

Title of Session: 7-12 Science Forum

Moderator: Jeff Cooper

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BJ: for those who just joined us, we usually start the discussions in Tapped In with introductions. Jeff Cooper is going to be the leader of this 7-12 Science Forum

BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

BillieF: I'm a pre-service teacher at the University of Akron

ErikaP: I am a preservice teacher and I will start teaching my own classroom in August. I have to join Tapped In discussions as part of my technology requirement.

JeffC: I'm also on Helpdesk here... and for the past three years was Education Technology Specialist for the College of Education at Pacific University. My major duties, in addition to troubleshooting and maintaining a computer lab, was to support Masters students and professors with technology and curriculum integration.

AdaA: I am a student at the University of Houston working in my Teaching Certification

GregC: I'm a preservice teacher at the University of Houston

DonnaLC: I'm a 7th grade science teacher

HaroldJ: I am not currently teaching but working on my certification. I just sooo want to learn. This is part of my course work.

BenR: I'm a high school Earth Science teacher in Indianapolis, doing this for a technology class

JeffC waves to Kelly... we're just getting started... please give us a brief intro.

WendyCu I am a preservice teacher at University of Houston for elementary education

DonnaLC: I'm also working on my certification at Univ. of Houston.

JeffC: Before I get started with this forum, I'd like to welcome all of you to Tapped In. Although you may be doing this as a "requirement" ... I hope that you set up a virtual office here and continue to contribute to this educational collaborative community. In my opinion... this is "where it's at."

KellyW: okay - I taught middle school life science last year and am going to school full-time right now to finish my Master's Degree

ErikaP: Yes, that is my goal Jeff

HaroldJ: I already have my office and hope to make the most of it.

JeffC: I believe that this is one of the absolute essential sites for educators. By becoming part of this community, you will have resources, and more importantly... develop professional relationships for years to come, regardless of where you are physically.

JeffC: OK... let's get started.

ErikaP: That's true

JeffC: For those of you that were in the Math Discussion... some of this will be redundant for you... and you are welcome to "skip ahead" and take a look at the sites that I have.

JeffC: The key for me in education is "collaboration." When I was a kid... it was called "cheating"... now it's called "collaborating."

JeffC: And I think that we need to do as much cheating... er... collaborating as possible if we really want to make Science (or any subject) interesting for our students.

ErikaP: There is nothing wrong with "cheating" I mean collaborating

JeffC: Exactly

KellyW: agree

JeffC: A comment was made in the previous session that there is never enough time for teachers to do what they need. I agree somewhat... but then I used rather harsh language (poppycock)... because I believe that teachers don't time manage well... especially when it comes to lessons.

ErikaP: We do need to make science interesting for students. The bad thing is that science and science [classes] are getting taken out of elementary.

JeffC: The Internet has incredible resources... but it is important to separate the wheat from the chaff... something that isn't always easy to do.

ErikaP: The students do science for nine weeks and the following nine weeks they do social studies and that is sad.

DonnaLC: I have only science classes.

GregC: we don't do science at all in the classrooms I've been observing

BenR: I have only science classes also

JeffC: I have posted the bookmarks that I have found over the past years to a public site: <http://www.mybookmarks.com/public/coops> ... by clicking on Mr.C's Educational bookmarks... I would like you to scroll down and click on the "Science" folder.

ErikaP: It is important that students get science all the time b/c the process skills they learn in science can be applied to everyday life for the rest of our lives

JeffC: There are about 100 links there... and obviously... we're not really going to look at all of them... I just want to show you what some of the possibilities are for collaborating at this point. Making things Relevant (as Erika points out) is indeed important... and there are a number of sites that focus on that... and making learning about science interesting as well.

ErikaP: There are a lot of great websites

WendyCu: I like the volcano site

JeffC: Before looking at any of the links... I also want to let you know that I have created another mybookmarks site. If you go to <http://www.mybookmarks.com> and login: mathscience password: tappedin ... you will see folders for just Math and Science. It is my hope that I can encourage you to add your own links there as appropriate... and to create your own public bookmarks at either mybookmarks or <http://www.backflip.com>

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JeffC: Hopefully all of the sites there will be useful to someone here (or a peer). Other folders that may be of interest on my main mybookmarks are the Teacher Utilities and Lesson Plans folders.

JeffC: What I'm hoping to do here is to get you thinking about ways that you can collaborate with your peers (in real life or virtually)... to make it easier for you to do interesting things in the classroom.

GregC: Jeff, do you know of any sites that list lesson plans based on the objectives of different states?

ErikaP: Sounds good to me

KellyW: much needed for time management (as you say we need help on)

DonnaLC: I agree

JeffC: With Science, I think that many people do weather projects... and pretty much leave it at that...

JeffC: Greg... are you talking about aligning to standards?

GregC: right

GregC: but separated by state standards

GregC: like in Texas we have the TEKS, which are different than other states' standards

KellyW: how are they different?

JeffC: BJ just pointed out that ENC (Eisenhower National Clearinghouse) and Marco Polo align to standards. I know that the N.Y. Times Learning Network Lessons align to standards.

GregC: so a lot of time is spent sifting through sites that aren't pertinent to us

GregC: great!!

JeffC: I find it disheartening that standards have the effect of diminishing the possibilities for learning.

ErikaP: That's true

BenR: the standards definitely restrict what we can teach and the detail that is sometimes needed is left out

JeffC: I've subscribed to the ENC Digital Dozen for some time now...

<http://www.enc.org/> ... you can get excellent lessons emailed to you that way.

ErikaP: That is true, but sometimes it also depends on how flexible your principal is.

Some just think that it is just important that students learn

JeffC thinks that educators need to become more creative than ever in dealing with the NCLB standards and restrictions. I think there are better ways to come to the standards' ends.

JeffC: Let me rephrase what you said Erika: Some just think that it is just important that teachers teach.

HaroldJ: This is where collaboration will play a big roll - when standards tend to interfere.

WendyCu: In Texas it almost seems that way

ErikaP: I agree

JeffC: I'm going a bit awry here... but the didactic mode of the teacher being the sage on the stage doesn't really address the needs of the students any more. We need to find ways to make students become actively engaged in their own education. Too often the NCLB approach saps the will to learn out of the students. But... if the teachers teach subjects... teaching to the test... they're doing what they are supposed to do... but... I don't think it's necessarily what they *should* do.

ErikaP: Sometimes as teachers we can get too caught up on teaching to the test, b/c so much depends on the test scores.

JeffC: Students need to do more than learn "stuff" ... especially in a subject like science... the possibilities for scientific inquiry are enormous... project based learning moves in this direction... and there are quite a few sites out there that you can join, and become part of international projects. These don't necessarily mean that you don't get standards... it's just a different way of getting there.

KellyW: Maybe I am cynical - but when your principal tells you to teach to the test it is hard not to . . . I guess that is why we must be creative in finding hands-on activities that reach the same end

JeffC: Exactly

KellyW: We are doing service learning projects now and they seem to really spark student interest

JeffC: I think "teaching to the test" by itself does not address the issue of student motivation.

ErikaP: I agree and that can be hard if we don't know where to look. That is why I like the bookmarks

KellyW: which is a HUGE issue

DonnaLC: For my education class we are looking at sites now and there are a lot out there.

JeffC: Well... I can hold a forum some time on NCLB... and then I can really rant and rave about what I think about it... but I'd be up on an inappropriate soap box here if I were to spend time on it!

KellyW: who says what is inappropriate? hehe'

JeffC: Well... I'd get too political for my own good...

KellyW: gotcha

JeffC: Anyhow... I'd like people to have a chance to browse through some of my 100 links... and come back with a few comments.

JeffC: And indeed... if you would like to discuss "How do I align this site with these standards?" ... we can do that too.

ErikaP: I like the websites, I think they are very helpful

BillieF: They provide a lot of great resources for future use.

ErikaP: I agree with you Billie

DonnaLC: That's great. I liked them

KellyW: I like them - yet some of them seem like they need to be scaled down for my Middle school kids

GregC: I just looked at the world-wide biome project. It seemed like it would be fun for upper elementary or junior high

DonnaLC: I'll have to look at the biome one. We will be doing it soon

ErikaP: I am going to take a look at the biome project b/c I am interested in teaching upper elementary

GregC: the children do research about the plantlife, animals, etc. in their specific region and report it to the site for others to view

JeffC: excellent

GregC: it allows everyone to explore what each region of the world consists of

DonnaLC: Sounds good. I'm also having my observation then

GregC: also, I noticed that it won quite a few internet awards

HaroldJ: It's good to be passionate about something like you are about education, Jeff. I liked the site "Today in Science History"-that's one for motivation.

JeffC: Great Harold

KellyW: I like the web Ct site (under biology project - online interactive) . . . it goes through process skills and steps of the scientific method - good stuff

JeffC: My real goal in life is to support educators, students, even admins in their endeavors to make learning more enjoyable and meaningful for students.

BenR: Jeff, I'm currently looking for some good science webquests, do you know of anywhere I could go for some?

JeffC: oh yeah

ErikaP: If learning is meaningful for students then they will be more willing to learn

HaroldJ: With all these resources, why are our kids lacking so much in education?

WendyCu: There is a mystery of mars webquest on the bookmark

JeffC: There are many WebQuest sites... for those not familiar... a WebQuest is a web based inquiry guided by the teacher... where the students go online and have resources mapped out for them to develop (hopefully) a scaffolded webquest. Bernie Dodge (the originator of the WebQuest) holds monthly meetings here.

KellyW: of course - it needs to be linked to real-life experiences for them to retain and apply information.

BenR: I saw that one Wendy, I was just looking for some others also

DonnaLC: There was a site for middle school motivation too.

KellyW: where is the motivation site?

DonnaLC: Special Education. New Middle School

KellyW: thanks

DonnaLC: You're Welcome

JeffC: For starters... you might want to go to <http://www.webquest.org> and Search for Science.

KellyW: Jeff - when are the monthly meetings on webquests?

ErikaP: I'd like to know as well

GregC: Brainpop.com is another good site

JeffC: I put a list of Social Science and Science webquests together at:

<http://www.oten.info/resources/webquests.html>

JeffC: Hold on... I'll check when the next webquest meeting is.

GregC: it has lots of different movies and explanations to teach a variety of concepts in science as well as other areas

BJ: The next WebQuest discussion is on November 12

KellyW: thanks - both Greg and BJ

JeffC: I'd like to direct people to another site: <http://www.schoolkit.com>

AdaA: Jeff, here is one that I used a lot.

<http://www.howe.k12.ok.us/~jimaskew/gloss3.htm> Is for Physics and Chemistry for high school.

ErikaP: I like the schoolkit website

JeffC: At this site... the Enactz link has... in a nutshell... constructivist K-12 lessons that interact with MS Office. It is a great way to learn office as well as excellent lessons (that you should be able to align to standards). Cost is \$55 a year... but you can get over 600 lessons (though they are for all grade levels... and all subject matters). Plugging in a few of those into your curriculum should also be interesting and motivational for students.

AdaA: Jeff, can your school district cover some of the membership cost?

ErikaP: Good question Ada

KellyW: there is a one-month trial membership that sounds good - I know my school won't cover the cost

JeffC: Another site I would like to direct everyone to is HPRTEC... and specifically within it: Trackstar. HPRTEC <http://www.hprtec.org> has a number of very useful tools for all educators. At Trackstar, you can create your own 15 link "tour" with annotated notes. For an example... here is one that I made: <http://tinyurl.com/amen> (complete coincidence on that name btw). You can also search the archives. I really don't know what your school district will do in regards to covering the costs... but I do recommend the lessons.

ErikaP: Thanks that is helpful to know

JeffC: By searching archives at Trackstar, you can save yourself some time if you are looking for lessons and links on a particular subject.

BillieF left the room (signed off).

DonnaLC: I'll have to look into it.

JeffC: At HPRTEC there is also Quizstar (online quizzes) Rubistar (online rubric generator), CasaNotes, and NoteStar for communicating with parents.

JeffC: I have to leave soon, because I'm already overextending my daycare.

WendyCu: I have used both the quizstar and rubistar and they are wonderful

ErikaP: I like the part of communicating with parents b/c parent involvement is very important

GregC: thanks for the help, Jeff

JeffC: What I'd like to leave everybody with is the thought that together you can get quite a bit more accomplished than struggling individually.

WendyCu: Thank you for all the great links

BJ: Thanks, Jeff. The next 7-12 Science Forum is December 2

JeffC: Perhaps someone here would like to create a Science Resource room here at Tapped In?

DonnaLC: Yes, Thank you Jeff

BenR: Thank you Jeff, this was very helpful

AdaA: thanks Jeff

HaroldJ: Thanks, Jeff.

JeffC: The important thing is to stay connected... build a network... continue to support each other. You're all very welcome... it's been my pleasure.

KellyW: I definitely have more than enough to look at for one night - thanks for everything Jeff

ErikaP: Thanks Jeff both the math and science discussion was very helpful

JeffC waves bfn

BJ: good suggestion about the Science Resource room, Jeff

BJ . o O (any Tapped In member can create two group rooms)

BJ: If anyone is interested in starting a Science Resource room and would like help, please let me know. bjb@tappedin.org

BJ waves goodnight

DonnaLC: Bye

AdaA: Great! I will start with setting my bookmarks!

HaroldJ: Goodnight, everyone