

Title of Session: K-12 Language Arts and Literature

Moderator: Karen Lemmons

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BJB2: Welcome to the first meeting of this new group for K-12 LA and Literature

BJB2: as usual, let's start with introductions, please

BJB2: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

KarenL: I'm Karen Lemmons, a library media specialist in a Detroit elementary school.

BrookeM: Hi, I am Brooke. I am a third grade teacher in Maryland.

KarenL: Okay, welcome to this new group. This is my first time leading a discussion, so bear with me.

JeffC: No problem Karen.

JeffC: I'm on Helpdesk here, and in Forest Grove Oregon.

KarenL smiles and winks and Jeff

KarenL: Brooke, I would like to ask you a question. Do you teach any lessons on Memorial Day?

BrookeM: lol...not really. It doesn't fall into our curriculum

BJB2 frowns

KarenL: Don't feel bad, it doesn't fit into our curriculum. But I must confess I squeeze it in a few units that focuses on U.S. history and wars.

BrookeM: to be quite frank. I don't think I ever had a lesson on Memorial Day

JeffC: Here are a few: http://www.education-world.com/holidays/archives/memorial_day.shtml

KarenL: Okay, this is good to know. Perhaps we can convince you to include it somewhere.

BrookeM: Hey Jeff...maybe your kids can teach mine about it

BrookeM: Hi David

DavidWe: Hi, Brooke. How's it going?

KarenL: If you do poetry, In Flanders Fields, will be an excellent intro into Veterans Day and other days to remember our veterans.

JeffC: I want to know what Karen has.

KarenL: Okay, Jeff I'm getting to that. (smiles)

JeffC: cool!

BrookeM: ahh my screen is on such a delay tonight

DavidWe: Sorry, Brooke

KarenL: My first one website is pbs. <http://www.pbs.org/memorialdayconcert/history>

KarenL: Jeff, have you seen this website?

BrookeM: I LOVE pbs.org!!

JeffC: not that particular one Karen, no

JeffC: I know pbs.org... great site

KarenL: This is a wonderful website that you could probably use with your 3rd grade class. may have to adapt for the younger ones.

KarenL: Another one that was very interesting to me, probably more for the upper grades is

BrookeM: I don't have computer time or a projector any more

BrookeM: so I will read it to them

BrookeM frowns

BJB2: yikes!

BrookeM: TESTING

BrookeM: and somehow they need the projectors to demonstrate

BrookeM: bummmmer

BJB2: oh, dear. How sad

KarenL: oops, is the website from the history channel.
<http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/memorial>

KarenL: Oh dear Brooke. . .

DavidWe consoles Brooke

BrookeM: I know but I do have 2 computers

BrookeM: I make the best of them

DavidWe smiles

BrookeM: ahh the Tomb...soo cool. it is so close to us and the kids have never been there

KarenL: now if you want some ideas for activities, check out the one Jeff and BJB posted:

KarenL: I believe it was this: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson119.shtml

BJB2 . o O (this is all Jeff's work...I take no credit)

BrookeM: nice

KarenL: If you scroll down to the end of the page, you'll find plenty of resources. Incredible!

JeffC gives half credit to Bj anyway.

KarenL: Also, Children's Press, a division of Scholastic, has a Rookie Reader book on Memorial Day by Jacqueline Cotton. Short and age appropriate text, beautiful photographs.

KarenL: For older readers, Heineman Library has a book titled Memorial Day by Mir Tamim Ansary. Age appropriate text and beautiful photographs.

BJB2: ASCD had an article recently about how Social Studies is being removed from many curricula because of NCLB and the testing...not including Memorial Day is a perfect example

KarenL: Well, even worse, our state test has taken the Social Studies part of the test and moved it to either 6th or 7th grade. It was in the 5th grade, so at the very least, it could be a checkpoint.

BrookeM: ummm what is Social Studies?

JeffC: Well... learning about the three branches of government is passé anyway... since we're now merging everything into the executive branch.

BrookeM: I focus on Math and Reading

KarenL: Now, if our self-contained teachers taught social studies when they could squeeze it in, not taking an elementary test in Social Studies, could give them a reason to not teach it at all.

KarenL: Social studies is a combination of history, geography, economics, government, civic responsibility. . .

DavidWe . o O (geography, too)

DavidWe . o O (oops, you said "geography", sorry)

DavidWe . o O (Got lost in the list)

KarenL whispers, it's okay. . .

BrookeM TI skills seem to be rusty tonight

DavidWe hands Brooke the 3-in-1 oil

DavidWe: Makes a great salad dressing, too!

BrookeM: haha

KarenL: Here are a few more websites. <http://www1.va.gov/opa/speceven/memday>

DavidWe grins

KarenL: <http://www.va.gov/kids/teachers/index.asp>

KarenL: click on Memorial Day for more information.

KarenL: another one is <http://www.usmemorialday.org>

KarenL: ready for another one?

DavidWe: sure

DavidWe: What are you doing on Memorial Day, this year, Karen?

KarenL: well, let's see, eating, resting, sleeping and. . .

DavidWe smiles

KarenL: remembering those who died in wars.

KarenL: and you?

DavidWe: Couple of years ago I drove down to DC for Memorial Day

KarenL: wow, that's cool!!!

DavidWe was upset at the thought of simply SHOPPING on Memorial Day

DavidWe: I might do it again...

DavidWe is not happy about the current state of military deployment in the Middle East

KarenL: no, I don't shop on other days, really don't do it on the holidays.

KarenL: neither am I, but we digress.

KarenL: okay, here are some more lesson plans.

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MemorialDay.htm>

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe: I'm not a classroom teacher, Karen, but I appreciate the resources you are sharing with us

KarenL blushes and smiles, thank you, David.

DavidWe: You're welcome, Karen

KarenL: Another site I like but I didn't write the entire link is American Memory. I think you can type Memorial Day and get some resources. <http://memory.loc.gov>

DavidWe: I'm sure the Library of Congress has some great resources

KarenL: Now, I remember why I didn't type the entire link. It has a ton of resources!!!!

DavidWe: indeed

KarenL: If you type Memorial Day in the search field, you will get pages of resources.

KarenL: Two more and I'll be done. http://virtual-markets.net/vme/memorial/dvm_mem.html

KarenL: and <http://members.aol.com/vetsofamer/memday.htm>

KarenL: Okay, I'm done. As you can see, there are plenty of resources, activities, ideas for remembering our heroes--none of them include shopping:)

KarenL: well you can "shop" for ideas and resources. . .

BJB2 . o O (and you've included lessons on values, heroes)

KarenL: any questions? any ideas for next month?

DavidWe: Karen, tell me a bit more about what you envision for the topics of this NEW discussion, please.

DavidWe . o O (anything to do with Language Arts K-12?)

LindaU joined the room.

DavidWe waves to Linda

DavidWe: Hi, Linda

KarenL: David, to be honest with you, I have no idea. I do want to do specific subjects, but we could talk about Language Arts standards and benchmarks.

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe: That's why I wanted to ask you, Karen

JeffC: How about ways to transcend standards and benchmarks?

LindaU waves hi

KarenL: on the national level with NCTE and with states.

JeffC waves to Linda.

DavidWe likes the use of the word, "transcend"

BJB2: Hi, Linda!

KarenL: Oh yes. . .that sounds good. I know in Michigan, NCLB has helped the Department of Ed change from benchmarks and standards to grade level expectations.

DavidWe: Oh joy!

DavidWe smiles

KarenL: That way, we clearly know what should be taught, and what students should be able to do at each grade level.

KarenL: I can sense a little sarcasm, and I am so in agreement with you, because what happens when some of our dear children do not meet those expectations?

BJB2 . o O (except the sped kids, the esl kids, the kids with different learning speeds, etc)

BJB2 groans.

KarenL: Should we penalize the teacher, saying he or she wasn't "teaching" or should we really look at the student.

DavidWe hides the pot of sarcasm from the teacher

BJB2: Karen, email me with a short description of your topic, please

KarenL: No, David it's fine!!! Really, my thinking about education is a bit radical.

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe: Now you're talking!

KarenL: I need some help!!!! What should I talk about in June?

BJB2 . o O (time for Linda's session in the GPBL room)

BJB2 . o O (a not to be missed discussion, btw)

KarenL: End of the year activities? Reviewing. . .

DavidWe: Challenge will be end of year time - may not have too many attendees, like this evening

LindaU: I know I'm late into this conversation, but shouldn't standards be a guide, not a way to evaluate teachers or the educational system?

DavidWe smiles

JeffC: Brooke's students and my daughter's class are writing keypal letters to each other.

KarenL: Linda, I so agree with you, but trust me when I say this. Standards are being used as a measurement tool for tests and teaching.

DavidWe: Way to go, Jeff's daughter's class! And Brooke!

JeffC: No Linda... it's important to evaluate teachers to death so that we'll all leave the profession.

LindaU: Oh, I know that all too well...

KarenL laughs. Oh that is so true!!!

LindaU got Jeff's sarcasm

DavidWe: Jeff, I've got the pot of sarcasm, you need to use irony or satire!

KarenL: Oooh, Jeff that is so cool!!!

DavidWe smiles

BJB2: June is probably a little late for end of the year stuff

DavidWe gives Jeff an A- in sarcasm

JeffC: now... would you care to find what standard/benchmark that keypalling falls into?

DavidWe: which one?

JeffC is sick to death of having to search out which danged standard is being aligned.

KarenL: Okay, I must go. BJ, I will send you something. . .but I will defer to some wisdom from the elders. . .help

JeffC: let me tell you quickly one other reason i hate them.

DavidWe: Thanks, Karen.

LindaU: Have you seen No Dentist Left Behind? <http://www.release-on-reading.com/no-dentist.html>

KarenL: tell me. . .

DavidWe: We really appreciate you leading this new discussion

JeffC: I had my kindergartener using pbskids.org

DavidWe smiles

JeffC: he was learning to add decimals.

KarenL: Thank you David for coming.

DavidWe: You're welcome, Karen

JeffC: that's not a standard until 4th grade apparently

JeffC: oops! my bad I guess

DavidWe: Way to go Jeff's kindergartener!

JeffC: silly me for teaching him something he wasn't supposed to learn.

KarenL laughs. I just love Jeff's sarcasm!

LindaU: ahead of standards... hmmm

KarenL: I love it!!!!

JeffC believes in subverting the system... remember Mark Twain!

KarenL: You go, Jeff!

JeffC: "Don't let school get in the way of your education."

DavidWe gives Jeff a C+ in appropriate subject matter teaching at inappropriate grade level

LindaU: Sorry for being so late...

KarenL: Well, I like Michael Moore's comment about subversive librarians. I'm quietly planning a revolution!

DavidWe was in Hannibal, Missouri recently to visit the Samuel Clemens homestead

DavidWe: You go, Karen!!

DavidWe smiles

BJB2: Karen had some good resources, Linda, about Memorial Day.

KarenL: Goodbye, everyone!!!!

BJB2 heads for GPBL

DavidWe: Bye, Karen

JeffC: gbye Karen