

Title of Session: Arts and Literacy - Arts Empower

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Room: After School Online Room

BJ: We always start discussions in Tapped In with introductions

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

BJ: could you each introduce yourself please?

BJ . o O (this helps me know the audience and know what to show you)

NicoleDPW: I am a second grade teacher in San Jose, California. I am taking a technology class and have just been introduced to Tapped In through it. This is my first time attending a chat.

BJ: thanks, Nicole

EileenA: I am an art teacher in Michigan, teaching grades 9-12 design, drawing , ceramics and sculpture - year #32 in education

AudraS: I am a Kinder First Grade teacher in San Jose, CA. I am taking a Technology class and we discussed this site at my last class. Wanted to check it out. I apologize in advance on my rookie chat room experience.

BJ: cool, Eileen. Thanks, Audra...you're doing fine.

NicoleDPW: Audra and I teach in the same district and just discovered it, but haven't ever met. Crazy, huh?

CassidyP: I am an after school Web Design teacher in Oakland, CA and a grad student in learning and technology.

BJ: great! Thanks, everyone...that helps a lot. Let me give you a little background on the Arts and Literacy discussions...

BJ: I started them to help regular classroom teachers integrate the arts into their curriculum...

BJ: and to help art teachers to integrate other disciplines into their programs.

BJ: In addition, I think it's important for classroom teachers and arts specialists to collaborate

BJ: so they can draw on their strengths

BJ: an in among all that integration and collaboration, I'm hoping to help all educators use the arts to promote a variety of literacies

BJ: we are inundated with visual images and it's important for our kids to learn to make sense of all they see

BJ . o O (our web designer should know about this one)

BJ: does all this make sense and sound like something you'd like to explore further?

NicoleDPW: That sounds very interesting.

EileenA: sure

BJ: I should also mention that I teach art in a male juvenile correctional facility...I try to work on literacy skills all the time for this special population

NicoleDPW: Sounds like an amazing job!

AudraS: I too am interested, I want to incorporate more of this into my curriculum.

BJ: I had come across a site that I wanted to share during one of these discussions because it has so many valuable resources...

CassidyP: So are we talking about how to work on "visual literacy" or language literacy through visuals. Am I being clear in my question?

BJ: I'm going to show you a url. Just click on the hyperlink to open a separate web window.

BJ: Cassidy, we're talking about both

CassidyP: Ok.

BJ . o O (your question was perfectly clear to me)

EileenA: I use history and language in all of my projects. am always looking for other avenues to present information that connects to kids and their learning

BJ: Great, Eileen...remind me to show you my backflip site at the end

BJ: <http://www.artslynx.org/heal/index.htm>

BJ: open that url and we'll explore the resources a little

BJ: is anyone familiar with this site?

EileenA: went there earlier this evening trying to figure out how to navigate

NicoleDPW: I visited the site before attending this chat, but other than that, not much.

EileenA: do we go there now?

AudraS: I am not familiar, but thanks for the url. I'm exploring it now

NicoleDPW: Is there a way to keep my chat and visit that site

BJ: open the web page, Eileen...but keep an eye on this chat window

BJ: this site has a lot of resources....the idea of arts empowering caught my attention...

BJ: especially because I work with a lot of special ed kids and mental health issues

BJ: I found the easiest way to quickly see the resources was to scroll down to Resources Listed Alphabetically

EileenA: I have many special ed and emi

BJ nods to Eileen.

BJ: most of these links lead to other lists of resources...try going to the Abuse link

AudraS: This is really wonderful, so many resources..

BJ: Quilts are a popular activity in most elementary classrooms...and in a lot of secondary classrooms

AudraS: Yes, they are, my class will be involved in a quilt square making project over their Winter Break

BJ: Quilt squares can become a social and emotional portrait of the child.

BJ: what is the topic of the quilt, Audra?

AudraS: It's really too bad that the "art" if quilt making has changed with technology (sewing machines) Our theme is what they like best about school

BJ: cool, Audra. You could also have them approach the square as "I feel best when I'm doing _____"

BJ . o O (math, art, science, etc)

BJ: and have them put themselves in the picture

NicoleDPW: its a cozy topic, like a cozy quilt:-)

AudraS: Great idea. My class is 5 and 6 year olds. This project is also one of parent student involvement and getting them to share the experience...I hope they treasure it.

BJ: Yes, I agree, Nicole...quilts are a warm and non threatening topic

AudraS: Thanks for the tips BJ they are going in my "mental rolodex"

BJ: on the same topic...

BJ . o O (this isn't listed on the site we're looking at)

BJ: take a look at <http://www.cedarnet.org/emig/peace/>

NicoleDPW: I am interested in getting my masters in psychology. It is neat to see the resources for art therapy.

AudraS: Beautiful opening to a site

BJ: this is a digital quilt with the theme of peace through the resolution of conflict

BJ . o O (my boys did the USA top hat)

AudraS: Awesome!

BJ: this is an ongoing project if anyone wants to participate...

NicoleDPW: I think there is another chat on this site too, in a few weeks, right?

BJ: as a matter of fact, the Blanket the World With Peace is the topic for Thursday's ArtsSites

BJ: Ready to go back to the artlynx site?

BJ . o O (or am I going too fast?)

AudraS: sure

BJ: when you're ready, go back to <http://www.artsllynx.org/heal/alphandx.htm>

BJ . o O (that's the alphabetical index)

AudraS: I'm there

BJ: Nicole? Cassidy?

BJ: Questions?

BJ: do any of you use drama (readers theater) in your classes?

PatrickC joined the room.

BJ: Hi, Patrick

PatrickC: Hello.

AudraS: I have in the past but not yet with the split grade class. The kids have always loved it. It really fosters oral communication and literacy skills.

BJ agrees with Audra. Costume design and masks are a great way to integrate the arts into readers theater

NicoleDPW: About drama: We acted out the Rosa Parks bus boycott. I have done it three years in a row now, and kids always end up in heated discussions. Its wonderful

BJ smiles...cool, Nicole

AudraS: Since we are on the topic of arts in the classroom...when I returned from a summer trip to Europe I did a art series where we studied the famous artists Van Gogh, Michelangelo, Picasso et al and did projects based on their styles of art and read about the artist themselves...it was a very worthwhile project the kids are now in 3rd grade and still talk about it.

AudraS: Nicole that sound awesome, I was fortunate to hear Rosa Parks speak while I was in college.

NicoleDPW: Wow!! That is really cool that you got to hear her.

AudraS: She is a really neat lady. Very modest she even commented that "I didn't mean to change history, I was just tired and wanted to sit down.!"

BJ: anyone else use theater?

BJ: some of the theater links have some interesting nuggets of information that you can integrate into what you do. Take a look at <http://www.geese.co.uk/>

NicoleDPW: Has anyone ever heard of Jessica Weiner?

BJ: please tell us more, Nicole

AudraS: Please share

NicoleDPW: I am reading her book, and she travels all over the country doing drama that incorporates art and music to help kids in need

NicoleDPW: Her book is called A Very Hungry Girl.

BJ: ahhh...music is another powerful art resource

NicoleDPW: She discusses violence, eating disorders, rape, and many other issues that she feels don't get enough discussion in hs and college

AudraS: Nicole, isn't that the truth so many of those issues need to be addressed.

BJ: why do you think these sensitive issues don't get discussed or addressed?

NicoleDPW: Absolutely. The people in her book that she faces seem to have an it-couldn't-happen-to-me attitude.

NicoleDPW: She also started her company A.C.T Out in Indianapolis. That is near where I am from. Things are deemed "bad." Being in the bible belt is a lot different than being in CA

BJ nods sadly

NicoleDPW: We seem to talk about them a little bit more freely, but there are still embarrassment issues. Rape and eating disorders are built on shame, making people not want to discuss them.

AudraS: I wonder if the schools (HS, College) treat it as if we don't discuss it --it will go away....

NicoleDPW: Audra, you are probably right to some extent.

BJ: I also think teachers do not get much training in issues that need therapeutic support

NicoleDPW: I think you are right. Unless you have been to therapy or been trained in how to do it, you have a hard time knowing its importance.

AudraS: But an awareness needs to be brought to the students. The Life Skill type classes seem to be disappearing which is where there is a forum for these types of issues.

AudraS: BJ I agree with the lack of training on these sensitive issues

AudraS: what I mean is that I think there is a lack of appropriate traing for teachers in dealing with these sensitive issues.

BJ nods...this is also one of the reasons that it is so important to integrate the arts into as many disciplines as we can so we can provide at least minimal support to the emotional needs of our kids

NicoleDPW: With President Bush in office, and maybe before, I'm not sure. But schools lose their funding if they discuss sex, safe sex. They have to discuss only abstinence, I think, in order to keep their money.

BJ nods to Audra

NicoleDPW: I feel like the kind of art we do in second grade, and I am guilty of it too, is cookie cutter art. Its not the kind that gets kids to express themselves.

NicoleDPW: Writing seems to cut to their core more in my classroom than art. I really need to work on making it more meaningful to my students.

BJ: There is a lot of that, Nicole, but don't underestimate the power of creativity to sneak in

AudraS: BJ I agree with bringing arts into curriculum, I try and get as much art in, in very creative ways. I strongly feel it adds to the "whole" education rather than the "canned version" that we are often mandated to deliver.

BJ: even when a child traces a picture, the colors they use, how they paint, placement of objects are all opportunities to individualize

NicoleDPW: You are right Audra.

NicoleDPW: Thanks for the vote of encouragement, BJ

AudraS: It's interesting that you bring up the choice of color---I watched a 5 year old begin the year with blacks, grays and dark somber colors to now actually using lighter brighter colors. It affects mood, and until recently this child really wasn't happy internally...

BJ: now we're discussing the importance of social issues that get tip toed around ...like depression and drug abuse and teen pregnancy and all the other issues that kids have to deal with in the real world

BJ smiles...wonderful observation, Audra

BJ: that comment emphasizes the importance of working with your school art specialist...

AudraS: Audra smiles back to BJ thanks

AudraS: What school art specialist?

BJ: most people might not notice that red flag of dark colors that the child was using

NicoleDPW: Exactly, Audra

BJ sighs..good point, Audra

BJ: we have five minutes left...

NicoleDPW: BJ, CA schools do not have art, pe, music, etc. unless the classroom teacher does it. That was a huge culture shock after moving from the midwest

AudraS: My mother has a degree in art it has been part of my entire life. Fortunately I did not have your average mom. I was at art openings from the time I was born...

NicoleDPW: That is awesome, Audra!

BJ: was there anything else you all wanted to talk about? I do this session the first Monday of each month and certainly welcome you all back to continue the dialogue.

AudraS: Nicole I sure it was culture shock to find out that we "do it all"

BJ: I did promise to show you my backflip file

BJ: www.backflip.com/members/bjberquist

BJ: that site has a lot of art resources for all kinds of topics and subjects

NicoleDPW: neat. Is this like trackstar?

BJ: Backflip is an online bookmarking service

BJ: it lets you access your bookmarks from any computer

NicoleDPW: That will be fun to explore! Thanks for a great discussion.

BJ: Thank you all for participating.

AudraS: Thanks for the discussion, I enjoyed it. Nicole great to "meet" you.

EileenA: thanks