

Title of Session: Arts and Literacy - Posters

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BJB2: we start all Tapped In discussions with introductions...

BJB2: please tell me where you are located and what brings you to this discussion

BJB2: I am the discussion leader. I teach remedial communication and am located in south central Pennsylvania

LiaW: I am in Honolulu, Hawaii. I'm here to participate in a discussion and see how they are facilitated as I will be leading a discussion about uBoost on Thursday!

HilaryH: I'm in northern Virginia. I teach 9-12 Latin, but I love bringing the arts into my language classroom.

BenJ: I am an undergrad student at UC Irvine, I'm on campus right now. This is my first Tapped In discussion

SynthiaF: I am a grad student in northern Virginia

JeffC: I'm in Oregon and on Tapped In Helpdesk.

HilaryH: Synthia, what school are you at?

SynthiaF: UMW

BJB2: sounds like a very diverse group...love it!

BJB2: I've chosen the topic of Posters for our discussion today

BJB2: anyone want to share how they think posters can help literacy skills?

BenJ: posters like

BenJ: what you put up in your room?

BJB2: yes, they can be like the posters you put up in your room...

BJB2: or they can be advertisements for movies

BenJ: well, you can have posters of book covers. I was just at my professor's house a few hours ago, some of the posters he had made me want to read those books. In that sense it advertises literacy

BJB2: . o O (or posters can tell us lots of other kinds of information)

HilaryH: I like to use newspaper clippings, book reviews, movie ads, etc. pertinent to the discipline to promote the idea of reading for fun

BJB2 nods to Ben and Hilary. Good comments.

HilaryH: Or you can list reading strategies on a poster and use it as a cue when readers get stuck

BJB2 nods...directions, information, advertising

BenJ: posters can be a means to a means to an end

BenJ: for example if you have a rage against the machine poster

BenJ: that might influence you to listen to their music

BenJ: and their music promotes knowledge of global issues, leading you to books and the internet

BJB2: or they can be an introduction to a topic or era.

BenJ: I don't really get what you mean by "literacy skills" though

BJB2: Yep, all that too, Ben

BJB2: ahhh...good question, Ben. Anyone want to address that?

BJB2: maybe we should take a look at the definition of literacy?

ClintonH joined the room.

BJB2: Hi, Clinton. Welcome.

HilaryH: Literacy skills include more than just "reading".

BJB2: I've just asked for a definition of literacy

BJB2 nods to Hilary....like what?

ClintonH: hello

HilaryH: The ability to parse words, of course. But also the ability to understand tone, to infer information, to draw conclusions, etc.

BJB2: do you agree, Ben?

BenJ: yes

BJB2: so that means that you can combine words and pictures to build a powerful message that either one alone would not provide

BenJ: yes I think posters which promote knowledge are often more effective than rhetoric

ClintonH: literacy...hmm I would think the ability to comprehend, understand, and read a piece of writing

ClintonH: sounds good Hilary

BJB2: ok...so we have a consensus on literacy and the value of posters?

BenJ: potential value of posters

ClintonH: well what type of posters? I am a science teacher so please help me out

BenJ: most posters suck

BenJ: I walk around my campus

ClintonH: not science posters

HilaryH smiles

BJB2 chuckles...let's not get into a discipline war!

BenJ: and see many posters for clubs, events, etc... they are not eye-catching. they might promote higher learning and all that, but they ineffectively promote

BenJ: its all about effective promotion

HilaryH: Ben, how could those promotional posters improve their message?

ClintonH: oh no I am an artist as well, but I would like to understand your field so that I may incorporate it into mine

BJB2: obviously there are good posters and not so good posters...let's take a look at some

examples

BenJ: more dramatic picture

BenJ: here comes the army of links?

BJB2: this is a good place to start... <http://www.npg.si.edu/exhibit/ballyhoo/>

BJB2: take a couple minutes to look at the site and then come back and we'll discuss it

ClintonH: ok

ClintonH: colorful already

BJB2: yes, the site is dedicated to posters...but they are focusing on something specific, right?

ClintonH: yes

HilaryH: It definitely seems to address the issue that Ben was discussing a moment ago.

BJB2: Ben, do you feel that the site addresses your concerns?

HilaryH: A thought: are we including cultural literacy in our definition?

BJB2: ahhh...we certainly can, Hilary!

ClintonH: nice touch I see many cultural aspects....but mostly American

HilaryH: That site certainly seems to be using posters as an entree to a particular episode/aspect of history

BenJ: addresses my concerns?... I suppose. none of these posters make me want to learn more, though

BJB2: it's also focusing on people, especially famous people, or people who became famous because of the posters

BenJ: the Huey P Newton poster under "politics and protest" is intriguing

BenJ: along with the whole "Uncle Sam wants you" thing

BJB2: right, Ben...do you think that would happen to your students?

HilaryH: I also love the poster for "Trinidad" with Glenn Ford and Rita Hayworth - really draws you in

BenJ: I don't have any student s

BenJ: it's really tough to make posters that appeal to the lowest common denominator

BJB2: do you think that the posters would draw in the observer to seek more information?

BenJ: often, ex. a poster featuring a work by El Greco - the intent is to draw a certain type of person in - namely, lovers of his art

ClintonH: that's true

BenJ: on the other hand

HilaryH: what about a poster that might work for different people on different levels?

BenJ: when "literacy skills" are the desire, it seems like the most broadly appealing poster would work

BenJ: that is good too

BenJ: ambiguous is often good

HilaryH: ambiguous in the sense that it could spark discussion/controversy?

BenJ: I personally like posters without words

BenJ: books have words

BenJ: people say stuff all the time

BenJ: words surround us

ClintonH: what audience though would attract the most appeal?

BenJ: posters give a chance to show a million words, without ever saying it. People can draw their own conclusions

Hilary H: sorry, Clinton, don't understand your question

BJB2: what do you mean, Clinton?

BenJ: maybe like

BenJ: I don know if you guys have seen it

BJB2: true, Ben. Some posters work as wordless books.

BenJ: but there's this pic from Sudan? Darfur? I'm not sure

BenJ: anyways

HilaryH: might the El Greco poster not appeal to someone who had never seen an El Greco painting before - not just the connoisseur (sp?)

ClintonH: well some posters are meant to attract a particular audience...now if we focus on literacy which audience would we want to attract?

BenJ: it's a kid dying, and a vulture is right next to him, just waiting for him to croak. that picture can provoke 1) research about that particular region 2) human rights organizations 3) poverty economics etc

BenJ: if you want to focus on literacy *specifically*, I'd say the poster would have to involve books

HilaryH: that would be a great picture to use as the cue for a short story

BJB2: Clinton, remember that there are many definitions of literacy

HilaryH: ...or a poem. what is going thru this kid's mind? how did he get here?

BenJ: one side of the poster is very dark and menacing and a serpent climbs out of the books and is scaring the kid, meanwhile the text has question marks and jumbled sentences. And on the other side its brighter and sunnier and a kid is reading with legs crossed on a grassy knoll

ClintonH: of course but we as ..some of us teachers want to create something for our students to grab on to right?

BenJ: that would get the point across

BenJ: "Reading is good."

HilaryH: that's sort of the point of the celebrity "read" posters, right?

BJB2 grins...good point, Hilary. I love those posters

BJB2: something else you need to keep in mind...

ClintonH: yes Ben. exactly

ClintonH: exactly my point Ben

BJB2: some of us might like very graphic posters like the Bette Midler poster...

BJB2: and some might prefer a different style...

HilaryH: (I think that poster is kinda scary! lol)

BJB2: so we have to provide a variety for our multidisciplined students

BJB2: let's take a look at another site and see where that takes the discussion

BenJ: I think one good catch phrase

BenJ: is

ClintonH: but my question was never asked...what audience are we trying to serve?

BenJ: "oh yeah"

BenJ: it can be "oh yeah!" or "oh yeah?" or "oh, yeah."

BJB2: we're trying to serve our students

ClintonH: well answered I should have said

HilaryH: Clinton, do you mean inside the classroom?

BJB2: . o O (if we are in a classroom)

ClintonH: yes inside the classroom

BJB2: look at Powers of Persuasion and let's talk about what information that offers http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_home.html

HilaryH: for instance, are we serving the LCD (as Ben mentioned) or the middle, or the high performers?

ClintonH: for example if I want to draw in something from a student lets say I show a poster of a dead polar bear on a green mountain

ClintonH: well lets say middle school for now

ClintonH: as a teacher what kind of audience would I effect in my classroom and second what inference would we want to gather

BJB2 looks around and wonders if anyone has a classroom of students at the same level?

HilaryH: with your example poster, you're trying to elicit thoughts about global warming, Clinton?

ClintonH: yes

ClintonH: now which audience in the room would we effect?

HilaryH: I guess it depends on whether you've discussed the issue with students already.

ClintonH: but it seems you knew without me saying a thing

ClintonH: wouldn't that be some type of informed literacy?

HilaryH: there - so some of the kids will be able to understand your drift immediately. but I suspect some of them will need more info

ClintonH: that's true

BJB2 agrees

BJB2: anyone else have any comments?

BJB2: would that poster become a cliché like the Indian with the tears down his face?

ClintonH: I don't know

BJB2 . o O (or am I dating myself)

BenJ: I think anything that becomes cliché

ClintonH: I don't believe in global warming

BenJ: means it has proven phenomenally effective

BenJ: otherwise how would we ALL know about it?

BJB2: interesting perspective, Ben

ClintonH: I do agree with that Ben

HilaryH: Clinton, so your intent might be to promote discussion of the facts about global warming?

HilaryH: good point, Ben

BJB2: so we've kind of discussed how you can use posters to promote discussion

ClintonH: yes Hilary or even global cooling

ClintonH: we could also have a discussion about climate

ClintonH: would a polar bear survive in a temperate climate

HilaryH: or the succession of ice ages (are we leaving one now?)

BJB2: and I think you can use a variety of kinds of posters to meet all the learning needs of the students...

BJB2: the posters would be like writing or discussion prompts

BenJ: some people are visual learners some aren't

BenJ: therefore what one kid understands with words, the other needs to see a pic

BJB2 agrees strongly with Ben's statement

BJB2: as an educator, you have to provide many different ways to view an idea

HilaryH: to what extent should we use posters to provide info, rather than promote discussion?

ClintonH: good question

BJB2: I think never, Hilary...unless you're using posters like you would a handout of information

BJB2: a poster can be an intro to a topic.

ClintonH: well as a scientist I do happen to put my information on posters and I have my students do it as well

HilaryH: what about highlighting, say, key words?

BenJ: a common figure

BenJ: we are all accustomed to

BenJ: but perhaps in different ways

BJB2: or, it could be a demonstration of learning...the students would make their own posters

BenJ: if you show a bus running out of gas, with three wheels and a cracked windshield

BenJ: some kids in the class might know what its like and they would say "I've been on shitty buses before"

ClintonH: lol

BenJ: others might have never used public transportation in their life, and they just see it as a broken bus and nothing more

HilaryH: definitely, Ben, personal experience can be a huge cue

BenJ: the more perspectives a poster touches, the better

BJB2: but it could be an introduction to a discussion on public transportation...

ClintonH: yeah

BenJ: its best to have personal experience-type picture, but which has ramifications for a whole big theme

BenJ: yes exactly

BenJ: what's the word

BenJ: microcosm

HilaryH: or the bus could be a metaphor for a concept

ClintonH: and also a historical perspective on public transportation as well

HilaryH: Clinton might use a factory to indicate a cell, for instance

HilaryH: (bad example, sorry, Clinton, lol)

ClintonH: but I think I will try that approach next year...posters as a way of introducing a lesson

BJB2: before we run out of time, here's another site...focuses on a culture as well as politics <http://www.art-for-a-change.com/Chicano/chicano.htm>

BJB2 . o O (and social issues)

HilaryH: this is definitely a series where personal experience/culture will affect your reaction (as Ben was discussing)

ClintonH: sure will

BJB2: posters can be used to introduce or spark discussions on history, science, social studies, and math

BJB2: posters have been markers of art movements, records of war, what else?

HilaryH: advertisements, of course

ClintonH: wars

BJB2: political commentary and YES, advertising. Thanks, Hilary

HilaryH: expressions of identity

BenJ: I think that last one is one we forget

BenJ: expressions of identity

BenJ: I see posters more as art

BenJ: and art does many many things

BenJ: spurs discussion

BenJ: contemplation

BJB2: what or who are we trying to identify?

BenJ: inspiration

ClintonH: fashion

HilaryH: what does being Chicano mean (for instance)

BenJ: it means being of Mexican origin but born here

BenJ: (as far as I know)

BJB2: culture then would be an identity

BJB2: nationality

ClintonH: true

BenJ: I have to go, nice talking with you guys.

BJB2 waves bye. Thanks for your input, Ben

BenJ left the room (signed off).

BJB2: our time is almost up. This certainly has been a vigorous discussion!

ClintonH: yes indeed

HilaryH: great chat, gang!

BJB2: I think we all have our own perspectives and viewpoints on what arts and literacy can mean ...and that's what I wanted you to take with you...our students are the same way

ClintonH: have a great night

LiaW: great - thank you!

BJB2: next Arts and Literacy discussion will be the first Monday of July

HilaryH: thanks, BJB

BJB2 waves bye