

**Title of Session:** Language Arts Forum - Fan Fiction

**Moderator:** Donna Hendry

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Room: After School Online Room

**DonnaH:** Tonight's discussion is slated to be on how we can use the concept of fan fiction (fanfics) in our classroom.

**DonnaH:** First, though, lets start with official introductions:)

**DonnaH:** My name is Donna Hendry, and I'm an educational consultant living in CT.

**MaryFT:** Hi, I'm Mary from Houston. I work with Preservice teachers at the University of Houston.

**JeniG:** Hi, I'm Jeni from Houston. I'm a preservice teacher working with Mary.

**LaurieES:** Hi I'm Laurie I work at large international school in Mexico City, Mexico

**GailB:** Hi, My name Gail I too live in Houston.. I am a student at university of Houston.

**JeniG:** hello fellow cougar!

**DonnaH:** (thinks that's all of us.)

**DonnaH:** First, let's all start on the same page...are we all aware of what fanfics are?

**JeniG:** No.

**LaurieES:** no

**MaryFT:** actually no...I was hoping to lurk around until I could figure it out

**DonnaH:** \*chuckles\*

**DonnaH:** Good, you're in for a treat then.

**LaurieES:** cant wait

**DonnaH:** Fan fiction is exactly that. It is fiction that people write based on another author's characters or "universe".

**DonnaH:** It seems to be most popular in the fantasy/scifi genre.

**MaryFT:** ohhh...cool...

**DonnaH:** but can be anywhere (I for one, actually tried writing a story between 2 of the books of the Anne of Green Gable's series...but that is another story:))

**DonnaH:** With the advent of online publishing, it has become exceedingly popular.

**DonnaH:** Does anyone here truly despise Harry Potter?

**MaryFT:** no...I'm actually a big fan

**DonnaH:** (there's a reason i ask)

**JeniG:** I have no opinion on it

**LaurieES:** do they take the character to another dimension?

**GailB:** Well sort of.

**DonnaH:** Sometimes. Sometimes they may take a secondary character and develop them more.

**DonnaH:** It can certainly be enjoyed on its own...

**DonnaH:** but the reason I bring it up in here is simple. It is an excellent way to get your students to really consider specific characters

**DonnaH:** it lets them play what if.

**GailB:** I agree with what you are saying. I personally enjoy reading books that are true story.

**JeniG:** How fun!

**LaurieES:** this would probably be a good way to design a webquest

**DonnaH:** The second reason is it allows them to really focus on the concepts of description and focus, because the characters already exist...how many kids do you know have no idea how to just MAKE a character up?

**JeniG:** It's like those books that allow you to choose the ending by going to a certain page

**DonnaH:** it takes that really big stumbling block out of the way.

JoyEM joined the room.

**GailB:** That is true, it sort of hard to do.

**MaryFT:** that's a really good point

**DonnaH:** I'm going to share an example. (this particular site rates their stories, g, pg, pg13 and r) so I wouldn't use it in the classroom...BUT it gives you an idea.

**DonnaH:** very short story looks at something that happened to Draco Malfoy as a child.

**DonnaH:** <http://www.thedarkarts.org/authors/abrean/DS.html>

**GailB:** Donna you are really making this very interesting.

**LaurieES:** I like this!

**DonnaH:** (read it or don't...but HP fanfic is one of the larger existing fanfic genres...and I figure most people would be at least familiar with it: )

**DonnaH:** (okay, and I'm obsessed myself...sue me \*grin\*)

**JeniG:** What do you mean HP

**DonnaH:** sorry...Harry Potter.

**JeniG:** Gotcha

**MaryFT:** I'm a closet HP obsessive myself...there's no shame in it]

**DonnaH:** a few other bigger fanfics take after oh, Star trek. that is a big one.

**GailB:** I have not ready the book ,but i did see the movie and it was okay.

**JeniG:** Now you're talking my language

**DonnaH:** \*chuckles\*

**JeniG:** Another good one would be DR Who

**DonnaH:** most you can find online are not "appropriate" to share with students...BUT. It's the concept.

**DonnaH:** you could use it with any story...but especially character centered stories.

**GailB:** Many people made the movies seem bad, but I thought it was okay.

**DonnaH:** it was alright.

**JeniG:** How would you google such a site?

**DonnaH:** (I'm still miffed that they totally cut out Oliver Wood out of the third movie. gits)

**DonnaH:** fanfic is a recognized term.

**JeniG:** just type fanfic then?

**JeniG:** never mind

**DonnaH:** if you are looking for a specific one, you could put in Harry potter fanfic, and come up with a disgusting number of hits:)

**MaryFT:** fanfics would be a great extension for any book...and it could suit most grade levels

**DonnaH:** (fictionalley is one of the larger HP fanfics)

**DonnaH:** exactly.

**DonnaH:** an example of a published "fanfic"...anyone ever read Dear Peter Rabbit?

**DonnaH:** (or With Love, Little Red Hen?)

**JeniG:** it'd also be a great project for students who often finish early

**GailB:** no, what is it about.

**MaryFT:** along the same lines as the true story of the Three Little Pigs?

**DonnaH:** Oh, it is SOOO cute. Picture book. and the story is told through letters (used it to teach writing friendly letters too)

**GailB:** cool, I would love to read that book to my kids.

**DonnaH:** but peter rabbit writes a letter to the little bear from goldilocks, and goldilocks is actually Mcgregor's daughter...

**DonnaH:** and she meets up with little red riding hood.

**GailB:** could you please tell me how to find that book or website.

**DonnaH:** and it seems the wolf from the 3 little pigs is related to the wolf from LRRH.

**DonnaH:** sure!

**LaurieES:** I bet you get some great stories!

**MaryFT:** I looked up Dear Peter Rabbit on amazon. The author is Alma Flor Ada

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0613016645/qid=1079573249/sr=1-1/ref=sr\\_1\\_1/102-5810689-4697767?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0613016645/qid=1079573249/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/102-5810689-4697767?v=glance&s=books)

**GailB:** I am all exciting about this, because those are some of my favorite books when I was a kid.

**DonnaH:** I think it is important to tell the children though...that they are BORROWING the characters.

**JeniG:** good point

**GailB:** That is a good way of putting it.

**LaurieES:** we don't want any plagiarism

**DonnaH:** (and older students can be told that you don't see fanfics sold, because the characters belong to the author.)

**DonnaH:** now, with Dear Peter Rabbit, the copyright is old enough that they have become public domain...which is why the fanfiction could be published.

**DonnaH:** (same with stories like ella enchanted, and ummm...the frog princess.)

**LaurieES:** wouldn't that be the case with any traditional story?

**DonnaH:** Welllll it depends.

**LaurieES:** why?

**DonnaH:** If you make up your story about the 3 little pigs, that's fine.

**DonnaH:** if the concept is new.

**DonnaH:** or if you follow the basic original structure.

**DonnaH:** but say, you try to write a different version of the TRUE story of the 3 little pigs...

**DonnaH:** then you'd be poaching someone else's intellectual property.

**DonnaH:** (does that make sense?)

**DonnaH:** because it was someone else's NEW idea.

**LaurieES:** yes,

**JeniG:** perfect

**DonnaH:** (did anyone actually read the short story I posted?)

**JeniG:** not I

**DonnaH:** \*nods\*

**MaryFT:** the one about Draco?

**DonnaH:** yes, Mary.

**MaryFT:** I started to...

**GailB:** No.

**LaurieES:** go into more detail about your story

**MaryFT:** it was okay but a bit "over-the-top"

**GailB:** yes tell us more.

**DonnaH:** (oh, its not mine...my story is in its 9th chapter, and actually based on someone ELSE's fanfic \*laugh\*)

**DonnaH:** a bit...certainly. but it does show how we can use it to see behind the scenes as it were.

**MaryFT:** the author stated at the top that he was using characters from J.K. Rowling and was not intending to plagiarize

**DonnaH:** it's actually how I got the whole idea in the first place \*laugh\*

**DonnaH:** on fictionalley, that goes automatically on top of any story that is submitted.

**DonnaH:** because, after all, it IS JKR's characters.

**MaryFT:** probably a good idea

**DonnaH:** most fanfic websites I've come across have that

**DonnaH:** it still doesn't mean if they decide you're breaking copyright, they can make you take it down.

**DonnaH:** but most like that find that it helps their business rather than hinder it.

**LaurieES:** true

**DonnaH:** and of course, like I said...plenty of people wrote it before...but since it couldn't feasibly be shared...it didn't really make much of a show.

**DonnaH:** (since the whole point was you couldn't publish it.)

**DonnaH:** but with online publishing, it gives a certain amount of grey area.

**JeniG:** does it cost anything to publish something to one of theses sites.

**DonnaH:** Nope.

**DonnaH:** I will say, at least with fictionalley...that posters HAVE to be over 13.

**DonnaH:** And they will deny stories if the grammar isn't up to snuff.

**JeniG:** So if a children's site was found, they could publish online?

**DonnaH:** Yep.

**JeniG:** Kids would love that. They could show their family and friends their work online.

**DonnaH:** wellll...most sites won't publish someone under 13...that whole privacy act thing.

**JeniG:** Oh, I see.

**DonnaH:** but i did recently read a story on fictionalley that was written by a7th grader.

**GailB:** I was going to ask that question. I know my daughter would love it since she love make believe.

**JeniG:** I've seen sites that allowed elementary age students to post.

**DonnaH:** and there isn't anything saying it couldn't be put online with the schools' website.

**LaurieES:** that's the way most are going

**GailB:** Does the child have to post their name.

**DonnaH:** If they are strictly for elem students...and they usually have a few extra hoops to go through.

**JeniG:** I don't think the school will do it, but the site had permission slip sections

**DonnaH:** On the site I was showing? heck no. I don't even have MY real name on there.

**MaryFT:** A teacher could have his own fanfic page that kids could show to their parents

**DonnaH:** absolutely.

**JeniG:** that's a good compromise

**GailB:** good

**DonnaH:** I always kept all my online stuff myself...took too long to post with school,

**DonnaH:** most places expect you to use an online handle.

**LaurieES:** are you at a school working now and what grade level

**DonnaH:** not currently. I just finished a stint with an 8th grade science class..

**DonnaH:** before that, I was doing gifted English with 6-8th graders.

**LaurieES:** thanks for sharing!

**LaurieES:** is there a lot of work on the consulting end, I imagine there is

**GailB:** good question.

**DonnaH:** and when I'm not teaching, I do consulting work online for companies like PBS and do training in the different districts.

**JeniG:** what sort of training?

**JeniG:** technological, I assume

**DonnaH:** I've done Online literacy for preschoolers with teacher and parent groups.

**JeniG:** how fun!

**DonnaH:** I've done training for paraprofessionals

**DonnaH:** I've done online parent/student sites with parents groups...

**LaurieES:** Do you miss the classroom? I think it's important however, to get out of it every so often

**DonnaH:** and I've been doing this here for...\*thinks\* nearly 4 years.

**GailB:** that sounds interesting, what was it about.

**DonnaH:** Actually, right now, I'm burned out, to be honest.

**LaurieES:** so am I!!!

**DonnaH:** The last position, the 8th science was because the students actually made the teacher resign at Christmas.

**DonnaH:** so they thought they could pull the same with me.

**LaurieES:** how did it go?

**DonnaH:** so life was rather hellish for the first 2 weeks.

**JeniG:** WOW

**DonnaH:** 147 students.

**GailB:** Is it a lot of working teaching middle school, because my goal is to work with k-4or special education.

**LaurieES:** I bet you won them over!

**DonnaH:** It is and it isn't. There is really less planning, because you do the same lesson over and over.

**LaurieES:** Every level is a different ball game

**DonnaH:** I did. They were asking why I couldn't stay (I'm only cert'd to 6th grade.)

**GailB:** because I am not in a class but I do hear a lot of different story about the classroom.

**DonnaH:** but the administration in our system has a really bad problem with not hiring "good" subs.

**LaurieES:** By chance would you know Doloras Kelsey?

**DonnaH:** nope.

**DonnaH:** The last day of school, a student went the VP and asked why I couldn't stay. (I had already told her...but \*shrug\* we were in the cafeteria...and they hadn't seen me...the VP answered, "She's just a sub" \_

**DonnaH:** \*rolled her eyes\* its endemic of the whole administration.

**LaurieES:** Just a sub!!

**DonnaH:** (yeah. isn't that a nice thing to tell a STUDENT?)

**LaurieES:** Have administrators ever been teachers???

**DonnaH:** (I'm a bit bitter, I'll admit it)

**DonnaH:** you know, I'm not entirely certain.

**JeniG:** they're supposed to be

**DonnaH:** I think that depends on the state, Jeni.

**DonnaH:** and I know in CT we are really desperate for admins.

**LaurieES:** they just forget what's its all about, don't they

**DonnaH:** I don't' think its just a matter of forgetting.

**DonnaH:** I mean, Do you really see students acting the same way as they did even 10 years ago?

**LaurieES:** Its a lot of financial and political pressures as well

**GailB:** you think maybe they are over work and under paid.

**LaurieES:** no, students have changed as they always will continue to..

**DonnaH:** I dunno. I know the Instructional Consultant at my daughter's elementary school (oh, I dunno...maybe 300 students?) was getting \$80k+ a year.

**DonnaH:** but I see students acting less respectfully in general.

**LaurieES:** definitely

**GailB:** may be she is just there for the money.

**DonnaH:** \*laughs\*

**LaurieES:** let me know when there's an opening!

**GailB:** me too.

**DonnaH:** My district though smaller than most, is considered an inner city school district.

**DonnaH:** a very high percentage of minority...and high poverty level.

**LaurieES:** Is there a great 2nd language factor?

**DonnaH:** huge.

**LaurieES:** What's the bilingual program like?

**DonnaH:** over 30% of the pop is Hispanic.

**DonnaH:** What's the party line, or what do I see?

**LaurieES:** no compendo

**DonnaH:** party line: we have many programs that have been copied by others because they are completely innovative.

**DonnaH:** bilingual students do excellent, etc.

**LaurieES:** ok

**LaurieES:** Tell me, what kind of interventions work best with these students?

**DonnaH:** however, what I SEE is many bilingual students fall behind because in order to do well, they get left in the Spanish classes, rather than focusing on the language acquisition and moving them into mainstream.

**DonnaH:** It depends on the support structure at home really.

**LaurieES:** I have been doing a lot of research that says that native language use is essential for 2nd language learning

**GailB:** that's funny because me and my daughter really wants to learn Spanish

**DonnaH:** we get a lot of students from Europe too...(had like 3 Turkish families come in...not a word of English) but because they were mainstreamed, could speak English fairly well by the end of the school year.

**DonnaH:** Hispanics who come in are still in bilingual classes, and still having difficulty.

**LaurieES:** I believe that happens when they need the survival language

**DonnaH:** Do you guys use the LAS testing down there?

**GailB:** that is good, because I think that speaking two language is a plus.

**LaurieES:** no

**DonnaH:** (oh, I do too...and I've learned enough Spanish to be able to take a bilingual class if I want...and I have many times.)

**LaurieES:** definitely a plus in this global world

**DonnaH:** but bilingual is exactly that...knowing 2 languages...I know many of the teachers will teach almost completely in Spanish

**GailB:** well I myself do planned on learning to speak Spanish. myself as well.

**JeniG:** Thank you for a great discussion. I'll definitely be incorporating fanfic into future LA lessons.

**DonnaH:** because that is what the student knows. but that isn't helping them.

**LaurieES:** Our European and Asian students who in the international school also pick up English very quickly

**DonnaH:** \*smiles\*

**DonnaH:** thanks Jeni:)

**JeniG:** Goodbye!

**DonnaH:** you ARE right...it is time to be heading off:)

**LaurieES:** Thanks Donna and best luck with all your ventures!

**DonnaH:** \*smiles\* have a good evening!