

Title of Session: Language Arts Forum - Summer Reading Lists

Moderator: Donna Hendry

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DonnaH: Actually, this should be good; I'm going over Summer suggested reading:)

StevenFe: so what do you discuss here?

DonnaH: Different things; we've done from Harry Potter; to heroines in literature to persuasive writing...

DonnaH: I'm going to figure we're going to have a smallish group tonight...so I guess we should start:)

DonnaH: We always start with Introductions;

DonnaH: My name is Donna Hendry, and I'm a gifted English teacher and educational consultant from Connecticut

DonnaH: (by introducing yourself, you help me to make sure what we share is useful to you as well:))

StevenFe: My name is Steven Federle and I teach language arts to 6th, 7th and 8th in Vallejo California

KaraK: I'm Kara Kaelber and I teach 8th grade Language Arts in Prosser, Washington

JasperD: Hello, Jasper Daleo I teach 9th grade Language Arts in San Diego, California

KeriB: My name is Keri Brauer and I just finished the credential program at San Diego State University and I am currently taking EdTEch. 570.

DonnaH: Okay, so for the most part, we're all in the same general age group! Cool!

KarenMW: I'm Karen Walsh and I just finished the Multiple Subject credential program at SDSU. I am currently searching for a job and completing a course to receive my professional clear.

DonnaH: (that doesn't always happen *laugh*)

DonnaH: Hi Karen!

KarenMW: Hi!

DonnaH: *notes; my sessions are very laidback*

JasperD: I am also taking Edtec570 to get my clear.

DonnaH: if this is going to fast for you, pull the drop menu at the right corner of the text window, and click on "detach" it will make your text window larger

DonnaH: WELL tonight's session is on summer reading lists.

DonnaH: I do have posted (for my students) a reading list; and would love any discussion/suggestions

DonnaH: I tried to stay away from "cotton candy reading" but tried to avoid things I knew they WOULD read in school.

KaraK: What age group are we talking about as far as reading lists?

DonnaH: <http://www.techforteachers.org/summerreadinglist03.html>

DonnaH: My students specifically are 5th-8th

DonnaH: (but they are the gifted English kids)

DonnaH: And most of us here are middle grades

KaraK: Does your school participate in the Accelerated Reader program, or is that a separate topic of discussion?

DonnaH: separate topic, Kara *grin*

StevenFe: the list looks good....is this a required list? Do you verify reading in some way when school starts?

DonnaH: Not required in the slightest.

StevenFe: Do the kids tell you what they have read?

DonnaH: (I wish we could; but that's an admin decision)

KeriB: yes :)

DonnaH: There is a state reading program; they get some small award for reading (I think) 20 books.

DonnaH: but all they need to do is write down the titles.

StevenFe: I was considering giving them a list of titles, and having them take a Reading Counts test when they get back to school.

DonnaH: I didn't bother listing things like Harry, cuz lets face it, its likely they're all going to be reading that one anyway.

KarenMW: I will be!

DonnaH: (me too...and will irritate my husband, because I'll be useless for the 2-3 days it will take me to get it finished:))

KeriB: Have you read all of these books?

JasperD: How about having their parents sign off on what they read

KaraK: I have to still finish the second one before I can dive into the 3rd and 4th and so on and so on...

DonnaH: I'd say about 80% of them.

KarenMW: Which is your favorite?

DonnaH: (gosh, I've read each HP 7 times)

StevenFe: #4

DonnaH: really? I liked #3 the best.

KarenMW: Okay...I meant off of the list...)

StevenFe: I have to go....thanks for the discussion...do you do this on a regular basis?

DonnaH: *giggles* Karen, when I said 80% I meant the list:)

DonnaH: We run these the first and third wed of the month, Steven:)

KarenMW: Now which one is your favorite off the list?

DonnaH: (it is the third, right?)

DonnaH: oh, gosh.

StevenFe: See you later then. Good bye.

DonnaH: I could give you in topics...but would have difficulty giving just ONE

DonnaH: though...The Great Good Thing is truly a wonder.

DonnaH: very unique and original

KarenMW: Is fantasy popular with this particular age group?

DonnaH: I would say so!

KaraK: I could really use some suggestion on a new YA novel that I could read to my 8th grade reading classes at the beginning of next year. Are there any suggestions?

DonnaH: they're going wacko for them.

DonnaH: Is there any topic you need to cover? or just a really good book?

DonnaH: (and what level?)

KaraK: just a really good book, that none of them have read yet

DonnaH: like high readers, average, or low?

KaraK: average

JasperD: Donna would you please give me that site again!

DonnaH: Well, my 6th graders really loved reading "Warriors Don't Cry" (abridged version)

KeriB: Can you give examples for high and low readers as well?

DonnaH: <http://www.techforteachers.org/summerreadinglist03.html>

DonnaH: its about the integration of Central High in little rock.

KaraK: is it fiction or non

DonnaH: really kept their attention; but it is a bit edgy (if you come from a sensitive district) its nonfiction.

DonnaH: A memoir

DonnaH: its written by one of the original 9.

KaraK: As an English department we are purchasing a class set of the book "Holes".

After the movie came out many of the teachers and kids were really excited about it.

PattiM: Cheers Language Arts Fans! I am also interested in literature for low readers (sixth grade) that can gain their interest, thanks for the website, Donna

KaraK: Do any of you teach or should I say touch Harry Potter in any way, shape or form in your classrooms?

DonnaH: I've taught it before; the first one; have a webquest for the first one KarenMW:

Students could read it on their own...at least in the third grade class I did my student teaching in last fall.

DonnaH: you know...I never could really get into Holes.

KaraK: I haven't read it yet, but everyone seemed really excited.

KeriB: Do you have the address for the webquest?

DonnaH: Another good book is The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle (by Avi)

PattiM: I was in a sixth gr class, where one student enjoyed H. Potter, but my most recent sixth grade class preferred realistic fiction.

DonnaH: my 5th graders seem to be diametrically opposed; half love it, half despise it.

DonnaH: Realistic...have you tried any Jean Craighead George?

KaraK: Do any of you have any project based lessons tied to a particular book?

DonnaH: Another good (shortish) book is called "Morning Girl" by Michael Dorris; especially if you have a high Puerto Rican population...

PattiM: I enjoyed Hoot, a book by Carl Hiaasen written for young adults. The themes include endangered species, moving to a new state, and finding new friends and one's new place.

DonnaH: *snickers* tons.

DonnaH: that's on my list of buy books...I'm glad to hear its as good as I thought it might be.

DonnaH: ummm George's "sharks beneath the Reef" touch on those subjects too.

DonnaH: and her later "frightful" stories do as well.

DonnaH: Kara any particular book you have in mind?

KaraK: no, I'm flexible

PattiM: Donna, I like Jean C. George, most of my students did not appreciate historical or out of urban areas books--too bad.

KeriB: Donna, Do you have the address to your webquest by any chance?

DonnaH: yep; <http://www.techforteachers.org>

DonnaH: main addie...my school stuff though is on blind pages

KarenMW: thanks

KeriB: thanks :)

KaraK: I would just like to try some project based learning and I know some teachers can take one book and draw out some great learning and span the disciplines.

DonnaH: but I have units on Charlotte Doyle, Lord of the Flies, Warriors don't

cry...Harry Potter, Midsummer nights dream...and Greek mythology PattiM: A question for all: How do you integrate computer literacy programs into curriculum? That seems challenging, and I am mostly ignorant of what is there.

DonnaH: one thing I love to do is mapping with books...things like say, Lion the witch and the wardrobe; or Lord of the Flies

KaraK: that's a good idea, thank you

DonnaH: we're highly restricted with what "students" are allowed to do...I can't do much of what I would really LIKE to do...

PattiM: Donna (gasp!) what a range of possibilities between CS Lewis and Lord of the Flies

DonnaH: *chuckles*

KaraK: to pattiM, what kind of computer literacy programs?

DonnaH: I told my 8th graders they didn't need to take a final test on LOTF (to great cheers) but we would do a project;

PattiM: Thanks, KaraK- I know about webquests, and that is about it! DonnaH: the class broke up into groups, and actually wrote like a 90 page study guide to it. summaries, study questions (with answers) character studies, vocab...

JasperD: Storyboards ?

KaraK: You read LOTF to 8th graders? (wow)

JasperD: That is an excellent idea

DonnaH: not to...they read it...but as I said, I teach the gifted English program.

JasperD: Wow you got them to write 90 pages!!!LOL

KeriB: Wow!

KaraK: oh, I thought all children were gifted, and I was just slow

PattiM: Donna--what a GREAT idea-super to have the students make the lesson--did they test it on another class? (Tee hee hee)

DonnaH: they worked really really hard:)

DonnaH giggles karaward

DonnaH: Well, that is something I've done before...

DonnaH: have both classes create a test, then flip flop them

DonnaH: (so each class was taking the OTHER classes test)

KarenMW: was it successful?

DonnaH: it was awesome.

KaraK: How long did a project like that take?

DonnaH: when I did it, I did it with SED students; and I'll tell you they came up with harder questions than I did. DonnaH: lets see...the study guide...I gave them maybe 4 days of class time; the rest was on their own.

KaraK: Were they aware of what they were going to be doing before they began the book or after?

KeriB: I'm sorry, what does SED stand for?

PattiM: KaraK, I will quote you--"I thought all children were gifted--something to inspire all!

JasperD: Thanks KeriB you type faster!

DonnaH: Oh, if you liked the map idea; I was really evil; after they did the map, they had to write justifications for each major placement

DonnaH: (sed+ Social Emotional Dysfunction)

KeriB: No Problem JasperD :)

JasperD: Special ED

PattiM: Donna, good for you for map work--justifying is a good idea! DonnaH: so they had to take quotes from the book to explain WHY each was placed where it was.

DonnaH: yep.

KaraK: This is great stuff

DonnaH: those are the kids that will hug you one day, then tried to coldcock you the next.

DonnaH: (did that for a year and a half...quite long enough for someone without spec ed certification)

JasperD: Unheard of in CA.

KaraK: AMEN

DonnaH: Another book you might be able to do that with is My side of the mountain

DonnaH: what's unheard of in CA?

PattiM: Sounds like lots of good stuff, for all areas of students' gifts

JasperD: Working with SED without Cert.

DonnaH: (one year was as a "tutor"; but I taught all the English classes...in a day treatment school; the other half year was as a long term substitute)

JasperD: Oh loop holes! Gotta love em!!

DonnaH: yep....

PattiM: Has anyone required powerpoint book reports?

DonnaH: for me, I dislike those...the kids tend to spend more time on the bells and whistles than the actual content.

KaraK: I agree

DonnaH: that isn't to say I dislike PowerPoint...

JasperD: And access to computers (in my case) is limited

DonnaH: me too...I have one computer that is networked, and two that are stand alone.

DonnaH: but only one has PP on it.

PattiM: What else can you do with Pwr Pt to keep reading going?

KaraK: does anyone have any suggestions of how to incorporate other technology into the classroom?

DonnaH: I've used the internet a lot for further readings;

KaraK: I have learned even with one computer, you can search the internet together

DonnaH: When we did Warriors Don't Cry, we visited a number of sites to learn more about the time period

KaraK: the projection monitors really help though

DonnaH: ours are hooked up to the TV's in the room

PattiM: Great Q, Kara! We are in a techie world--have the students design a video lesson?? How very time consuming, but, a potentially handy skill. Newsletter, journalism, anyone??

DonnaH: (which, does make it a bit hard to read...but the graphics are quite useful)

KarenMW: My first grade students used the computer in the classroom for Accelerated Reader and for the StarFall Program

DonnaH: I just had my students do a commercial

JasperD: I did a unit on Salem Witch Trials where they had to search the web for research articles and facts! It went very well!

PattiM: DonnaK--GREAT!! giving historical context draws a more interesting picture!

DonnaH: (we were doing Island Ad Campaigns for review on persuasive writing)

DonnaH: we find a lot of our problem is the speed of the computers...

DonnaH: dunno whether it is us, or schools in general.

KaraK: other problems come when servers go down

DonnaH: but egad...I got better speed when I was on 56k modem

PattiM: The four computers available for 30 students crashed a lot :-O and were not available for our thirty students. Darn!

KaraK: I find the best technology I have in my classroom is really a piece of butcher paper and a couple of markers. Some kids just love seeing their name on something and love having it hung on the wall.

PattiM: Donna-I am intrigued--what was the scope of your commercials lessons?

DonnaH: for the end of the year, the 6th graders worked in cooperative groups to create Ad campaigns, including slogans, magazine ads, brochures, a song, poster, and a postcard collection for an island of their choice.

DonnaH: The commercial was supposed to reiterate things from the other parts of their project and had to fit in a 30 sec. block.

JasperD: I also taught ESL and we had no computers to use so I had the kids draw me a picture of what their website would look like! Included were links and pictures! It was awesome!

PattiM: Wow! It seems like an adventure to Madison Avenue and marketing, very real world and good analysis stuff is there!

DonnaH: the REALLY cool thing; when I went to the local travel agency to scam old travel catalogues, they agreed to exhibit the kids work for the summer.

DonnaH: we started the week before looking at magazine ads, and talking about slogans

PattiM: Jasper--excellent use of imaginations and limited resources! I will keep that one in mind...

DonnaH: what was the slogan? what sort of enticing language did they use? did it address the intellect, or the emotion?

PattiM: Donna, great to have the students work in the community!! Connections are good.

DonnaH: Oh, lets see; the group that did Hawaii's slogan was "Be Happy, Be Hawaiian"

DonnaH: Bermuda did a pic slogan...imagine someone sitting in a hammock between two palms at sunset overlooking the ocean...

DonnaH: the slogan was..."Kinda like this....but better."

PattiM: Donna, did you require basic climate and geographic feature exploration of the locales?

DonnaH: Normally I would...but this was a "end of the year keep the kids interested" project:)

DonnaH: tomorrow (our last day) we're having a drink day.

DonnaH: they all had to create a new "drink" for their island...I'm bringing the blender *laugh*

KaraK: you're pretty brave

DonnaH: nah.

PattiM: Oh my! that should be fun and creative--watch out for ants DonnaH: I've done it before.

KarenMW: Donna, do you know how/where to get books for the classroom?

DonnaH: which kind of books, Karen?

DonnaH: like lit circle books? whole class books?

KarenMW: books for a classroom library

DonnaH: beyond scholastic, I wouldn't have a clue.

KarenMW: scholastic was my first choice too

DonnaH: you're asking the wrong person...I spent my \$250 tax deductible by March.

DonnaH: and MOST of that was on books.

KaraK: I have hungry kids tugging at my legs so I have to go, but thank you everyone for a very informative and entertaining discussion.

DonnaH chuckles

PattiM: Karen, in sunny San Diego, I hear that teachers get \$200.00 to "form" a classroom library, but, often there are good local places, don't forget library book sales and used books---they are still valuable.

DonnaH: if you have that page; you have my email...so feel free to mail me:)

DonnaH: I love library book sales.

DonnaH: tag sales...

KeriB: Donna, have you ever incorporated reader's theater into your classroom, if so what scripts do you recommend?

DonnaH: my own books from when I was a kid *yes, I'm a really really REALLY bad packrat)

DonnaH: I haven't Keri:)

DonnaH: when we did Greek Myth, I had them write a script to the Trojan War...

DonnaH: and I've done "Midsummer Night's Dream"

JasperD: Good night all! Thank you DonnaH!

PattiM: KeriB, there are several publications that might be available through your school librarian, or through an ed district office. I REALLY enjoyed Click, Clack, Moo, but it is for 3rd grade and under.

DonnaH: "goodnight, Jasper:)

PattiM: Good chat, all!! Thanks for a stimulating session!

DonnaH: Glad it was useful!

KeriB: Thanks Donna for the info. you provided.

KarenMW: Thanks for the chat. Time for class..

DonnaH: "have a great week, guys:)

KeriB: Thanks you too!!

DonnaH: the sessions will run through the summer:)