Title of Session: WriteTalk
Moderator: Sandra Shattuck
Title of File: 20090709writetalk
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Room: WriteTalk Group

BJB2 waves hi to Stacy and Terri

TerriR: Good evening

StacyP: Hi Terri

BJB2: are you a member of the WriteTalk group, Stacy and Terri?

TerriR: No just a guest

StacyP: No just visiting

BJB2: you may want to join this group so you can get reminders of upcoming discussions

BJB2 . o O (one of the advantages to joining a group is that you are automatically subscribed to the discussion board and in communication with all members of the group)

BJB2 . o O (just suggesting ;-))

BJB2: are either of you familiar with NWP?

BJB2 . o O (NWP = national writing project)

StacyP: I'm not.

BJB2: Sandy, the leader of this discussion will give you a basic understanding of the resources of this rich resource....

BJB2: the topic is writing across the curriculum and the site has activities and articles for all disciplines.

StacyP: That's great. I teach social studies and would like to learn how to involve more writing in my curriculum.

BJB2: excellent, Stacy

BJB2: Sandy should be here shortly.

TerriR: I also teach social studies and am hoping to also use more writing

BJB2: super, Terri!

BJB2: one problem that I often see with people who are "required" to attend a certain number of discussions in Tapped In for a course they are taking...

BJB2: is that the whole objective of Tapped In is overlooked...a professional development community designed to provide support to educators for lifelong learning

SandraS joined the room.

BJB2 . o O (of course, the day to day responsibilities often eat up much of an educator's time!)

BJB2 hugs Sandy warmly. Heya!

SandraS waves hello

SandraS hugs BJ

SandraS: Hi!

BJB2: I'll announce, Sandy. Terri and Stacy, just ignore. You're in the right place

SandraS waves to Terri and Stacy

BJB2: |** ANNOUNCEMENT: WriteTalk, writing across the curriculum is starting in the group room. To participate type /join SandraS in this chat window **|

StacyP: Hi

TerriR: Good evening everyone

RuthRS joined the room.

BJB2: Welcome to this month's WriteTalk.

BJB2: Hi, Ruth. Just in time ;-)

RuthRS: Hello!

BJB2: We usually start all TI discussions with introductions. Sandy, would you like to do that?

SandraS: Absolutely

BJB2: also, a reminder if you are new to Tapped In to go to the Actions menu in the top right of the chat and select DETACH

BJB2 . o O (this will make your chat window larger and easier to follow)

SandraS: I'm Sandy, and I teach writing and literature at the University of Alabama

BJB2: I'm on Tapped In helpdesk and a retired communication and art teacher located in Pennsylvania

StacyP: I'm Stacy, and I teach 6th grade U.S. history in Alexandria, VA

TerriR: I am Terri and I teach seventh grade civics and economics as well as a reading class

RuthRS: I'm Ruth and I taught English in a past life and am now working on my masters in ESL

SandraS: wonderful!

SandraS: heavy on the VA participants this evening, eh?

RuthRS: Yes, Fredericksburg, Va., historic city

TerriR: Fredericksburg, VA for me too! :)

SandraS: Welcome!

SandraS: OK, so I'd like to start with a short, very short spiel about the National Writing Project

SandraS: and we'll focus as much as possible on social studies and ESL resources and concerns

SandraS: after my short short intro., we'll explore the NWP site

SandraS: and then go from there

SandraS: Has anyone here heard of the National Writing Project?

TerriR: no

StacyP: No

RuthRS: Not sure.

SandraS: You're in for a treat

BJB2 agrees!

SandraS: NWP began in 1974 at UC Berkeley and has functioned since then as a fantastic professional development community

SandraS: it's federally funded

SandraS: with a budget of about 30 million

SandraS: and there are not about 200 sites

SandraS: each site is housed at a university

SandraS: usually in an education dept. or school or in and English dept.

SandraS: and the main project for each site is the summer institute

SandraS: which last about a month

SandraS: k-16 teachers from any discipline participate

SandraS: it's intensive

SandraS: it follows the three tenets of the NWP

SandraS: which are

SandraS: that teachers are the best teachers of other teachers

SandraS: (no canned professional development!)

SandraS: that teachers teach writing more effectively if they improve their own writing

SandraS: and that writing is a fantastic learning tool across all disciplines

SandraS: once you participate in a summer institute, you become a TC or teacher consultant

SandraS: you can participate in national writing retreats, conferences

SandraS: and the NWP has many projects

SandraS: Reading Initiative

SandraS: Technology Initiative

SandraS: Rural Schools

SandraS: Urban Schools

SandraS: I started in 2003 with the NWP

SandraS: and have worked nationally with the tech initiative

BJB2 . o O (it was the national printing project in 2003 ;-))

BJB2 sits on her hands and behaves herself

SandraS: we designed a writing retreat for teachers who wanted to write about how they used technology to teach writing

SandraS: LOL

SandraS: the NWP also believes that teachers need to write about their experiences

SandraS: so there's a great journal, The Quarterly

SandraS: any questions before we go visit the site?

StacyP: No sounds great

TerriR: No

SandraS: before we do that, let me ask everyone:

SandraS: what's the one area or one thing you'd like to try in your classroom...or what is one thing that continues to bother you?

SandraS: intrigue you?

SandraS listens to all the answers...

StacyP: I would like to learn to be more creative with my writing assignments. Involving technology would be great.

TerriR: Giving the students meaningful, relevant topics for the to write about in civics... especially since they come to the class with limited background knowledge

RuthRS: Learning how to use technology better--as starting points, etc

TerriR: Using more technology would also be a great benefit

SandraS: excellent! OK, let's start with that. My response: how to integrate readiing-writing assignments more fully.

SandraS: So, when we go to the website, there are at least two things you can do.

SandraS: Check out the map in the upper right corner and see what NWP site is closest to you.

SandraS: Then type in a term in the search box (like "creative assignments") and see what comes up. Explore a bit. When you're done (take a couple minutes) come back here and we'll talk about what you found.

BJB2 . o O (hold down the ctrl key on your keyboard when you click on the url Sandy gives you)

SandraS: Thanks BJ!

SandraS: Everybody ready?

SandraS: Here's the URL:

SandraS: http://nwp.org

RuthRS joined the room.

TerriR joined the room.

SandraS: Hi, Terri

TerriR: Hello... I didn't want to take too long :0

SandraS: Thanks, Terri

BJB2: wb, Terri!

SandraS: Let's see if Ruth and Stacy are back, too.

SandraS: Everyone here?

BJB2: here's the NWP url again if you need it....hold down the ctrl key when you click on it http://www.nwp.org/

StacyP: I'm here. Just got done looking around the website.

SandraS: Great.

SandraS: You can see that you can spend a LOT of time on that website.

BJB2: the urls will be in your transcripts so you can always look later

SandraS nods

RuthRS: When I tried to go to the NRP nothing happens.

SandraS: So what did you find? What did you think?

SandraS: http://www.nwp.org

SandraS: Do you click on that URL, Ruth?

SandraS: and do you hold down the control key?

RuthRS: Yes, yes!

SandraS: You're not getting anything?

TerriR: There are a lot of great resources when I have time to look around. When I start browsing I find myself still on the computer hours later.

RuthRS: nothing. Do I need to open another window?

SandraS: I know the feeling, Terri.

SandraS: Hmm. It should open automatically.

StacyP: There are two Universities that are really close to me. I found a link on vocabulary which is something my students struggle with.

SandraS: Excellent, Stacy!

SandraS: Ruth, if you're OK with just hanging with our conversation, you should be able to visit the site later.

TerriR: I couldn't get on with that URL either. I opened a new tab and typed it in.

SandraS: The URL will be in your transcript, which will be emailed to you later.

SandraS: Thanks, Terri.

SandraS: I went ahead and indicated two resources above this screen.

SandraS: If you have the room view above this chat screen (you'll have to attach if you detached)

SandraS: you can see two urls in the Whiteboard

SandraS: one points to NWP Resources on Teaching Writing

BJB2: or find the web window behind your chat window

SandraS: and the other is a short publication that is all online

SandraS: 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing

SandraS: Thanks BJ!

SandraS: It might be worth looking at the 30 Ideas for a sec.

SandraS: Does everyone see the link?

BJB2: you're talking about the whiteboard, Sandy?

SandraS: Yes.

RuthRS: Yes

SandraS: Does everyone see the Whiteboard?

StacyP: Which link is it? I have three links in the whiteboard.

SandraS: last link

StacyP: Thank you

SandraS: it says 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing under it

SandraS: why don't you visit that for a couple minutes

SandraS: again, hold down CTRL when you click on link

StacyP: Is is bubbl.us

BJB2: ahhh...I needed to update the whiteboard

SandraS: oh, rats

SandraS: hang on Stacy

RuthRS: I got it.

BJB2: everyone go to Welcome on the blue menu on the left on the web window

TerriR: yes... mine is the same as Stacy's

SandraS: http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/922

BJB2: when you click on that you will update the whiteboard

TerriR: that would be Stacy's! :)

BJB2: http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource_topic/teaching_writing

BJB2: NWP Resources on Teaching Writing

BJB2: http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/922

BJB2: 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing

BJB2 . o O (not pretty, but it works ;-))

StacyP: I'm updated now. Thank you

SandraS applauds BJ

SandraS: just scroll through some of the Ideas, check out one or two, and come back here

BJB2 . o O (another reason to join this group is that it makes it easier to return to this room and view any resources that have been posted)

SusanR joined the room.

SusanR walks in quietly and sits at the rear of the class

BJB2 waves hi to Sue. We're looking at the links Sandy has posted to the whiteboard

RuthRS: I like having students analyze dialogue between 2 authors

SandraS waves to Susan

BJB2 . o O (30 ideas for teaching writing)

SusanR: Thank you, BJ

SusanR: hi Sandra

SandraS: Ruth, sounds intriguing.

SandraS: Are our social studies folks back?

SandraS: I'd like to point out one other cool resource

TerriR: I like the idea of emailing students at other schools to discuss a book

SandraS: ooh, yes, that's also a great idea

StacyP: I like the "thinking like a football coach" and putting off grading.

SandraS: yes!

TerriR: Yes, that was also a good idea. I think it is especially useful in middle school.

StacyP: Students and parents tend to focus too much on the grading rather then the quality of work and effort they put in.

SandraS: So, especially for social studies folks, let me tell you about a collaboration by NWP and Google

SandraS: I agree, Stacy

SandraS: before the presidential election, they put up a website so students could write letters to the next president

SandraS: here's the description of the project on the NWP site

BJB2: totally off topic, but related to football ;-) No Child Left Behind: The Football Version http://34kbg.tk

SandraS: http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/doc/nwpsites/letters2president.csp

SandraS: Thanks, BJ!

SandraS: I'm so glad we have these URLs emailed to us!

BJB2 . o O (if you follow me on Twitter, that was one of my retweets)

SandraS: If you look at that description, you'll also see a link to the interactive map.

SandraS: So it's a great way to introduce all kinds of civic topics and discuss them. And it's all through writing

BJB2 . o O (fyi, I tweet daily events scheduled for TI @ tappedinorg)

SandraS: yeah!

SandraS: BJ, do you want to give the Twitter address?

TerriR: I love the civics idea. Thanks so much for sharing!

SandraS: Terri, you'll love all the letters

BJB2: www.twitter.com/tappedinorg

SandraS: and they can be sorted by topic

SandraS: Thanks, BJ!

StacyP: I briefly looked at the site and it looks very interesting. Thank you.

SandraS: OK, let me stop yakking and hear your thoughts.

SandraS: Ideas? Questions? Comments?

StacyP: It is hard to get the students to get involved and interested in writing civics related papers. I think they will love that website and find it very interesting and also be able to relate to it.

SandraS: Great!

SandraS: Here are some of the reasons, I think: the writing is authentic

SandraS: that is, these are letters

TerriR: I agree. I am going to check it out in greater detail after this session.

SandraS: and the writers know that an international audience may read those letters

StacyP: It's letters from students like them, their peers

SandraS: so part of finding more creative writing assignments has to do with the purpose of the writing, the audience, how it's published

SandraS: yes, I agree, Stacy--that's important

SandraS: that's why discussing a book with a student from another school can be so effective

SandraS: audience is outside classroom

SusanR: an authentic audience is so important

SandraS: here's a great website for reading ideas:

SandraS: http://notrequiredreading.com

SandraS: by students

SandraS: other thoughts, ideas, comments?

SandraS agrees with Susan

SandraS: Several of you mentioned wanting to incorporate more technology

SandraS: What do you already use?

SandraS: What would you like to use?

StacyP: I have a hard time finding time to review all of these wonderful resources. Do you have any suggestions.

SandraS: Stacy, I'd start with the 30 Ideas

StacyP: Ok.

SandraS: The link to NWP Resources on Teaching Writing is also a good place

SandraS: it looks a little overwhelming

SandraS: but you can shop through the list

SandraS: so it divides those resources up into great categories

StacyP: I don't really use much technology. Anything basic would be great.

RuthRS: I agree. In the tech. class I'm taking, we've looked at dozens of sites which I have bookmarked for later perusal but haven't had time to use.

SandraS: I know that a site like this can be overwhelming!

SandraS: Here's a simple use of technology: let's say you're reading a presidential speech or studying a poem

SandraS: you can take that text and put it into Wordle

SusanR: Do you have a delicious account? Sorting and tagging may help with the overload of info

SandraS: http://wordle.net

SandraS: Good point, Susan.

SandraS: and you can see which words predominate

SandraS: also allows for visual representation

SandraS: then students can write about what they learn from building a Wordle

RuthRS: Sounds interesting. Will check it out.

SandraS: World is a web program that takes any text and then orders it visually according to the number of times a word is mentioned

SandraS: significant words

StacyP: I don't know what Wordle or a delicious account is

TerriR: Interesting idea... the students would like this.

StacyP: Oh, ok Little behind in my typing.

TerriR: Delicious is a great way to organize your information

BJB2: wordle is way nifty!

SandraS: Wordle is a toy for generating "word clouds" from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. The images you create with Wordle are yours to use however you like. You can print them out, or save them to the Wordle gallery to share with your friends.

SandraS: That was Wordle's description of what it is.

BJB2: I posted a site Jen Wagner created that is fun...

SusanR: I found out you can edit your wordle as well; ie deleting words

SandraS: Oh, cool, Susan. I didn't know that.

SandraS: What's the site, BJ?

BJB2: http://guessthewordle.pbworks.com/

BJB2: wordle is a site where you can paste in a document or a list of words...

BJB2: the words that appear most frequently appear larger

BJB2: the words are arranged in a pattern that you can edit

SandraS: That is cool! The guess the Wordle link is intriguing.

SusanR: that is a creative use of wordle

SandraS: I'm not sure if the topic for today is just "zoo" or maybe "endangered species"?

BJB2: my guess was endangered species

SandraS: aha!

BJB2 . o O (but that was just a guess)

StacyP: That is neat.

SandraS: Another way to jumpstart your thinking about using technology with writing is to check out the sources on the NWP site...

SandraS: In the list of Resources on Teaching Writing

SandraS: there's a link to "Writing and Technology"

SusanR: I like the idea of Performance Poetry. http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2872

SandraS: if you click on that, you'll see links to lots of articles

SandraS: oooh...that sounds excellent

TerriR: Yes... that does sound like a great resource.

SusanR: "Slam poetry and hip-hop music testify to a resurgence of poetry as a spoken art."

SandraS: so, for instance, there's a link to an article on Glen Bledsoe, a 4th-grade teacher who uses Comic Life, a program that helps students write comics

SandraS: woohoo! slam poetry is wonderful

TerriR: My students love comic life! They have produced some great products using comic life... fun!

SandraS: oh, that's wonderful...

SandraS: you might like the article, then

StacyP: My school used to do something like that but it was not required for students to participate. The students really enjoyed it.

SandraS: Stacy, you mean the performance poetry?

SandraS: Here's the Comic Life article

SandraS: http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2811

SandraS: OK, we're about at the end of the hour.

StacyP: Yes, they would perform them afterschool for anyone who wanted to attend. It would be neat to have local coffee shops have students perform there.

SandraS: Any final comments or questions?

SandraS: That sounds like such a great time, Stacy!

TerriR: Thanks so much for all of the great resources. Now I just need to find some time to look at them!!

SandraS: I really know the feeling, Terri!

StacyP: Thank you too. This was very informative and helpful.

SandraS: Many thanks to all of you for attending and sharing your thoughts

BJB2: assign each resource to a student, Terry, and let them report on what they think

SandraS: Thanks to BJ for graceful hosting

SandraS: and Susan for her excellent input

RuthRS: I will definitely look at the transcript and check out some of these websites further. And post in my PortaPortal. Thanks. Interesting hour.!

BJB2: Thanks, Sandy! Next WriteTalk is August 13?

SandraS: I like that idea, BJ

SandraS: yes!

SandraS: if you join the group, you'll get the email announcement of the next meeting

TerriR: Thanks!

StacyP: Thanks again

SandraS: to join the group, just look above this chat box to the room view

SandraS: and click on the green i or information icon next to "WriteTalk"

SandraS: you can click on a "join this group" link

SandraS: Thanks to all of you!

BJB2 waves bye and heads for Teachers in Training

SandraS: Bye BJ!