

Title of Session: Nuts About Nature-April Showers Bring. . . May Flowers!

Moderator: Bill Hilton Jr.

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Room: Tree House Conference Room

BJ: Welcome to Nuts About Nature everyone!

MaryFT: **Ms. Thompson's students from UH** Please limit your responses to the discussion at hand. You do not need to reply to everything that is written. Please do not say "hi" to everyone. Remember this is an international forum.

BJ: and a reminder that Bill Hilton Jr is the discussion leader. He has lots to share and welcomes your comments, but, as Mary said, please don't make "hi" type comments...makes the chat scroll too fast.

BJ: If you want to talk privately, double click on a name under the here tab

BJ: As always, we'll start with brief introductions

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

ErinPG: I am Erin a preservice teacher in the Katy ISD cluster from the University of Houston in Texas

DeborahLS: I'm a Tech teacher in Texas -- elementary school

MirandaLK: u of h

SaraEF: I am a junior high science teacher in Wichita Falls TX

ElizabethJP: I am Jia a preservice teacher in Katy ISD from U of H

KarenGi: Preservice student with uh, in Houston isd

FranciscaE: I am a pre-service teacher at Houston Texas/ bilingual elementary

AlisonI: I am a preservice teacher at UH

NatalieMH: U of H on Houston Texas

AshleighS: I am a pre-service teacher from the University of Houston.

HollyMi: U of H, Pasadena ISD

JeannieDi: i am a UH preservice teacher

MichaelMo: I am a Pre service teacher in California

CatherinJR: U of H PUMA student, Katy Cluster, name's CAT

SuzanN: I am a pre-service teacher at UH graduating MAY 15!

MelissaL: I am a UH preservice teacher

LindseyCK: I am a Grad Assistant at a midwestern state University for the women's soccer team

MariaGa: Preservice teacher from UH

EstrellaB: I am a UH Preservice teacher

JuanitaR: preservice teacher U of H

BillHi: Welcome, EVERYONE! I'm Bill Hilton Jr., executive director of Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History in York SC. I taught high school & college biology for many years and now do lots of preservice and inservice teacher training around the country.

BillHi: I think of myself primarily as an educator-naturalist, so "Nots About Nature" looks at ways we can use the natural world as a teaching tool for K-16 students--and adults!

BillHi: That's "Nuts About Nature."

BillHi: "Nots" About nature is for folks who are scared of the out-of-doors.

VictoriaSt: How do you do outside field trips if you are scared of the out-of-doors?

CatherinJR: I LOVE the outdoors, and would like to learn how to help my future students not be afraid

BillHi: Sometimes my typos have hidden wisdom therein.

VictoriaSt: Is it harder to have control in the wide open spaces- control of students, that is.

ErinPG: I like the outdoors, but I was never exposed to it...that is what scares me

ErinPG: too many bugs

VictoriaSt: too many unknown things

BillHi: Everybody stop for a minute.

MichaelMo: don't be afraid of the unknown

BillHi: Everybody.

BJ: ATTENTION PLEASE

BJ: Please listen to what Bill has to say

BillHi: Okay, I have a direction I'd like to go in, so you need to let me start off the discussion.

BillHi: Victoria actually hit upon the first point that I was going to make. Many teachers do not like to take field trips into the out of doors.

VictoriaSt: It is hard enough in defined spaces

BillHi: One reason is, indeed, that some of those teachers "lose" control outside the classroom. This is not a student problem, but a teacher problem, and one that can be fixed.

LindseyCK: Parent involvement?

VictoriaSt: preparation beforehand

BillHi: Those are both good fixes.

VictoriaSt: understood expectations

MirandaLK: good classroom management! no matter where your class is at.

BJ: because this group is so large, please wait for Bill to ask for comments

MichaelMo: That's the key

AndrePH: Teachers find it hard to keep the students attention outdoors.

BillHi: GOOD teachers may find it hard--but not impossible--to keep a student's attention, indoors or out.

BillHi: Another reason some teachers don't take field trips, also alluded to, is the "fear" of the unknown.

BillHi: When you are in a self-contained classroom, you have control over what's in the room itself.

BillHi: When you go to the woods, you can't legislate animal behavior or natural phenomena, so you have to be prepared for the "unknown." But you should NOT be afraid of it.

MichaelMo: What would be a good number for total students?

BillHi: So, here's my first question: How does a teacher prepare for the "unknown" and increase his/her level of self-confidence in leading a field trip.

ErinPG: research

MichaelMo: You have to have a plan

SaraEF: By visiting the area before hand to better prepare for what might occur

VictoriaSt: if possible, familiarize yourself with the area first

SuzanN: be prepared know all aspects of the area

AshleighS: Research the place they are going.

ErinPG: maybe going to the field trip site and walking through it

MirandaLK: know where you are going.

KarenGi: the teacher needs to familiar with the place, animals and where to get help of needed

VictoriaSt: know what you would like to get out of the trip and focus on that- allowing for some variety

MelissaL: have a backup plan and be flexible to change

AlisonI: planning with and without the students, everyone must be on the same page

MichaelMo: Know what your topics will be

LindseyCK: Talking with the person or organization that will be leading the field trip

VictoriaSt: discuss expected behavior and outcome beforehand with students

CatherinJR: Research, and they should go out before class, such as to the places they plan to take their students

ErinPG: know the facts about the topic you will be discussing

SusanR: Have 1 adult present per 8 students

SaraEF: prepare your students for what might come up while out of doors

VictoriaSt: lots of volunteers- parents -

JeannieDi: set clear rules

EstrellaB: I think a teacher must plan and preobserve the area

ErinPG: I always like to have at least one or two "fun facts" that you can't get out of a textbook or online

AndrePH: use nature as a tool to teach

LindseyCK: prepare the student on the topic they will be learning about

SaraEF: flexibility

MichaelMo: Tell the students about the trip and what they are to expect

BillHi: Hmmm, looks like almost everyone's responses are a paraphrase of only two or three main ideas.

KathyPi: Hi I just entered the discussion. I am always looking for fun ways to integrate science in my class.

BillHi: So let me interrupt and try to summarize.

JuanitaR: The students should be warned ahead of time to avoid behavior problems and such

BillHi: 1. Boy Scout Motto: "Be Prepared."

BillHi: 2. Scout your area.

BillHi: 3. Explain your academic and behavioral expectations.

KathyPi: There should always be a code of conduct for all off campus activities

BillHi: Hold on, Kathy.

BillHi: One of the hardest parts about field trips is that you want them to be filled with "discovery learning," so you don't want to tell the students in advance everything they're going to see.

BillHi: By the same token, you have to whet their appetites.

AndrePH: Give the students tasks to accomplish outdoors

BillHi: NEXT QUESTION: How does one whet an appetite without giving away all the surprises?

MelissaL: talk about the topic, but not about the specifics of what you will be doing

ErinPG: doing an activity using one aspect of the field trip

VictoriaSt: discuss what they might see without describing everything- ask them what they think they might see

MichaelMo: Talk about main topics and leave the specifics for the trail

SusanR: Pose a challenge.

LindseyCK: mystery.

JeannieDi: Give background information and some exciting expectations

DeborahLS: Pose some questions without giving the answers -- like you do, Bill.

SaraEF: inquiry based activities, you should give the students a general goal but give them freedom in getting there

MariaGa: introduce a focus

VictoriaSt: ask them all to find something new when they get there

MirandaLK: make a scavenger hunt for the answers!

AlisonI: start off with a little information and maybe a riddle

JuanitaR: don't give them all the answers let them explore for themselves

CatherinJR: Focus! You need a related focus

KathyPi: By just giving a tiny bit of information and leaving questions in their minds

CatherinJR: a book is always good

CatherinJR: okay, I've probably shared too much

JeffC: Parallel a real life field trip with an online scavenger hunt, webquest, and/or collaborative activity.

KarenGi: tell of where they're going and what they think they're going there for

MichaelMo: put the students in investigative teams

BillHi: Good answers. But let's go back to what Deborah said: "Pose some questions without giving [all] the answers . . . like you do, Bill."

BillHi: Let me explain what this means.

KathyPi: Great idea! Let them think critically.

BillHi: Good teachers have lots of different teaching tricks. The one that I think works best in the out-of-doors (or in the classroom for that matter) is the "Socratic method."

BillHi: Can someone define "The Socratic Method"?

ElizabetJP: asking lots and lots of questions

ErinPG: calling out students randomly to stand and answer a question

ElizabetJP: it's the debate type of discussion

NatalieMH: oh okay

ErinPG: that they do not get to choose which question they answer

LindseyCK: letting the student tell you what they know

VictoriaSt: answer questions with more questions- don't give black and white answers leave them open ended

DeborahLS: one question leads to the next -- student is doing the work

BillHi: Now we're getting closer.

SusanR: teaching by asking rather than telling

ElizabetJP: you keep asking questions to make them go deeper with their answers

ErinPG: I have a question though

BillHi: Ahah!

BillHi: Erin?

ErinPG: can you relate this to elementary students?

CatherinJR: or what comment to make

BillHi: Absolutely.

SuzanN: Blooms taxonomy

ErinPG: ok I know blooms taxonomy

DeborahLS: My all time favorite 6th grade teacher used this method with us in science. It was slow, painful, and memorable.

MirandaLK: hots

KathyPi: Yes, using all modalities of learning

BillHi: It's "Blum's Taxonomy."

ErinPG: really?

KathyPi: I think he is joking

ErinPG: I am taking it too seriously

BillHi: Deborah, you have it. Slow and painful maybe, but MEMORABLE!

SusanR: higher order thinking skills

JeannieDi: I feel this method allows students to have self discovery and remember what they have learned

BillHi: No, it IS Blum's.

KathyPi: Uses all the senses

BillHi: Okay, everybody stop again for a sec.

MichaelMo: First time I've seen it spelled that way

BillHi: Just kidding. It's "Bloom's." Named for Benjamin Bloom.

DeborahLS: You're losing it, now, aren't you?

MichaelMo: Just as I suspected

CatherinJR: You're just covering up being wrong, Bill

BillHi: Through the Socratic Method, a teacher leads the student, usually by responding to a question with another question.

KathyPi: Like Yes! What does that mean?

AndrePH: When they give you an answer you ask another question

VictoriaSt: why don't you tell us what you think that means

BillHi: This "forces" the student to come up with an answer of his/her own.

LindseyCK: What if a class is not responding to your questions

MichaelMo: And if he is wrong?

VictoriaSt: ask different ones

ErinPG: don't they have to in the Socratic Method?

MirandaLK: what if the students do not understand where you are going with your topic?

BillHi: If students don't answer then you're not doing a good job of asking.

VictoriaSt: stick to your guns and show them you are not going to respond except with questions

SaraEF: restate the question or come at the answer from a different angle

MichaelMo: You are assuming prior knowledge?

CatherinJR: I don't much like the term "forces"

BillHi: You don't assume prior knowledge.

JeannieDi: Find activities to incite more questions

KathyPi: My experience is that students always ask questions and then you would turn it back around by answering but asking another question. Do I have it right?

BillHi: That's why I put "forces" in quotes. Don't be so PC.

SuzanN: what do you do when you get those kids who take an hour contemplating over a question?

NatalieMH: You always try and answer a question with a question to get the children thinking

SaraEF: everyone, even a 1st grader has some sort of prior knowledge, break it down into pieces until you get some answer and then start putting the pieces back together

BillHi: Kathy does have it right.

BillHi: So what's wrong with spending an hour on one question?

CatherinJR: I'm not, I'm being analytical

CatherinJR: I am far from PC

KathyPi: I think a lot of deep understanding comes from discussing something for a length of time

MichelleSe: If you spend one hour on one question, will there be time to cover all the standards

VictoriaSt: hope it's a good one- must be if it could hold interest for an hour

SuzanN: well during whole group I mean

MichaelMo: Nothing if that is where you want to go

AlisonI: this form of questioning is great at getting the students to think outside the box and to think for themselves

AlisonI: students need some "wait time" in order to get good answers

MirandaLK: the longer you talk the more brainstorming that is going on!

JeannieDi: I feel spending an hour on a question is not feasible for capturing students attention. Teachers should change activities every 12 minutes

MichelleSe: Great point about the wait time

BillHi: "Wait time" is build into the Socratic Method.

VictoriaSt: wait time is in more modern practices too

MichaelMo: Yes, there are always those students who need to formulate their answers

BillHi: The Socratic Method IS modern.

ErinPG: but the longer you wait the better their answers will be

LindseyCK: a lot of deep understanding or a lot of bored students?

VictoriaSt: not that Socratic is not modern- just older name

ErinPG: don't wait a long time but don't hurry or rush them either

KathyPi: I think that is one of teachers' major faults. Not giving a student enough time to think and answer. I know that I get caught up in that. We always want to give the answer to the student who is taking a long time.

VictoriaSt: don't leave them totally hanging- prompt if they look totally blank

MichelleSe: I know wait time is an area I can improve in

BillHi: okay, everybody stop for a minute.

KathyPi: Wait Time is a hard thing for many teachers.

BillHi: Everybody.

NatalieMH: you should never rush a student to answer a question, some need a few more minutes

BillHi: I think it would be great for the whole bunch of you in Houston to get together and role model the Socratic Method.

BillHi: For now, however, I want to do something different.

JeannieDi: You think?

JeannieDi: why?

BJ: LISTEN TO BILL PLEASE

BillHi: (One learns much from role modeling when it's done right.) Everyone seemed to agree back at the beginning that being prepared for field trips is very important.

BillHi: One way to be prepared is to use resources at hand.

BillHi: Few schools have good library holdings in natural history.

BillHi: Go look at the 590s and you'll see few books about birds, bees, flowers, and trees.

BillHi: So what do you do for resources?

ErinPG: online

CatherinJR: other teachers

MirandaLK: WHAT ARE 590

ErinPG: calling the arboretum, or better yet doing professional development

MichaelMo: the internet

LindseyCK: The internet is a great resource, guest speakers are also good

AshleighS: internet

JuanitaR: the internet, books, teachers, friends

VictoriaSt: online resources for sure

SaraEF: 590s are in the Dewey decimal system

MichelleSe: contacting local agencies or non-profits

MichaelMo: field guides

SuzanN: internet and community pamphlets ...free resources

KathyPi: I think online is a great resource too!

HollyMi: the outdoors

MirandaLK: THANK YOU

VictoriaSt: docents or guides at field trip site

MichaelMo: National park service

KathyPi: But don't you want background info before you go?

BillHi: Miranda, the 590s are the Library of Congress numbers for natural history topics.

ErinPG: what about professional development guys?

ErinPG: I learned some great stuff at Project Wild

JeannieDi: great idea

MirandaLK: thanks Bill

SuzanN: Yes Nature at your door step gave us resource book

MichaelMo: you want "local" information

ErinPG: project wild gave an awesome one too

CatherinJR: And Project Learning Tree

ErinPG: right Cat

BillHi: Okay, all those are good, but most of you gave a very different answer than I would have gotten even 2-3 years ago: the internet.

JuanitaR: yes nature at your step was a great resource for outside activities

BillHi: So everybody stop again.

BillHi: Let's suppose you were going to lead a field trip this week so that your students could look at flowering plants.

BillHi: I just HAPPEN to have a URL I want to give you to look at.

BillHi: Everybody go to <http://www.hiltonpond.org> and go no further than that page.

BillHi: This is my main Web site.

VictoriaSt joined the room.

BillHi: If you scroll down a little, you'll come to a logo for "This Week at Hilton Pond."

NatalieMH: This is a very child friendly site

BillHi: Go ahead and click on the link for "Different Views of a Dogwood."

KathyPi: I will have to check it out on my own. I can not link to it from here

BillHi: You might want to bookmark <http://www.hiltonpond.org>

DeborahLS: Your photos blow me away once again.

BillHi: But for now, take a look at the dogwood photos and text and think about whether there's anything there a student could learn Socratically with you as the teacher.

BillHi: If the link won't open it's probably slowed down by all the eager students in this session trying to access at once. We've never had this many before. -)

JeannieDi: wow looks great

BillHi: You can subscribe by sending a blank e-mail to <mailto:thisweek@hiltonpond.org>

NatalieMH: these are really GOOD!!

AlisonI: this is great

MichelleSe: thanks what a treat, great job

MichaelMo: you're the man!

ErinPG: they are so pretty

BillHi: The Hilton pond Web site stands ready as a nature resource for you and your future students.

MirandaLK: I will definitely bookmark this page.

MelissaL: this is a great site to use with our students

JeannieDi: I wish my link worked

BillHi: Keep trying, Jeannie.

BJ: I strongly recommend that you subscribe to the newsletter

MichaelMo: Thanks Bill

NatalieMH: Great link for students to see actual PICTURES

ErinPG: is it an e-newsletter?

BJ: yes, Erin

BillHi: Thanks to all of you for bring here. Good questions from all.

LindseyCK: they are great pictures. It is good because most students are visual now days

ErinPG: thanks again

AshleighS: thank you

MelissaL: thank you

SuzanN: thanks

BillHi: Any closing questions or comments?

ElizabetJP: Thank you very much

MirandaLK: thank you!

NatalieMH: thank you

AlisonI: thanks for the great information

MichelleSe: thank you

JeannieDi: thank you?

KarenGi: thank you for the great information

KathyPi: Thank you. I learned a new term "Socratic Method"

LindseyCK: Thank you

MariaGa: thank you

JuanitaR: thank you for the info

EstrellaB: Thanks for the website it will be beneficial for my future classroom

HollyMi: Thanks for the resource. You have been very patient with our large group!

BillHi: Thanks, Holly.

BJ waves goodnight to everyone. Thanks for your patience. Thanks, Bill, for a great job!

SusanR: Thanks Bill! Well done!

CatherinJR: Definitely! Nice site, I look forward to spend more time at it

JeannieDi: I will look forward to that Socratic session in Houston

ErinPG: yea yippiee

ErinPG: bye everyone

CatherinJR: Thanks for bearing with me Bill

MirandaLK: THANKS BILL- LOVE THE WEB SITE!!!!!!

BillHi: Thanks, Miranda.