Title of Session: Teaching Teachers - Using Reflections to Improve Practice
Moderator: Dianne Allen
Title of File: 20060504teachingteachers
Date: May 4, 2006

Room: Teaching Teachers Group

DianneA: but to start, may we all introduce ourselves to each other ... name, location, current teaching role ...

VioletaO: Violeta Ortega, Texas, graduating teacher

AllisonL: Allison, Houston, graduating teacher

TamekaM: university of Houston graduating May 13 @9:00 graduating teacher

DianneA: I am Dianne Allen, a teacher of pre-service teachers in primary/elementary education, in Wollongong Australia

JasmineN: I'm Jasmine and I'm in Houston, TX

DianneA THREE CHEERS for Tameka!!!!!

JasmineN: I'm student teaching in Kinder right now

AngelaRP: Angela, Houston,

TamekaM: thank thank thank

DianneA: You may find it easier to keep up with the conversation if you detach the chat space, does everyone know how to do that?

AngelaRP: yes

DianneA: Jeff, intro?

DianneA: BJ, intro?

DianneA nods to Angela

JeffC: I'm on Helpdesk here... in Forest Grove Oregon, educator for 15 years.

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

DianneA thanks Jeff

DianneA thanks BJ

DianneA: What I was hoping to do with you US teachers, or teachers in training, was to ask about whether you undertake reflective practice for your professional development, and if so, how do you go about it?

AngelaRP: In the past we have had to write reflections on our lessons and keep a journal

DianneA nods to Angela

TamekaM: write reflections

JasmineN: yeah I had to write reflections too

DianneA nods to Tameka

DianneA nods to Jasmine

VioletaO: I have also been asked to write reflections for lessons, but I believe that it is something every teacher should. do.

DianneA: Allison?

AllisonL: I'm with everyone else. As student teachers, most of us had to reflect on our professional development. It really made me think about what it is that I had learned.

AngelaRP: I had a SBTE that wanted a verbal reflection after every lesson whether she taught it or I taught it

DianneA: OK, so I am not talking double dutch to you ... that's a start

AngelaRP: It was useful

VioletaO: After a lesson you have to ask yourself what you achieved or what you would change in a lesson

TamekaM: I had to do the same

DianneA: now, can you tell me, beyond making the record, do you, or have you, done anything else with the reflections?

AllisonL: honestly, not really.

AngelaRP: I would hope that I have improved my lesson quality

TamekaM: well sometimes I go back and look at what I need to improve for the next time

DianneA: Angela, in what way were the verbal reflections 'useful' for you?

DianneA nods to Allison, thanks

VioletaO: After reflecting I have changed parts of my lesson. I have done this when I had to teach Language arts and social studies twice to two different groups.

JeffC: When you write reflections... is it an individual endeavour? Are any of you in situations where you write reflections in a blog or threaded discussion board and get input from others?

AngelaRP: I have had the opportunity to reteach lessons after reflection and seen big changes in the successfulness of the lesson

JasmineN: I think it just helped us in becoming better teachers

TamekaM: I agree

DianneA nods to Violeta and Angela

AngelaRP: We blog but I haven't gotten any feed back, I work with other teachers that provide feedback and I talk to my classmates, who are very helpful

AllisonL: Jeff, some of have used blogs for reflection purposes. it was kind of fun in my opinion.

DianneA: Sometimes practicing teachers do all that review work in their heads anyway

DianneA: and yes, I am interested in the 'feedback' issue, and taking reflective work to the next level ..

ShannahB: I've seen people do that, but are they really doing justice to the students that way?

DianneA: a blog seems to be one space for that to work

DianneA: Shannah can you elaborate that a bit more please?

DianneA: While we are giving Shannah time to draft her response

DianneA: can you check out back in the room view under the files link in the left hand side menu

ShannahB: Well, often I feel that teachers who have been teaching for a long time don't think about what the kids get out of what has been taught. They just keep doing the same thing regardless because it's what they've always done.

DianneA: I have placed a word doc of ways and means of structuring reflections can you open that so you can see what I was suggesting to Mary we might talk about tonight

VioletaO: I agree Shannah.

DianneA nods to Shannah ... good comment

VioletaO: When I was in school I had teachers who would use the same test year after year

AngelaRP: I think you can tell which of the long term teachers are the ones that reflect by how they are constantly adjusting their lessons

DianneA: and I was meeting with the GURU Tom Russell during the last month where he raised this issue of getting feedback from the students to add to any reformulation of a lesson design

TamekaM: yea it's not hard to figure out

TamekaM: Students' evaluations are always good because they will tell you the truth

VioletaO: I think that I would be neat to hand out students' evaluation forms for lesson that you teach in class and ask them for feedback

ShannahB: I think that they often don't realize that today's students aren't the same as yesterday's students.

TamekaM: no they are not

TamekaM: even in kindergarten

DianneA: Tom's two questions for a 'ticket-out-of-class' for his students were: (1) what was the main point of today's class? (2) what point in today's class would you like to understand better?

AllisonL: I had a supervising teacher that I'm almost sure has taught the same lessons for 20 years.....I don't think the kids learned very much from her lessons.

AngelaRP: I have often thought a little mailbox in the classroom that would let comments stay anonymous just for that purpose would be useful

ShannahB: I have used what's called an EXIT card for students to give feedback about what they got and didn't get from a lesson.

DianneA: he used to hand out 5x3 cards and collect them as the students left the class as their ticket of leave!

BJB2 wonders if the same thing will be said of this year's teacher grads by the next generation of teachers?

JasmineN: my class uses the Exit Ticket to go to recess

DianneA: Shannah your one sounds a bit like Tom's one

DianneA nods good one BJ!!!

ShannahB: It's similar I think.

TamekaM: I had the students fill out a form even in kindergarten I would read it to them and they would color happy face or sad face

TamekaM: they loved it

AllisonL: that sounds like a good idea, Tameka

DianneA: HOKAY, my next question is: what could we do here at Tapped In to help you teachers reflect, better?

AngelaRP: I think the big thing there Tameka is that we are willing to accept that the students have some form of input and that the teacher can improve. I have seen teachers that think students should just listen, do what they're told and not disrupt the class.

DianneA nods to Angela

TamekaM: the students make me a better teacher honestly

AngelaRP: I think that a posting system would be effective

VioletaO: create a weekly meeting time where teachers can reflect on lesson. Have the leader ask leading questions for teachers to reflect on

AngelaRP: post leave, come back later, read responses

ShannahB: That is definitely the old school method of teaching, and it doesn't work.

TamekaM: what doesn't work

AngelaRP: that is good to Violeta

DianneA: what doesn't work Tameka?

ShannahB: Stand and deliver, expecting the students to listen and not disrupt.

DianneA: and I am asking can we use Tapped In to help teachers reflect more effectively

JenniferLR: I am sorry that I am really late. I have been trying to find this room for 20 minutes. Last minute so I haven't done my Prof. Dev. as of yet. Can I still enter?

JenniferLR: Hey Dianne

DianneA nods to Jennifer

DianneA: we can't repeat the discussion till now but you can certainly join us

JenniferLR: Thanks

BJB2 thinks Jennifer needs to join one of the tips and tricks discussions to learn how to find the room where events are taking place

JeffC: I'll send the transcript up till now to Jennifer.

JenniferLR: great idea.

JenniferLR: Thanks Jeff.

DianneA: Thanks Jeff, that's really helpful

JeffC: done

AllisonL: just so we're all on the same page, what is the current question being asked?

DianneA: Let me tell you some of what is on my mind and see if you think this would be helpful ...

DianneA: thanks Allison, the question I am asking is

DianneA: HOKAY, my next question is: what could we do here at Tapped In to help you teachers reflect, better?

DianneA: Each year at Tapped IN's Festival we offer Certificates of Participation to participants

JasmineN: I agree with what was said before

DianneA: This year I was hoping to add a reflective component to it

VioletaO: create a weekly session where teachers can reflect on lessons where the leader asks leading questions that will encourage teachers to reflect

JasmineN: a posting system would be helpful

DianneA: and give feedback to those who submitted entries there

AllisonL: I agree with Violeta

VioletaO: It has to be ongoing

VioletaO: it can

JasmineN: good idea Violeta

JenniferLR: I have found it really helpful to reflect immediately after a lesson and make notes so that I can modify as necessary for the next time I use it

TamekaM: that does sound good

DianneA: I am beginning to see that having a group room and postings and responses might be a way to go

DianneA: I have had such a room before but haven't been able to get people to come ..

DianneA: what do I do next?

AllisonL: reflecting right about a lesson is the best way. I know I've waited till days or so after teaching a lesson and it's not neatly as effective.

JenniferLR: it could be a way to go but the conversations are held to little detail so maybe also email with attachments would be good

ShannahB: I like the idea of being able to reflect when it's convenient, not just at a specific time and place.

DianneA nods about immediate reflections being best

AngelaRP: I agree with Shannah

VioletaO: maybe there should not be a separate room for reflection, but should be integrated to other discussion in Tapped IN. Where reflection is one of the components of the discussion

AngelaRP: I would never make it to a meeting, I am too scatter brained

DianneA: but I have also been able to reflect well enough after a sleep, so long as I manage to discipline to not let it slip too far away in time

JeffC: Why not use the Discussion board in this room?

JenniferLR: great idea

ShannahB: I attend a university that has online learning and using something similar called web ct. We post responses to various questions.

TamekaM: I like the posting idea

VioletaO: INTEGRATE reflection to other DISCUSSION in tapped in

VioletaO: it does not have to stand alone

JenniferLR: U of H has that as well where we post an idea or comment on

BJB2 wonders if there should be a Reflective Practices group room where comments can be posted

DianneA: OK, can we make a start today ... to reflect perhaps on how this session has gone, for you, and to post it here in the discussion area, and I'll be back to give you feedback ... and I'll post my reflection here, too for you to see how I do it ..

JenniferLR: That would be wonderful.

DianneA: Violeta, I like your idea ... I'll have to think some more about how I can help facilitate that

JenniferLR: We often email or post a response and one of our prof.will resond in a timely manner

TamekaM: it just time consuming

VioletaO: just make reflection one of the components of the discussions in tapped in

DianneA: Tameka, any work that is worthwhile takes time

JenniferLR: a reflection component would be a good link

DianneA: the concern I have is to make such work more worthwhile ...

ShannahB: I think posting and responding is often less time consuming because it's not all at one time. It's over a long period.

DianneA: Yes Shannah, and as you build a series of reflections you can go back and see how things have changed, and improved

JenniferLR: It only really takes 10 -15 minutes to say to least to write or type something even a quick marginal note

ShannahB: I think it's also good for reflecting about at a later time.

AllisonL: agreed

DianneA: and you can also be reminded of important things that tend to be missed as days roll by

TamekaM: I agree too

DianneA: One of the surprising things I noticed about my reflective practice, when I took time to look back over it was how many times I asked myself questions

DianneA: what was next interesting was to see what was the nature of my questions to myself ...

JenniferLR: reflecting at a later time may be necessary but you may forget the little things that at the time of the lesson may not have gone that great or may have gone good and you may not be able to make the right changes

VioletaO: I agree Jennifer

AllisonL: I've never really written reflections just for my own personal use. all the ones I've ever written have been for supervisors/professors. i think it would be really interesting just to reflect on my lessons for my own use.

DianneA: I mentioned before that I had placed a file here in this room with some suggestions for how to structure reflections on teaching ..

DianneA: has anyone had the opportunity to open it?

JenniferLR: I always take a minute and write on a sticky note if I have to to make comments to myself

AngelaRP: no I am not sure what I am looking for

DianneA: and what did you think of those suggestions? Does any one really seem to 'hit the spot' for you?

TamekaM: I think I am going to try that too Allison

VioletaO: Every one reflects differently, it can be journaling, blogging, writing comments on a the actual lesson plan, what ever works for you as long as you are reflecting and modifying

JeffC: Click Files link on the left of the top frame.

DianneA: Angela in the left hand menu in the room view here there is an active link to files

JenniferLR: I will try to post a reflection bc somebody else may have a helpful comment

DianneA: there is only one file there, the copy of stuff I sent to Mary for today's discussion

AngelaRP: I have found it

DianneA nods to Angela, thanks Jeff

JenniferLR: thanks Jeff

DianneA looks to Jeff, do you want to run with your stimulating question now, I think I have more than enough to go on for my purposes ...

JeffC: lol

JeffC tries to remember his stimulating question...

JeffC: oh yeah... what do people here want to learn about?

DianneA watches to see what others' concerns are

JeffC: I'll take on all questions/topics/etc. whatever.

ShannahB: How do you motivate students who don't enjoy doing anything?

VioletaO: there is something that students enjoy, you just have to find out

JeffC: let them build a website about something they are interested in... that's what I did with my summer school kids...

JenniferLR: I want to learn more about where I can go to get good ideas for math and science at the elementary level that are hands on

JeffC: motivation comes from within... not without.

AngelaRP: I have my class moving a lot and working on projects, I try to vary all of the projects so that there is something for all

VioletaO: true

JeffC: three rooms here Jennifer... Math Resources, Science Resources, K to 3 Resource room.

ShannahB: My students really enjoy blogging, but my district frowns on this.

VioletaO: so you give them options Angela

VioletaO: that sounds good

TamekaM: there is something I liked you have to find it and help them to learn with it

JenniferLR: I currently do a lot of hands on for math and science, hardly any worksheets. The kiddos are so interested in those subjects now

JenniferLR: thanks Jeff

JeffC: What does your district do to support *anything* with tech Shannah?

JeffC: Let them frown... then go ahead and do it.

AngelaRP: I try to give them as many options as possible and instead of lecturing when most other teacher do, I have discussions with them much like the one we are having now so that I can see what it is they really need to learn and what they already know

JeffC: Assuming you're not violating some iron clad rule that will get you fired.

ShannahB: At my school and a couple of others the students have their own laptops, if their parents paid a fee.

JeffC: Bring the students *here*... create a K-12 classroom for them.

AngelaRP: My district is technology phobic, they just about won't let anyone do anything with technology

JeffC: I'm going to paste up the instructions for creating a K-12 classroom here... and Angela... have your district people contact me about internet safety.

VioletaO: I also hold discussions with my students. Especially when I am introducing a lesson. I tell them the topic. I ask them what they would like to find out about and we go from there

AngelaRP: Even the thought of teachers having web pages to post homework onto is forbidden

JeffC: that of course is very sad Angela... not to mention insane.

ShannahB: I agree, but my district is very similar.

JeffC: here comes the instructions for creating a K-12 class here (use this later, or click Actions--- Send to Pasteboard to do it now).

JeffC: K-12 Student Group Creation

JeffC: 1) Click the Tapped In tab in the top frame

JeffC: 2) Click the Groups subtab

JeffC: 3) Click the Create a new K-12 Student group link

JeffC: 4) Read all the terms... (recommend copy/pasting the agreement into Word for later use)... check the box saying you agree to the terms... click Continue

JeffC: 5a) Name your group: (ex. Mr. Cooper's AP English) 28 characters maximum.

JeffC: 5b) Nickname: Give it a nickname (ex. cooper_ap) 10 characters maximum and *no spaces* This will be the name of your group room. Empower your students by asking what they want the nickname to be (panthers, peacenicks, etc.)

JeffC: 5c) Purpose: The purpose can be what you want... teach online with your class, collaborate with other classes, etc. This shows up on your group profile page (and may be edited later).

JeffC: 5d) Topics: Select up to three topics that relate to the group (ex. ESL, Language Arts, Technology Education) for your group's profile.

JeffC: 5e) URL: You may type in your school's homepage or any appropriate link. Be aware that this will also show up in the group's profile. If you are looking to collaborate with other K-12 educators, consider giving the teacher's homepage with information that you are looking to collaborate with other teachers and students.

JeffC: 5f) Duration of Group: Defaults to 3 months, can be up to 12 months. The group may be renewed later by the Owner or Moderator.

JeffC: 5g) Grade Level: Elementary, Middle, or High School

JeffC: 5h) Number of Accounts: Select the number of students in your class and add 5 (just in case). If you have more than 50 students select 50 (more may be added manually later). Also consider creating more than one K-12 group.

JeffC: 5i) Prefix: Prefix may be no longer than 6 characters. Prefix will generate default student names (student names can be edited later) If you don't plan on changing their user names, these names will be used by the students with numbers attached. (ex. choose "coops" to autogenerate coops01St coops02St etc.). All students automatically have the St suffix added to their user names.

JeffC: 5j) Click Next

JeffC: 6a) Specify a password: Type it twice, at least 5 characters. All students will login initially with this password. Once logged in, they should immediately change it so that other students cannot use each other's accounts. (more on this in the Quicknote K-12 Group Management). Owners and Moderators may change individual passwords at any time.

JeffC: 6b) Join K-12 Students Box: Check the box to join the K-12 Students group. This is a support group for educators with K-12 students. In addition to posting questions regarding help for your group, you may also post requests for collaboration, lessons, etc. This group has over 400 members at Tapped In.

JeffC: 6c) Click: Create Group: This will create your group. If you are unsatisfied or need to make any changes, simply click the Back button instead.

JeffC: 7) You may now click the link at the bottom of the page to enter your K-12 Class!

JenniferLR: I am currently having my students use Alpha Smart keyboards, ELMO, Educational software that my school provides

JeffC: Many districts operate on a foundation of paranoia when it comes to the Net.

JenniferLR: Yeah, tell me about it

JeffC: They're not really interested in motivating students to learn, they're just afraid something bad might happen so they forbid everything.

AngelaRP: I do use the elmo in the classroom, I have really fallen in love with it, dissecting plants and things works great

JeffC: do the kids like it Angela?

ShannahB: I think the media has made this even worse with myspace and all dateline has shown with that

AngelaRP: The ELMO? Yes, they love just about anything I do with them because I refuse to give them worksheets.

JenniferLR: We looked at plants as they grew from seeds to plants and at out chrysalis as it changed into a butterfly

ShannahB: I have a document camera. It's great because it's more compact that the elmo.

JeffC: how about having them do the Newsletter for your webpage Angela? That hasn't happened since November.

AngelaRP: They work harder, do better work, learn more, and score higher on the tests

JenniferLR: I have my students interact with the ELMO and the black board when we do math

AngelaRP: My web page is not one the district I am currently in approves of

JeffC: what do they *disapprove* of?

DianneA puts her hand up for a final input for today

AngelaRP: The Elmo works great for math

JeffC hands the floor back to Dianne.

DianneA: thanks Jeff and you can take it back in a minute

DianneA: I'd like to thank you all for being here today, and thanks for all your input on doing reflective work for professional development.   Don't forget to post a reflection here, for how this session went for you.   I'll post mine, and I'll be back to see if I have feedback that I can share with others about how to get more value out of the reflective work you do, either individually, or here in this group space.

DianneA: over to you Jeff

AllisonL: thanks Dianne!

JasmineN: Thanks Dianne- This session has been very helpful

AngelaRP: They are afraid that I might put something on the site that is inappropriate or misdirects the students or parents in some way. My intent is to be in a different district

next year that is far more supporting of technology and the education of students in regards to technology

VioletaO: thanks Dianne

TamekaM: thanks Dianne

AngelaRP: Thank you

ShannahB: Thank you

JeffC: I have a three hour tour here on my profile if people want a tour.

AngelaRP: Thanks Jeff

JeffC: You can read it in about ten minutes.

JenniferLR: wonderful Jeff

JeffC: 1) Click my name in the "Here" tab on the left.

JeffC: 2) Click the little "i" in the green circle to pull up my profile.

JeffC: 3) Scroll down to "Shared Files" on the left and download the "Walden Helpdesk Session" document.

TamekaM: I will

JasmineN: Thanks Jeff

VioletaO: Thanks Jeff

JeffC: let me share one more thing with those remaining

JeffC: http://snurl.com/netc1

JeffC: someone asked about motivating students.

JeffC: I believe that motivation is one of the four major needs in the classroom.

JeffC: facilitation-- validation-- motivation-- collaboration.

JeffC: That link was for an article I wrote entitled "Building 21st Century Collaborative Communities."