenM: that sounds neat!

JimOl: I already have some wonderful material from Californian students - there will be two editions - primary and secondary

JimOl: You will be able to link onto it from the www.glc.me.uk website but it's not there yet

MarleneM: what do you do with students who are learning English because they have to not because they'd like to?

CandaceJaG: Jim, I am looking forward to the 24/7 project for my Mississippi students

JimOl: One of the things I have been so thrilled with about this work is that the most unengaged students have become involved in learning again For Example...

SusanneN: Maybe, perhaps this kind of project could motivate those students because they NEED to have some English skills to communicate

LydiaO: do you plan to include students from say Africa

PeggyKL: Hong Kong used to be a British colony. I learn it as a second language and I am using it as my "first" in US.

ElsaV: Jim have you ever considered a project related with foreign languages activities

MarleneM: thanks but how does the project work?

PeggyKL: Jim , you had 5 lesson learnt, what are the rest?

BryanGst12: A paper for experimenting with different languages would be interesting.

JimOl: One group of grade 10 students were studying Crime and Punishment and the role of the Police and got into discussions with similar students in California. It got some most unlikely students very focused on their English and they gained a very different perspective on learning

JimOl: I'll get to the other lessons shortly but just one or two other responses...

DavinaP: how was their perspectives on learning changed?

JimOl: Although we are primarily working with schools in Silicon Valley and New Delhi, obviously schools have their own links and some of our schools have links in many other places including Africa, Australia and, of course Europe

LornaB: Do you give the students input first in a f2f situation before they begin the collaborative exercise?

LydiaO: Thanks Jim

SheilaN: Jim, what is the second project that will be starting with the new school year?

JimOl: Different school approach the links in different ways but - another lesson we have learnt is that the more specific a school can be about how a share learning link could really enhance the learning (as opposed to being cosmetic) the better

JimOl: This also helps possible link schools to decide whether to pursue the link

JimOl: Another realization for me is that there does seem to be a limit to what you can achieve in a developing relationship without face to face contact...

BryanGst12: I agree entirely

LornaB: Can you explain please?

DavinaP: how do the schools, students. teachers link up?

JimOl: Given that we are operating largely with English speaking partners, there is a danger that you assume the culture is the same..

JimOl: and I have sometimes assumed things which where well out of order!

DavinaP: by link up I mean how are the partners partnerships formed?

PeggyKL: that's why there needs the protocol

JimOl: Anyway - this seems like a good excuse/reason for me to get over to California in the Fall and meet up with colleagues

LydiaO: I think we should start with f2f before going on line

PeggyKL: blended

SheilaN smiles - visiting California

BryanGst12: I think the process would still work in the opposite order.

DavinaP: what protocols? and what cultural disconnects have happened examples please

JimOl: OK - partnerships are set up in different ways - of course there are personal contacts...

JimOl: but the most common is through me at UK end and someone like Linda

SusanneN: sometimes geography makes it hard (or at least pretty costly) to meet f2f

BryanGst12: With some research into the backgrounds of the participants?

PeggyKL: via survey?

BryanGst12: That would work.

RoseGst16: What is the f2f?

JimOl: Our website is now developing a bit like a 'dating' agency - with offers/requests from schools which other schools can pursue

PeggyKL: face to Face meeting

JimOl: However, issue number 5 is the growing problem Linda and I have in keeping track of what schools are doing

PeggyKL: size?

LydiaO: Admin

BryanGst12: Can real-time vocal contact compensate for a lack of face-to-face?

CandaceJaG: perhaps a tool can be used Jim to have participants report in some way

JimOl: I see we are running up on time now - you have my contact details on the web site - any final queries/comments

HelenK: there are other 'f2f' options such as webcams and virtual team meetings using voice as well as text which give that connection that we feel is personal

BryanGst12: No, you have been most helpful.

MarleneM: thank you for a real informative session

PeggyKL: tks

CandaceJaG: merci

PrincesGst8: It was informative

TeresaD: thank you, Jim. interesting info and will look up the site for sure

MaryellenM: thanks!

DavinaP: thank you for your time very exciting things happening

LindaU: Great job all--Thank you Jim

JeffC: I'd like to thank Jim for this presentation, and invite others to carry the conversation forward. My presentation in three hours is entitled "Building 21st Century Collaborative Learning Communities" ... and I will carry on the discussion there. All are invited!

RobertWB: Very interesting...I will be checking your links periodically...

CarolynDE: Many thanks, Jim, and good luck

LornaB: I had no idea of the scale of the learning communities. It sounds wonderful.

JimOl: Just picked up the point re voice/video etc. Yes I agree this is useful but we have had technical problems in getting the systems to work easily - we'll get there though

ElsaV: this is my first time and I really appreciate for this interesting session. thanks bye

RoseGst16: Thanks, Jim

DoloresGst15: I have learned a lot. Thanks Jim I will be checking out that website later.