

Title of Session: Language Arts Forum - Getting Started

Moderator: Donna Hendry

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Room: After School Online

BjB . o O (if you've never participated in a discussion here before, please read the 10 Steps)

DonnaH joined the room.

BjB waves hi to DonnaH

DonnaH waves back:)'`

JuliaK joined the room.

BjB: Hi, Julia. Just in time

JuliaK: Great.

StephanieS joined the room.

BjB: welcome, Stephanie

StephanieS: Thank you

DonnaH: Do we have everyone we were expecting?

BjB: I think so, Donna. Want to get started?

DonnaH: Sure:~)!

DonnaH: Lets double check...everyone here is for Language Arts Forum:~)

DonnaLP: yes

StephanieS: yes

JuliaK: yes

VeraR: Yes

DonnaH: Lovely! Let me introduce myself...My name is Donna Hendry, and I am your session leader; I am an educational consultant who lives in CT:~).

DonnaH: What we usually do here at TI, if you are unfamiliar, is to give a short introduction of each person. This helps us get to know each other, as well as help me give you all useful information.

DonnaH: (doesn't do any good if I list all elementary links if you are all HS teachers *grin*)

DonnaLP: HS special ed in NJ

JuliaK: I'm working toward my single subject English credential at SDSU.

StephanieS: I teach Kindergarten, and am working on my CLEAR credential at SDSU.

DonnaH: (who else would like to speak up? *smile*)

VeraR: I'm currently finishing the teaching program (multiple subject) at SDSU.

JulioCB: PE and Spanish working toward a specialization in APE, I worked APE last Spring.

DonnaH: "Tell me if I'm wrong then...but only one of you is actually a language teacher, correct?"

JuliaK: I'm becoming a language arts teacher.

DonnaH: (yep, I think Julia is it *smile*)

DonnaLP: I do teach la in a resource room

DonnaH: Okay, that's really helpful to know!

JulioCB: I use my bilingualism to help students

DonnaH: Now, obviously, if I like knowing whose attending *grin* I (try) to make sure the info is useful. That being said...with such a varied group...is there a topic we would really like to cover tonight?

DonnaLP: everything is helpful

JuliaK: I'm up for anything.

JulioCB: What does language arts actually entail?

VeraR: I'm open to any and all topics as well.

JulioCB: reading , writing , foreign language?

DonnaH: Language arts usually entails reading, writing and grammar, Julio:)

DonnaH: There is a separate session for Foreign language and ESL:)

JulioCB: I thought so thank you

DonnaH: (looks to BJ to check the veracity of that comment)

BjB Nods. Check the calendar for WebHeads and EuroLang

DonnaH: Well, since we are such a varied group...lets try something we can all use:)

DonnaH: The beginning of the year usually means a lot of getting started paperwork.

DonnaH: Review, testing...seeing where our students are at.

DonnaH: Here are some great websites that can assist (both lower and upper grades.)

DonnaH: First up:

DonnaH: <http://www.rhlschool.com/>

BjB: click on that hyperlink to open a new web window

DonnaH: offer sheets dealing with reading comprehension, grammar rules, etc.

DonnaH: Any comments or questions?

DonnaLP: I bookmarked it

DonnaH: (yes, I have used these myself...)

BjB . o O (also, if you click on the ACTIONS drop down menu and scroll all the way down to detach you will make your chat window larger and easier to read)

DonnaLP: edhelper is good also

JuliaK: Is there any way to print out the worksheets as PDFs?

DonnaH: The problem I had with edhelper is the organization. its a bit hard to follow at times. AND all their really good stuff is subscription based.

DonnaH: not here. They print out fine though.

DonnaH: (lemme double check...we're all American tonight, right?)

SusanR joined the room.

DonnaH: Hi Sue:)

DonnaH: Next one...includes games along with their worksheets...

SusanR: Hi Donna.

DonnaH: <http://www.dositey.com/>

DonnaLP: my kids like games

DonnaH: Not quite up for the 9-12 crowd...but Donna, I've used this with SED students before... it was very useful.

DonnaLP: I'll try anything

DonnaH: *chuckles*

DonnaH: well, then you might like the next site:)

DonnaH: <http://flashcardexchange.net/>

DonnaH: this one I highly recommend.

DonnaH: the level doesn't really matter.

JuliaK: I really like that site.

DonnaLP: It looks interesting

DonnaH: (is this useful? not useful? the more input I have, the more helpful I can be:))

DonnaLP: can't wait to try it

JuliaK: Have you tried exporting the flash cards before? Is it difficult?

VeraR: This is extremely useful--always helps to have abundant resources!

StephanieS: This is very useful for me, as a new teacher, to find quality resource sites.

DonnaH: I haven't tried...I always just printed them out.

StephanieS: Are there any resources for dealing with emergent readers?

DonnaH: <http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-6392.html?detoured=1> I haven't used this one much...but I'll toss it out...perhaps someone will have more luck than I:)

DonnaH: Oh, Stephanie...I have a FANTASTIC one for you:)

SusanR: www.starfall.com

DonnaH: <http://www.storyplace.org/>

VeraR: How about any resources on strategies for comprehension, writing, etc.?

DonnaH: offers online books that have audio read to them. vocab builders, etc.

StephanieS: Donna and Susan...Thank you, I bookmarked them both!

DonnaH: they ALSO offer all the same books in Spanish...so its a great ESL resource.

DonnaH: my children absolutely ADORE this site. They have games you can play dealing with info from the books, so there is comprehension follow-up.

StephanieS: Sounds wonderful!

JulioCB: great, one does not have to reinvent the wheel and as one gains more experience (which I am short on) can add their own ideas and style.

DonnaLP: you can never have too many resources

DonnaH: I stopped reinventing ages ago.

SusanR: I like the idea of students listening to stories. They can use these as a model for retelling stories

DonnaH: I know someone mentioned writing...here's a good one for learning how to write paragraphs.

DonnaH: (I don't care what grade they're in . they always need work on it)

DonnaH: <http://www.paragraphpunch.com/>

DonnaLP: isn't there a sentence punch also?

JuliaK: That's a great site. I really like how it breaks down the different parts of a paragraph.

VeraR: Great--thanks!!! I think, for me, writing will be the hardest to teach.

SusanR: Neat!

DonnaH: I don't know Donna...is there? I'd love to have it if you can find it:)

DonnaH: I like this one...really appreciate the graphic so many students get it better that way...

DonnaH: http://www.psesd.wednet.edu/write_process/Write_PC/writepr.htm

DonnaLP: I have to check it out, also, I believe there is one for writing a business letter

DonnaH: <http://jerz.setonhill.edu/writing/index.html> worksheets for writing practice

VeraR: It looks like Paragraph Punch also offers links to other sites as well--essaypunch.com, readingcomprehensionconnection.com, etc.

SusanR: I like the pizza analogy, Donna.

DonnaLP: definitely a good one for hs

DonnaH: *smiles*

JulioCB: writing is soooo important..even at SDSU students have difficulty passing the lower division writing exams. Then, they have to pass the upper division writing test. The earlier they learn the better off they will be.

DonnaLP: it's not just SDSU, many colleges are complaining that their freshmen can't write

DonnaH: well, gosh...even when I was a TA I wondered how some of them could answer an essay question with an incomplete sentence.

SusanR: They need a DEAR programme for writing.... drop everything and write

JulioCB: my point exactly (just kidding!)

DonnaLP: now with the IM's, forget about spelling

SusanR: IM???

DonnaH: see, I don't entirely mind that in a rough draft.

DonnaH: as long as they catch it before the final.

DonnaLP: instant messages & text messages

DonnaLP: I don't think they are capable and just don't care

DonnaH: Oh, yes, Sue...msging is a really big deal. Most of my middle school students last year used Aol instant msgr. I could be on and get paged by a half a dozen of my students in a night.

DonnaH: depends on the student, Donna.

DonnaLP: true, very true

JuliaK: It's so hard to help students understand how to change their writing style based on the audience.

DonnaH has worked with both ends of the spectrum.

DonnaH: One trick I've learned is to discuss how they speak with others.

DonnaH: Would you talk to a teacher or parent the same way you talk to your friends...or heck, your enemies?

DonnaH: Even at my age, I find my voice goes up and very respectful when I'm talking to elderly people.

VeraR: That's true.

DonnaH: Translate THAT into your writing.

JuliaK: That's true. It's probably very hard for students to know how to alter their writing when talking to their teacher on IM.

DonnaH: I've used that esp. when I was teaching persuasive writing.

DonnaH: you want to coerce your audience. you don't go up to mom and dad and say "Can I have 40 bucks for a really cool sweater?"

DonnaH: No, you go to them and say. "daddy...Do you love me?"

DonnaLP: I may have to disagree with you

DonnaH: (which of course got quite a few chuckles from the class...but they saw what I was saying)

DonnaH: There are exceptions, Donna. I can think of a few of my old SED students who didn't (pardon my french) give a crap WHO they were talking to.)

DonnaLP: Ok, so modeling is what we need to do

DonnaLP: yes

SusanR agrees

DonnaH: But if you think about it...those same "tough" kids DO see this...just not by an age thing...they'll look at who the kingpins (or whatever the heck the newest term for biggest thug on the block is now) and you can be sure, they give those guys the respect they should be giving everyone else.

DonnaLP: you are so right

DonnaH: *bows* glad some people think so *laugh*

DonnaLP: so I guess a way around it would be to talk about writing respectfully?

DonnaH: well, both.

JulioCB: I taught a bilingual 5th grade class this summer and the kids needed help expanding on what they were writing. You know, the old who, what where and when thing.

DonnaH: Because those same kids giving respect to the "kingpins" would still be using street talk.

DonnaLP: and they write the same way

DonnaH: But at least with persuasive....that line of reasoning would work.

DonnaLP: funny!

VeraR: Oral language and written language are definitely intertwined. How do we teach students to write for an "academic" audience i.e. how do we teach them to not use "street talk"? For example, when writing informational reports, etc.

SusanR: I encountered the same thing with grade 6. Their style of writing was similar to a grade 2 class I recently taught.

DonnaH: That I think, Vera is the real question...and that one I just don't have an answer for.

DonnaH: everything I've ever seen it's been because if you don't you'll get an F on this paper.

DonnaH: those that care, did it correctly, those that didn't...*shrug* they didn't.

SusanR: I used to insist my students talk in complete sentences.

JulioCB: I spent a lot of time going over vocabulary because they did not understand many words

DonnaLP: I wonder if they really didn't care or was it just a cover?

DonnaH: Julio I see that all over. My students know me for my green pen and the word "Why?" all over their paper.

DonnaH: I find it a really good thing to go over synonyms.

VeraR: did that help to have to students speak in complete sentences?

DonnaLP: I'm glad you don't use red!

DonnaH: one of my "beginning of the year" assignments is to create room posters.

SusanR: for grade 2 it did, Vera

DonnaH: I pass out index cards with "over worked words" (it could be a center too; I've done it both ways)

DonnaLP: I could do that

DonnaH: these words are tired...but here is a list of their relatives who are willing to work in their place...chose one next time you want to write using the word.....(good, nice, hot, pretty etc)

DonnaH: put on posters, they are big enough for the kids to see from their seats.

DonnaLP: kid love to make posters

DonnaH: then the kids don't feel any stigma for wanting to use a "Thesaurus"
StephanieS: And they don't have to HAVE a thesaurus
VeraR: Yes, I'm sure that it gets tiresome reading the same descriptive words over and over again!
DonnaLP: you are assuming they know what that is
DonnaH: Another major trick I do is to tell kids to read their stories without the words And and then.
DonnaH: anytime it still makes sense...cut it out.
DonnaH: (those page long sentences kill me.
DonnaLP: Word
DonnaH: that seems to be more of a 4-5 grade practice though.
DonnaLP: no, it happens in HS
SusanR: do you do a lot of peer editing?
DonnaH: I do some.
DonnaH: But I do a lot of modeling first.
VeraR: checklists can help with peer editing
DonnaH: beginning of the year, i've had the whole class get together and write one story.
JuliaK: If you don't want to use a thesaurus, you can use a dictionary of synonyms. My students had a much easier time working with it as a reference tool. Plus, I kept on telling them how unusual and cool it is to use a dictionary of synonyms.
DonnaH: The times I've done it, we've created a classroom pet. (totally make pretend.
DonnaH: So say, they say the pet has a head of a snake.
DonnaLP: my kids would like that and I can only imagine the story, X-rated
DonnaH: okay. cool.
DonnaH: now, what color? what shape?
DonnaH: Are you sure you don't have MY old students, Donna?
DonnaLP: probably do, or their kids
SusanR: a grade 7/8 used this site for their writing.. the thesaurus...<http://www.rhymezone.com/>
DonnaLP: it's not all that b/c I can have fun with them
DonnaH: However, ladies and gentleman...time flies when you don't know what you're doing...
DonnaLP: not all that bad I mean
DonnaH: *chuckles*
DonnaLP: thank you!!!
SusanR: synonyms ...etc <http://www.rhymezone.com/>
DonnaH: (I remember. the structure is tighter and looser at the same time:))
DonnaH: *chuckles* our session is just about at an end:
DonnaH: *well, technically...it ended 5 minutes ago...but who's counting?)
JulioCB: I enjoyed it. listening to my music, having a cigar and diet coke. thank you and goodnite
VeraR: Thank you--this was my first session and it was very helpful...and fun!!!
DonnaH: Enjoy your evening:)
StephanieS: Thank you Donna
DonnaLP: good night!
DonnaH: I'm glad to hear that Vera:)

JuliaK: Thanks. I really enjoyed my first tapped in discussion.

StephanieS: Good night everyone!

SusanR: Thanks, Donna!

DonnaH: Please check the Tapped In calendar for other scheduled events:) We'd love to have you:)

SusanR: nice session, Donna