

Title of Session: The Art of Storytelling - August House Publishing

Moderator: BJ Berquist

Guest Speaker: Laura Deisley

Title of File: 20060614storytelling

Date: June 14, 2006

Room: The Art of Storytelling Group

BJB: I'd like to officially welcome you all to today's The Art of Storytelling!

BJB: we usually start all the Tapped In discussions with introductions. Please tell Laura where you are located, what you teach, and what interests you about Stories

BJB: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and am fascinated by the possibilities and power of story

BJB looks around the room...anyone else?

ConnieTo: I am a kindergarten teacher in Louisiana - today I completed an InTech course with focus on story telling through power point

DenitsaM: I am located in Moorhead, MN. I am the Abroad Programs Coordinator for Concordia Language Villages and I am interested in stories as I think they are very powerful for the experience of children

DonnaW: I am from Tennessee and teach 6th grade language arts. Storytelling interest me.

SeanHe: I am an 8th grade Math teacher from New Jersey. I am taking a class that is studying Tapped In and thought the Storytelling session would be interesting.

AnnCla: I am in Bountiful Utah and am very interested in storytelling for my 4th grade class

LynnML: I teach general methods to middle and high school teachers and secondary math methods. I teach at Clarke College in Dubuque Iowa. I know digital story telling is becoming a teaching method using the power of multimedia tools.

DianneA: I am a professional developer and pre-service teaching lecturer, in Wollongong, Australia and my interest in stories is in their reflective capacity, or as Gregory Bateson puts it, their capacity to demonstrate 'mind' and to represent a 'knot of relevance' for an issue under discussion

BJB: anyone else?

BjB hands the virtual floor over to Laura, our special guest speaker for this session.

LauraWD: Thanks for the invitation BJ--before we get started, is anyone out there familiar with August House Publishing or any of our authors?

SeanHe: no

DenitsaM: no

ConnieTo: No

AnnCla: No

LynnML: no

BjB . o O (lots of fertile ground, Laura!)

DianneA: no

DonnaW: no

LauraWD: Given the nos, let's see where to get started! August House (AH) is a 25 year old editorially driven publishing company. It has been owned all those years by Ted and Liz Parkhurst. Their focus was to publish stories from around the world, many of which had been handed down through the oral tradition.

LauraWD: The company was winning awards and receiving critical acclaim, particularly from librarians. But outside of the storytelling world, few knew the company or its authors--many of which are performing artists, professional storytellers.

ConnieTo: What does it mean to be 'editorially driven'?

BjB: cool...and now we're learning about this wonderful resource

LauraWD: we purchased the company to build its distribution and to take these important stories, many of which are folktales, and make them available in many forms.

LauraWD: If you go to augusthouse.com you will see the beginning of the educational focus and the animation we are building around these stories.

BjB: www.augusthouse.com

ConnieTo: This sounds wonderful

ConnieTo: Ummm - I think we just hit a gold mine!

LauraWD: As executives who have come to this business without publishing backgrounds, but with a variety of connections and skill sets, our goal is to improve upon the content that is out there for children and families, with an emphasis on literacy, emerging readers where we can build a love of reading, nurture character building, and develop some cross-cultural understanding.

LauraWD: We have storytelling resources for educators, as well as over 300 titles, book and audio. Does anyone remember the story Stone Soup?

BjB nods

AnnCla: I use that story in my class every year. I love it!

DianneA nods to Laura, remembering reading it during bookweek to littlies, many moons back

ConnieTo: YES! It was part of our classes as well. We even cooked it!

SusanAM: Sorry to be late, I had to go to a meeting. I am a Spec Ed teacher and a private tutor. I will catch up

CamilleA: Yes, my Kindergartner cooked it in his class his year too.

LauraWD: I don't know if you have our version, an award winner which McGraw Hill uses in its Open Court Reading program...what is neat about it is the setting: a multicultural village where young and old alike have something to contribute.

LauraWD: What we are doing is taking these wonderful stories and working with corporate sponsors to bring them into schools...as well as getting the stories and our artists on XM radio, TV, and increasingly in animated form or video on the internet.

ConnieTo: We use McGraw Hill now - but not Open Court - The story is not in the current program, but we have used the 'old' version when we teach nutrition

LauraWD: Story Cove, which can be found in the Learning Center, is where we are housing the animations and the limited interactive games and activities for 4-8

AnnCla: Is that at the same URL?

LauraWD: Y'all-the hotel computer is going to boot me off for a moment. I will be right back up--they lost wifi service today so I am stuck...just a moment...

BjB gets out her tap shoes...

BjB . o O (time for the intermission and floor show)

ConnieTo: too cute

SusanAM will sing

LauraWD left the room.

BjB: while we wait for Laura to stabilize her connection...

LauraWD joined the room.

AnnCla: Hey, while we are waiting can I go to that URL or will it bump me off?

BjB: please think of questions you may have for her

ConnieTo: Do you know if the August House site has the Story Cove?

LauraWD: I am back!

BjB: you can go to the url, but hold down the ctrl key on your keyboard

LauraWD: Yes, go to Learning Center...that is where you will see Story Cove as an option

BjB cheers

BjB listens to the huge sigh of relief from everyone

LauraWD: ha, ha...I think I am jinxed...my last visit to this room my battery charger had a hey-day and crashed...

BjB remembers that.

ConnieTo: I found it!

AnnCla: I went to the site also. It looks wonderful. I will explore more later.

LauraWD: You know, storytelling is an incredible way to teach. I am not a teacher, but I have been engaged in strategic planning for a K-12 private school. And tutored. And subbed. My previous life I was a corporate investment banker...

SusanAM: I will also look at it later

ConnieTo: This site is going to be a favorite for me - (listening for more)

LauraWD: What attracted me to this company is "how can we use great stories to teach children IMPLICITLY through story to understand, and consider, and relate...as opposed to the didactic methods.

SusanAM: I think kids need to hear stories not just read them for a different type of understanding. It helps them create mental pictures

LauraWD: I too am fascinated by digital storytelling, and what that means for older students especially. There is so much opportunity with technology integration.

AnnCla: Sorry for my ignorance. Is digital storytelling just stories on the computer?

LauraWD: yes, the imagery is what makes the difference. Donald Davis has a wonderful book Writing as a Second Language where he describes a writing program that starts with telling stories and helping children uncover stories they have to tell.

BjB: there are many resources in this group room on digital stories, Ann

AnnCla: Thank you!

LauraWD: Digital stories are stories that can be done on the computer, video, big screen, where photography or animation are used (for example). The Center for Digital Storytelling is a wonderful resource.

SusetteG: this seems like what most English teachers are trying to do--get students to tell their stories. How does it work with the computer?

SusanAM: I just put together a digital story or movie with Microsoft Photostory 3 that combined photos my second graders took with the stories they wrote about winter

LauraWD: They can blog, they can video, they can do a movie...

SusetteG: How would this work with large classes of 9th grade students?

LauraWD: Do you have computer labs?

SusetteG: We do.

ConnieTo: You can use a "Smart Board" - or an Active white board (brands) that you link to your computer - show the movie such as The Clever Monkey than have the children follow up using the same board - Would work for math, creative writing, anything.

BjB agrees with Connie...story can be used with any discipline

SusetteG: I don't have a smart board.

SusanAM: Math stories after all are word problems

BjB: photostory is used on PCs. iMovie comes with MACs

ConnieTo: The teacher/student uses the Smart Boards as a tool (like a chalkboard) BUT MUCH MORE. They can download their own pictures, they can 'write' using their fingers, amazing technology and perfect for a site like this.

BjB: you can use anything that projects a computer image, Susette...

BjB: or use overheads and brainstorm

SusetteG: Okay. Tell me more.

BjB listens to Laura

LauraWD: power point presentations can be effective...do check out Joe Lambert's site for digital storytelling

ConnieTo: OK

SusanAM: Kids can find photos on the internet or take photos and then write the story. They might have to take turns on the computers or they could work in groups

BjB: <http://www.storycenter.org/>

BjB . o O (watch out for using copyrighted photos)

SusetteG: I'll look into that.

LauraWD: Let me ask a question: we are trying to figure out the best way to reach teachers with resources on storytelling, and to get you lesson plans (we have plans to correlate with many of the stories)...what is the best means?

JeffC: do you have a listserv set up Laura?

SusanAM: the Internet seems like the best method to me

BjB: I think this is a good start, Laura. Make sure there is a link to the teacher resources on your webpage

BjB . o O (I've added AugustHouse to the resources in this room)

LauraWD: we are talking to technology partners who might be able to 'go with us' to create desktops for teachers with tools and resources...

AnnCla: Though the internet is a good way, you also need to somehow let teachers know it is available for them to look for

LauraWD: yes, we have a listserv and we are always collecting names

CamilleA: LM-Net listserv would be a way to let school library media specialists know.

LauraWD: What if there were something like a Google Desktop for teachers?

BjB: can you tell us more, Laura?

SusetteG: I'm still not clear why using the computer would be so much better than just having students write. Don't laugh. I'm struggling with so much new technology.

LauraWD: What if you were given a desktop that you could download that would have special teacher links to things like Marco Polo, Amazon, August House, education news, blogs, etc....

SusanAM: Since the kids today are so hooked into computers at home, have cell phones, etc. it is another medium for their creativity

BjB: the kids are digital natives, Susette. They aren't struggling with the tech. They like to write on the computer

LauraWD: absolutely...and they are feeling more and more alienated by traditional methods

AnnCla: I would love a desktop that would give me that information!

SusanAM: It is easier to edit, rewrite, etc. Sometimes the physical process of writing is boggling

SusetteG: I guess I'm needing something really specific so I can visualize what we're talking about.

ConnieTo: Both have their place. Technology to our students is a tool - like paper and pencil is to us.

CamilleA: There is a Google email newsletter just for librarians. but I'm not sure how widely it has been received. I think it's only been around for a few months. It gives great info to use or share with our teacher.

JeffC: What would be even cooler Laura was a desktop that had links to online emulators like www.thinkfree.com (online Office emulator), etc. ...all freeware of course (that

would allow students and educators to run programs like Photoshop online)... I'm dreaming of course.

LauraWD: I'm big into all the open source apps out there...Google spreadsheets is going to be really nifty

ConnieTo: smiles

SusanAM: It would be easier and cheaper to give out some kind of disc with a webliography

SusanAM: You could send them to hundreds of teachers

LauraWD: how many of you blog, or have your students blog, write in wikis, etc? Those are great places for telling stories...and collaborating on stories

ConnieTo: This is as much blogging as I do.

SusanAM: I blog for grad school, but have not done any with second graders.

BjB: there is also a K-12 student campus in Tapped In...

SusetteG: I've just learned how to do that, and my school will have an in-school blogging site in the fall.

BjB: where classes can collaborate

CamilleA: Responding to my listserv is about as much blogging as I do.

AnnCla: I don't think blogging is allowed at our school

SusanAM: can someone explain listserv to me?

LauraWD: The new web is read/write with so much good opportunity, alongside all the struggles with some of the social networking sites

ConnieTo: I'm leery about putting my students into something like that - perhaps penpaling with specific - safe -classes would be more appealing.

SusetteG: I agree.

ConnieTo: not the read/write - the blog

SusetteG: What is the read/write?

LauraWD: I hear you. Will Richardson's new book has great info about using these tools in school---

ConnieTo: Is he on the site mentioned earlier?

BjB: Will Richardson is going to be one of the Keynote speakers for the Tapped In Festival!

LauraWD: no. he writes a blog called weblogged.com (I think). You can google him. I can't remember the site name!

CamilleA: Susan, a listserv is a group of like minded people who email each other to ask questions, share info, etc. LM-Net is for school librarians around the world. Sometimes you can get a question answered or get advice in a matter of minutes. Great for professional discussions.

SusanAM: Thanks Camille

SusanAM smiles

ConnieTo: Wow - I wish there was that for K teachers! Does Tapped In have that?

JeffC: a listserv is an email list... my 2nd grade daughter has a class here and they've been keypalling with another class here this year... safe and secure.

ConnieTo: ah

ConnieTo: nods

BjB: Tapped In has a K-3 Resources group, Connie

ConnieTo: I'll check it out - thanks

SusetteG: Is there a group for 7-9th grade?

BjB: what subject, Susette?

SusetteG: Language Arts

BjB . o O (we only have 10 minutes left. Laura, was there more you wanted to share?)

BjB: There is a K-12 Language Arts group, Susette...they meet tomorrow

SusetteG: Great!

ConnieTo: Laura, does the site explain how to schedule storytellers for school performances?

LauraWD: This is where I realize the limitations of chat...there is so much! We are building partnerships with retailers, folks like Walden Meida, non profits, etc to bring these stories and methods and training to folks like you...I hope you all will stay in touch and feel free to ask questions of me anytime!

LauraWD: We have a contact for storytellers--Rob Cleveland (rob@augusthouse.com)

LauraWD: And please forgive my typing...I just can't do it fast enough or accurately enough!

ConnieTo: Thank you, how do we get in touch with you for future chats? Will you be returning to Tapped In? I have other teachers that I believe would like to see this.

LauraWD: That's up to BJ. My email is laura@augusthouse.com and feel free to contact me!

ConnieTo: Thanks!

AnnCla: Thanks!

SusetteG: Thanks!

DonnaW: thanks

BjB: we'd love to have you return, Laura I know how busy your schedule is.

SusanAM: I will be checking out the August House website for more info. Thanks to all for the discussion

LauraWD: I'd be delighted.

SusanAM smiles and waves

SusanAM: Bye all

BjB waves bye to Susan.

AnnCla: Thank you, this was great! Good bye.