

Title of Session: WriteTalk: Gaggle Net

Moderator: Sandra Shattuck

Guest Speaker: Stephanie Newton

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Room: WriteTalk Group

SandraS joined the room.

BJB2 cheers. Hi, Sandy!

SandraS hugs BJ

SandraS waves to Michael and Claire

MichaelJH: I don't know how to do those things Sandra, but I'm waving back...lol

LaurenKa: me too, waving...:)

SandraS applauds Michael

SandraS: just type a colon and whatever action you want

SandraS waves

ClaireP dances

SandraS: so if I type ":waves"

ClaireP: haha

LaurenKa waves

SandraS: ooooh

SandraS: yeah Claire and Lauren

MichaelJH: oh duh...

ClaireP: woohooo

SandraS: quick learners...

MichaelJH waves

StephaniLN joined the room.

SandraS applauds Michael

StephaniLN: Hello everyone.

SandraS: Hi, Stephanie!

MichaelJH: well, you learn something everyday

StephaniLN: Hi, Sandra

SandraS jumps on her hoverboard and does a flip off the left sequoia

BJB2 sighs with relief...hi, Stephanie

MichaelJH: Hi Stephanie

StephaniLN: Hi, Michael

MichaelJH: dang Sandra...you got the moves

SandraS: Stephanie will be talking about how she's used Gaggle.net, so we're very glad she's here

SandraS: lol, Michael

SandraS turns on the meditative fountain

StephaniLN: I will do my best

JeffC joined the room.

SandraS waves to Jeff

SandraS passes around warm chocolate chip cookies and espresso

JeffC waves... mentions <http://www.epals.com> (yeah i know... topic is gaggle.net!) and lurks since I have to head out and deal with kids, etc.

SandraS: thanks, Jeff

ClaireP: yup

BJB2: Sandy, would you like to start with introductions?

SandraS: sure

SandraS: sounds good

SandraS: We usually start by introducing ourselves.

SandraS: Where are we? What do we teach?

SandraS: . o O (not an existential question....)

SandraS: I'm in Huntsville AL where I teach literature and writing at the college level

BJB2: I teach remedial communication and am in Pennsylvania

FredS joined the room.

SandraS waves to Fred

SandraS: we're just doing introductions

ClaireP: I'm in San Diego and I teach high school biology

StephaniLN: I'm in Belleville, IL I teach in Brooklyn IL and teach middle school literature, math and social studies

LaurenKa: I'm in El Segundo, CA-I teach computers to grades 3-8

BJB2: we're just starting introductions, Fred....where you are located and what you teach

FredS: sorry new at this. science 6th grade Chicago

MichaelJH: Hi, I'm from San Diego, CA, and I teach 10th grade English and a classmate of Claire's at SDSU. I thought that was you Claire, but I wasn't sure.... :)

SandraS: excellent!

SandraS: We've got two science teachers!

FredS: I was reading the writing project

SandraS: and a nice range of grades...

SandraS: Welcome to WriteTalk!

SandraS: I start with a quick introduction to the National Writing Project

FredS: thanks

SandraS: and then we'll move right on to Gaggle.net

SandraS: I'm very pleased that Stephanie is here this evening

SandraS: at the last WriteTalk, several people asked about safe web-based email

SandraS: Stephanie talked about gaggle.net and she's been using it in her classrooms...so she'll give us her experience

SandraS: and we'll talk about using email to teach writing...

SandraS: So here's the quick spiel on the National Writing Project or NWP

SandraS: It's a professional development organization started in 1974 at UC Berkeley

SandraS: federally funded

SandraS: there are about 200 NWP sites around the country

SandraS: all housed at universities

SandraS: serving primarily k-12 teachers

SandraS: NWP has three tenets:

SandraS: 1) teachers are the best teachers of other teachers

SandraS: 2) teachers teach writing more effectively when they improve their own writing

SandraS: 3) writing is a great learning tool across all subject areas

SandraS: The main program at each site is the Summer Institute

SandraS: these are intensive and can be taken for grad. credit some times...or you might get a stipend

SandraS: but let's take a quick look at the website

SandraS: you can see a map in the upper right corner

SandraS: so you can see if there's a site near you

SandraS: just check the map

SandraS: then please use the Search function

SandraS: type in anything you're interested in

SandraS: journal writing

SandraS: science

SandraS: technology

ClaireP left the room.

SandraS: and see what pops up

SandraS: then come back here

SandraS: Everybody with me?

SandraS: Here's the URL:

SandraS: <http://nwp.org>

BJB2: hold down the ctrl key on your keyboard when you click on the url

SandraS: thanks, BJ

SandraS: if you want to visit the National Writing Project website for a couple minutes, here's the URL

SandraS: <http://nwp.org>

FredS: Sandra I have to go but would like more information on this. Can I get it emailed to me at school?

MichaelJH: We have one at UC San Diego

SandraS: you'll have a transcript emailed to you Fred

SandraS: and the information so far will be right there

SandraS: cool, Michael

FredS: perfect

FredS: thanks

SandraS: sure!

SandraS: UC San Diego has a fairly large site, I think

FredS left the room (signed off).

MichaelJH: I'm looking through it right now

SandraS: excellent

SandraS: should be a link to the site's webpage

MichaelJH brb dog needs in

SandraS: OK

SandraS: Is everybody back here yet?

BJB2 nods

ClaireP: yes

StephaniLN: yes

LaurenKa: yes

MichaelJH: yes

SandraS: OK, wonderful...any questions about the NWP before we go on?

StephaniLN: There is definitely a lot of useful information on the site

SandraS: yes, there's tons!

SandraS: The Quarterly is the online journal

SandraS: has been in print for a while

SandraS: just moved solely to online version

StephaniLN: Last time I know we looked at some of the journal topics

ClaireP: is it subscription?

SandraS: No, Claire

SandraS: all free

StephaniLN: and I was looking for any information they had on research I was doing for another class

SandraS: so let's say you're wondering about how to use digital storytelling

SandraS: inputting that search term would net you a lot of links and information

StephaniLN: I also liked some of the topics found in the journal writing we looked at last time

StephaniLN: this time I looked up information on math and found some more useful information

SandraS: yes, in the 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing...

SandraS: oh, great, Stephanie

SandraS: If you just type in "30 Ideas" into the search box

MichaelJH: how long is the summer institute?

SandraS: you'll get a publication that gives quick ideas

SandraS: and links to a longer article

SandraS: usually 4 weeks, Michael

SandraS: varies from site to site, but most of them are intensive and 4-5 weeks long

SandraS: Well, since email is our topic....let's try a search on the NWP site and see what comes up

SandraS: go to <http://nwp.org> and just input "email" into search box

SandraS: we'll meet back here in a minute or so....

SandraS: anybody back yet?

MichaelJH: yes...I just skimmed over the first article...very interesting

SandraS: yes, I skimmed it too...I'm looking forward to reading it later....

LaurenKa: lots to read..

SandraS: Yes!

ClaireP: back

SandraS: I noticed two articles on using email in the classroom.

StephaniLN: Yes

SandraS: OK, looks like we're here.

SandraS: Let's start with a practical question, and then I'm going to turn the discussion over to Stephanie...

SandraS: How many of you use email in the classroom, and if not, what keeps you from using it?

ClaireP: I use email to communicate with teachers and occasionally students submit assignments

MichaelJH: I use e-mail to send homework assignments, reminders, to answer questions and give feedback to my students.

StephaniLN: I don't necessarily use email in the classroom, but I have emailed assignments to a few students who are absent and they have submitted work through email also.

ClaireP: students also send me questions through email... but it's rare

SandraS: OK, so mostly I'm seeing email as a way to communicate...mostly administrative stuff..?

LaurenKa: I want to use email, but not everyone has an address.

LaurenKa: that is, the students...

MichaelJH: I've also accepted work via email, but I give a deadline, like say 8 pm.

MichaelJH: true Lauren, some of my students don't have computer access at home.

StephaniLN: Through goggle.net you can change so everyone has an email account.

SandraS: Stephanie, do you want to jump in?

ClaireP: that's true for me too

SandraS: Let's talk about Gaggle.net

ClaireP: ok

SandraS: Stephanie, how did you start using it?

SandraS: What do you use it for?

SandraS: And can you tell us something about it?

StephaniLN: Gaggle.net allows a teacher or technology coordinator to set up accounts for all students in your building

StephaniLN: There are three different versions

StephaniLN: One is a free version which is what my school district uses

StephaniLN: The downside to the free version is that you get several popups

StephaniLN: Through the subscription version it eliminates some of the popups

StephaniLN: and through the Licensed site I think it eliminates all popups

StephaniLN: The school district I work for had a high school English teacher and the tech coordinator set up accounts for all students and teachers

SandraS: So how do you use Gaggle.net?

SandraS: And why not just have students have email addresses through any old service?

StephaniLN: They set it up because it was easy and free to do

StephaniLN: While not all students have internet access at home, there are computers in all of the classrooms and several of the teachers let students on multiple times a day

StephaniLN: Some of the ways that I have used gaggle.net is set up blogs

SandraS applauds blogs

StephaniLN: I have created blog posts to have students connect aspects of literature lessons to their own lives

MichaelJH: cool

StephaniLN: or just to answer certain questions from the books

StephaniLN: The high school English teacher has the students do daily journals on their own blogs.

SandraS: What has your experience been with the blogs?

ClaireP: as a reflection activity?

StephaniLN: We also have teachers emailing students word documents through their email account

SandraS: What works? What are the glitches? Are they worth it?

StephaniLN: The glitches are that the gaggle.net site has been going through some maintenance the last few days

StephaniLN: during the day, so students can not get on to answer their blogs

ClaireP: is it routine maintenance, so you know when to expect when they are down?

StephaniLN: because they can not get on until after 2:30PM our time

StephaniLN: I am not sure if it is routine work or not.

MichaelJH: However, it sure beats hauling a bunch of journals home to grade and saves trees. ;)

SandraS: I know there are other free email programs like Gaggle.net

ClaireP: Definitely!

SandraS: Chalk.com is one

SandraS: Gaggle.net ensures a safe environment

ClaireP: what do you mean by safe?

SandraS: and teachers can read all the emails from students, block email

SandraS: no spam, no porno

MichaelJH: I like the profanity filter

StephaniLN: The teacher or administrator gets several emails from everything that is submitted by students to approve before students comments or blogs are accepted. This is another glitch.

ClaireP: I see

SandraS: you can use search terms to look for problems

StephaniLN: However it keeps the use of bad words out of their blogs or comments

SandraS: let's take a look at the site...check out what they do...then come back here... so Stephanie can tell us more

SandraS: <http://www.gaggle.net>

MichaelJH: I was a nerd and looked through it before we started.

SandraS applauds all nerds

MichaelJH bows

SandraS: Nerds unite!

LaurenKa: I signed up a few months ago but lost my log in and password, I just emailed their admin...think that will be enough?

SandraS: I'm pretty sure, Lauren

SandraS: I went ahead and got an account

SandraS: Anyone who wants to play with, I can add you to the Tapped In classroom I've got set up.

StephaniLN: There are also message boards, discussion boards and ways to set up chats.

LaurenKa: I like that I control passwords and can view if necessary. It is better for parents.

StephaniLN: However, I have not used these features yet.

SandraS: I could set you to "School teacher" so you would be able to play with the permissions

SandraS: That's important, Stephanie...that there are also message boards and chat

SandraS: Everybody back here?

LaurenKa: yes

MichaelJH: I also like the idea of having pod-casting tools

ClaireP: I see

StephaniLN: Today I looked more at the Teacher Guides, Teacher Frequently Asked Questions, and Administration Guide to see if I can start using some of these other features.

SandraS: oh, yes...podcasting!

StephaniLN: Sometimes the students say the blogs are too much or too long, but at other times I have students who want to know if we are going to be working on blogs and if new posts have been added. I definitely like hearing this.

SandraS: What did you think, Stephanie?

SandraS: I agree!

SandraS: blogs can really get students excited about writing

SandraS: And they can add pictures, links to YouTube

SandraS: unless you disallow that

SandraS: so the main thing is that the teacher has a lot of control

StephaniLN: I am hoping that the blogs and having questions that connect the students lives to what we are reading will help them on the state extended response questions

SandraS: sounds good~

StephaniLN: We really have seen a lot of excitement with the students in our building.

SandraS: How so?

StephaniLN: When students are creating their own blogs they are coming up with their own topics, examples being Top Five Actors/Actresses I like, Top Five Reasons Brooklyn is the Best City, Top Five Rappers

StephaniLN: They have become more creative with their writing

SandraS: Cool!

StephaniLN: While we, as teachers, have topics just in case they do not know what to write about they have been able to come up with topics on their own.

SandraS: Great!

ClaireP: it sounds like an educational myspace

MichaelJH: lol

SandraS: and because of the safety features, you could use this in second grade...

LaurenKa: I have found that they thing about what they are going to post more because of how many people will see it. It has been a good thing.

ClaireP: where the students can post whatever they want, but it is filtered

SandraS: great description, Claire!

LaurenKa: think..

SandraS: Lauren, do you use Gaggle.net blogs? or something else?

MichaelJH: It's funny how some students will struggle with writing in class, but get them on a blog...

SandraS: absolutely, Michael...

LaurenKa: blogspot right now. I make it open to everyone without an email account for the hour that we do it and then I close it.

ClaireP: some students are so used to typing so often that when a pencil is in their hand, it hurts to write for so long

SandraS: oh, wow...that's an interesting idea, Lauren

SandraS: lol, Claire...

StephaniLN: Sometimes the high school students wonder why their posts do not come up, so they are now trying new things or coming up with new words for the profanity words, but as an administrator you can add to the word list to block comments

LaurenKa: it gets me around them having to have an email

SandraS: would you consider Gaggle.net, Lauren?

SandraS: although Blogspot has many more options to the blogs...

LaurenKa: that's what I am moving towards because they need an email address

LaurenKa: then they can post at home too

SandraS: If anyone wants to play with Gaggle.net, you can give me your full name and email address and I can add you to the Tapped In classroom.

StephaniLN: Definitely

LaurenKa: yes, please

ClaireP: I am a coordinator for a collaboration between my school, UCSD, and SDSU, so I will probably have them invest in a license for this because it will be a 2 year program

SandraS: And Stephanie, we should be able to find you by searching on Gaggle.net

StephaniLN: ok

ClaireP: there's a directory in gaggle.net?

StephaniLN: Sandra is there a WriteTalk Group Next month

SandraS: yes

SandraS: we meet every second Thursday

StephaniLN: Claire there is a directory in gaggle.net, but I am not sure how far out it goes too

SandraS: Do you have an idea for next month, Stephanie?

StephaniLN: I am not sure if you are set up with a school if the school is the only directory you see, Claire

SandraS: As soon as I'm done here, I'll add y'all.

SandraS: And I'll make sure you have school teacher status.

MichaelJH: thanks Sandra

LaurenKa: thanks

SandraS: Sure!

StephaniLN: Have you ever done anything on how to get students to write on what they are thinking while reading?

SandraS: Oh, yes...

SandraS: there's one thing I use...

SandraS: a double-entry journal

SandraS: I have a handout I can upload here

SandraS: let's see if I can find it...hang on

MichaelJH: That would be great!

SandraS: does anyone know about double-entry journals?

LaurenKa: sure.

StephaniLN: I do a little.

MichaelJH: same here

SandraS: excellent...Lauren and Stephanie, do you want to talk about them?

LaurenKa: it's a good way for students to recall what they read chapters later

ClaireP: sounds great

SandraS: one reason I like them is because it helps them to find what they're thinking

SandraS: not what they think they're supposed to be thinking

MichaelJH: Or to write questions about something they don't understand

LaurenKa: gives you a point of reference for knowing how much they are retaining as well.

StephaniLN: Write a Quote that made them think on one side and write what it made them think about on the other side

SandraS: such great stuff!

SandraS: ok, I've uploaded "double-entry2.doc"

SandraS: under the "Files" section of this room

SandraS: if you go to the left menu above

SandraS: click on Files

SandraS: it will be the first file

ClaireP: thanks

MichaelJH: thank you

SandraS: we're about out of time...

LaurenKa: thanks!

StephaniLN: Thanks

ClaireP: Thank you for the info

SandraS: Thank you all for coming and sharing your expertise!

SandraS: Look for a welcome email from Gaggle.net if you asked to be signed up

SandraS: and if you join the WriteTalk group, you'll get our meeting reminders

MichaelJH: Great meeting and chatting with you all!

SandraS: and you can post anything you want to the Discussion list

SandraS: Thanks, Michael.

ClaireP: Have a good evening everyone!

SandraS: You, too, Claire

SandraS: Take care, all