

Title of Session: Mesopotamia: This History, Our History
Moderator: Michael Hutchison and Wendy Ennes
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Room: Social Studies Forum Group

MichaelH: Welcome to tonight's second Social Studies forum...

MichaelH: tonight's guest is another SSF "Vet"... Wendy Ennis has a great resource that she'll share with us this evening called "Mesopotamia: This History, Our History"... an interactive site that is super cool....

MichaelH: I know many of us introduced ourselves during Donelle's session, but I wonder if we might do it again so Wendy will know who all is here... if that's ok with everyone?

MichaelH is a social studies teacher in southwestern Indiana who will be teaching about Mesopotamia in about four weeks

HeatherAB: Sure! I'm a Tech teacher in a rural Texas middle school

DeE: sure, Derya from Turkey, PhD student and EFL instructor

TerriA: I am a middle school science and math teacher

LoraAB: middle school math science and social studies teacher in NJ

WendyEnn: This is great

EmilieD: I'm an LD resource teacher - work collaboratively with world history and earth science in Virginia

WendyEnn: Thanks for introducing yourselves. Thanks for coming - My name is Wendy Ennes - I'm the Teacher Services and e-Learning Coordinator in the Museum Education Department at the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

DavidWe knows someone who curated an exhibit about Art and Medicine in Ancient Egypt

WendyEnn: Neat - who was that?

DavidWe: Retired physician, David Mininberg - did it at the Metropolitan Museum this past year

WendyEnn: Interesting stuff..well let me get started here It's great to have this opportunity to share our new resource called "Ancient Mesopotamia: This History, Our History," with all of you tonight. To visit this site you will need the latest browsers as well as Quicktime, Flash and Shockwave. If you don't have those plug-ins right now - that's O.K., as you can always come back to the site and check out the bells and whistles at a later date!

DavidWe . o O (3,700 papyrus scroll - a medical text - was the centerpiece)

WendyEnn: Click on this link to take you to our Museum Education site:
http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/ED/Museum_Ed.html

MichaelH reminds all that they can click on the link to open the resource, but they may have to disable pop up blockers

WendyEnn: Yes....hmmmm, the doors to the Institute

WendyEnn: From this point please click on the link to the Teacher Resource area or go to:

WendyEnn: http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/ED/TRC/trc_home.html

WendyEnn: At this moment in time, the Oriental Institute Museum Education website features in the Teacher Resource Center information on ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. By the end of this week we should be launching a link to ancient Nubia as well.

WendyEnn: Click on either of the links on this page to enter Ancient Mesopotamia: This History, Our History

WendyEnn: <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>

WendyEnn: You will need more recent browsers to access the site

WendyEnn: Ancient Mesopotamia: This History, Our History contains three main educator resources...

MichaelH checks to see if everyone can access the site ok

WendyEnn: 1. The Learning Collection, which is a collection of teacher-chosen artifacts from the Oriental Institute Museum's Mesopotamian Gallery.

WendyEnn: 2. An interactive entitled "Dig Into History."

WendyEnn: 3. An online course on ancient Mesopotamia that will be available to educators nationwide to take for graduate credit by January 2007. If anyone is interested

in hearing about the launch of the online course please email me at:
wennes@uchicago.edu

WendyEnn: I will keep you informed about the dates the course will be offered and the cost of the course.

WendyEnn: We created this online resource with federal financial support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the creativity and energy of our partners here at the University of Chicago and with the sound advice of educators and technology coordinators from the Chicago Public Schools. Teachers told us what they wanted and we tried to design all aspects of the resource to meet their criteria.

WendyEnn: Are there any questions before we move ahead to examine the resource?

DeE: no

HeatherAB: it looks fascinating, Wendy

WendyEnn: Thanks Heather. O.K. Let's go to the Learning Collection to see the many ways this resource can be used.

WendyEnn: On our home page you see the links to the different areas in the resource.

WendyEnn: Now let's go to the "Life in Mesopotamia" Section at:

WendyEnn: <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/mesopotamialife/index.php>

WendyEnn: This section contains summaries about various aspects of life and culture in Mesopotamia. For example click on Archaeology at:

WendyEnn:
<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/learningcollection/search.php?theme=Archaeology>

WendyEnn: All the artifacts that refer to Archaeology are pulled up out of the database

WendyEnn: The theme summary wasn't pulled up properly - but go to the link for "life in Mesopotamia" at the top of the page and click on Archaeology from there to see the summary

WendyEnn: Is everyone there?

TerriA: yes, thanks

LoraAB: yes

WendyEnn: Great!

DeE: yes

JohnLi: Very interesting.

WendyEnn: In this area you can also link to lesson plans

WendyEnn: In each section of "Life in Mesopotamia" we feature one artifact, give an overview of the content and a link to Lesson Plans...but you can also access specific artifacts relating to each theme the Learning Collection from these pages

WendyEnn: Now click on the Learning Collection link.

WendyEnn: <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/learningcollection/index.php>

JohnLi: I am definitely going to recommend this to my sixth grade colleagues. I think they'll find it interesting.

WendyEnn: Wonderful to hear....we love getting the word out about this resource!

WendyEnn: As you can see there are many ways to find artifacts in the Learning Collection. You can conduct a search or browse the artifacts in a myriad of ways. You can also do a search with your students via Visual Exploration using a facilitation technique called Visual Thinking Strategies or "VTS."

WendyEnn: Take a few minutes to explore the search and browse features.

WendyEnn: You can browse by Time Period, material, object type, name and even archaeological site.

WendyEnn: Does anyone have any questions?

TerriA: I love that this can be integrated into my math and science classes!

WendyEnn: Great Terri - we've tried to make it a cross-curricular resource. In the online course we feature a section on Mesopotamian mathematics

TerriA: That is wonderful...sounds like a great webquest activity

WendyEnn: Yep

WendyEnn: Should I move on or would you like a little more time?

HeatherAB: this is great, Wendy

WendyEnn: Thanks Heather - I hope it will be useful for you

WendyEnn: More information about how to use the resource and VTS can be found in the Teaching Materials section.

<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/teacherresources/index.php>

WendyEnn: You are also able to find lesson plans and National Council for the Social Studies standards in this area of the site.

DeE: Pls move on

WendyEnn: Finally, let's visit the interactive area of the site at

WendyEnn: <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/interactives/index.php>

WendyEnn: Here teachers and students can explore Mesopotamian culture by downloading a wide range of interactives from video clips to question and answer interactives.

WendyEnn: By the end of July we should have up on the site the "Dig Into History" interactive. This Flash interactive involves students in a game-like archaeological dig where they first choose a quest statement and then find artifacts to support their quest statement. They have the opportunity to catalogue the artifacts, just like archaeologists do in the field...they also encounter events and situations that can affect team happiness and their funding. Finally they curate their artifacts into a museum exhibit that supports the original quest statement they chose at the beginning of the game.

WendyEnn: Please just use this link for tonight's introduction to the site and around mid-August look for "Dig into History" on the main Mesopotamian web site. It should be up and running for everyone by then. This example of the interactive still has some problems.

WendyEnn: The link for the prototype (which is still being tested for bugs) is:

WendyEnn: <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/interactives/index.html>

WendyEnn: Let's take some time to play! Please feel free to ask questions at any time

JeffC: Pardon me for lurking... but what grades are these appropriate to (not having really looked yet)... and are there adaptations for different grades?

WendyEnn: This is most appropriate for sixth graders

WendyEnn: The science and inventions quest is a little more appropriate for high schoolers but the graphics speak to sixth graders the most

JeffC: OK... but with a little tweaking I'm guessing it would work for older and younger grades... just curious if there are articulated lesson plans that accompany it.

JeffC: Thanks Wendy.

WendyEnn: No articulated lesson plans yet. Teachers who take our online course will create lesson plans incorporating the Dig into History resource

WendyEnn: The Learning Collection can be used with grades 6 on up

JeffC: cool

MichaelH: will the lesson plans that teachers develop in the online course be available for download onsite, Wendy?

WendyEnn: Yes, that's our hope

WendyEnn: The goal is to have teachers create lessons that weave together a wide range of aspects of the resource

JeffC: <http://snipurl.com/mesopotamia>

JeffC: there are two lessons on Mesopotamia at the New York Times Learning Network.

WendyEnn: From interactives to hunting for artifacts to creating a virtual exhibit - students should have a lot of fun learning with this resource

JeffC: they might be worth looking at by your teachers.

WendyEnn: Sounds great. Is that the link you just posted?

WendyEnn: Got it!

JeffC: yes... it's a redirect

JeffC: When your teachers create those articulated lessons, I think it would be great if they could post a link back here, as well as submitting them to the NYT Lesson Plan site (the best lesson plan site imho).

WendyEnn: Sounds like a great idea

MichaelH: Wendy, I don't want to ask something you were going to mention later... but I wondered if you had information how teachers might sign up for the online course... deadline for it, what school it goes through, etc.?

MichaelH: . o O (tuition costs, materials, and so on)

DeE: thanks for asking Michael

WendyEnn: No deadlines yet. We're in the process of gathering the names of interested teachers and the cost is still to be determined

DeE: hmm how can we updated?

WendyEnn: We would like the University of Chicago to offer graduate credit but it must be approved by the faculty first

MichaelH: I imagine there are a lot of teachers out there who would love to take a course like that for recertification or professional development

WendyEnn: Please feel free to send me an email at : wennes@uchicago.edu

DeE: ok, thanks

WendyEnn: I'll put you on our mailing list and inform you once we know more

MichaelH: That's great, Wendy. You should also post to the NCSS list and others so that they know about the course

WendyEnn: If anyone ever comes to Chicago - try to visit our museum - there's some incredible stuff on view from ancient Persia, Israel, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Nubia

WendyEnn: Great suggestion to post to NCSS. I'll be presenting at the national conference in December

MichaelH: Wendy, are there plans to expand the online exhibit to other ancient civilizations (or have other exhibits)?

WendyEnn: I wish! We would need another grant and those plans aren't in the works at this moment in time

MichaelH: Well, this one is definitely cool!

WendyEnn: Thanks so much Michael!

HeatherAB: This is great, Wendy. Thank you!

WendyEnn: It's getting to be that time....are there anymore thoughts or questions before we sign off?

MichaelH: Wendy, one other thing... I don't really have the background in ancient history, but let's say someone just wants to submit a lesson plan for inclusion on the site. Could they?

WendyEnn: Absolutely! That would be most welcome!

DeE: great to hear that

DeE waves

DeE: thanks

WendyEnn: Ideally we would like lessons to include facets of the resource

MichaelH: absolutely!

WendyEnn: Thanks for coming everyone!

HeatherAB: This is something my social studies teachers will love.

WendyEnn: good to hear - please spread the word!

MichaelH: I think you'll get a lot of people checking out the site based on the positive comments you heard tonight!

WendyEnn: Oh yes! ICSS - I would love to do it and didn't get back to you about the proposal process. I've been swamped

MichaelH: it's ok, we probably have till mid September. I'll check the site again and e-mail you.

MichaelH . o O (mid-September if you want to submit a proposal for a session)

WendyEnn: Thanks for being so patient !

DavidWe: Wendy, here's a link to the book that went with that show on art/medicine in Egypt:

DavidWe: <http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/book.asp?isbn=0300107285>

WendyEnn: Thanks David - I'll check it out

MichaelH: And, we'll be looking forward to seeing the rest of the site up and running in a few weeks

DavidWe: Thanks for leading the discussion, Wendy

WendyEnn: You bet!

WendyEnn: Bye everyone!

MichaelH: Thank you so much Wendy... I appreciate you coming back for another session with us!

BJB2: Thanks, Wendy and Michael!

MichaelH: Oh, yes, I want to thank everyone who attended sessions here tonight... we have regular Social Studies forum sessions on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month

MichaelH: at 8 p.m. Eastern.

MichaelH: We'd love to see you at some of those, too