

Title of Session: The Big6
Moderator: Ferdi Serim
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Room: Arcade Conference Room

FerdiS: Shall we begin?

FerdiS: First, now that we know where we're physically located, can you tell me how you are professionally located (what do you do, and where, and for whom?)

CarolFH: Elementary school teacher-librarian!

FerdiS: Great Carol! do you use the Big6?

BJ: Art teacher in PA for a residential male juvenile correctional facility.

FerdiS: I'm a music teacher in an elementary school in Santa Fe

CarolFH: I love the Big6! I'm implementing it with 3rd, 4th, and 6th.

SusanR: I am a K to 8 Occasional Teacher; formerly spent most of my teaching career in the primary grades, a short stint as an Educational Technology Integrator..and now dabbling with grade 7 and 8 students and special education students mostly

FerdiS: Thanks Susan, I remember that now ;->

GwendolynG joined the room.

FerdiS: Luckily, I think the topic I'd like to explore will work for all of us

BJ: Welcome, Gwendolyn. We're just finishing up introductions

FerdiS: Yes, Gwendolyn, please tell us where you are and what you do

GwendolynG: I'm from Lawson, MO, and I teach high school French.

FerdiS: fantastique!

GwendolynG: merci

FerdiS: So here is the common thread I hope to weave through our work: we could be doing a much more effective job of reaching all learners if we considered how 21st century skills go hand in hand with effective learning (and I mean for *all* learners)

FerdiS: So for the moment, let's not distract ourselves from what we mean by student achievement...I think we can define it more broadly than is being done under alphabet soup (AYP, NCLB, CYA)

FerdiS: So first, let me ask you about your familiarity with 21st century skills, as they've been recently defined

FerdiS: would a brief tour help?

CarolFH: Yes, more information is great!

SusanR: absolutely

GwendolynG: Yes, please

FerdiS: OK, I have a series of six graphics I'm going to show you, by copying and pasting the url here....click on it and we'll discuss....the first concerns the core subjects:

<http://oii.org/ferdi/21stCLearningCore.gif>

BJ: everyone get the link?

GwendolynG: yes

CarolFH: yes

FerdiS: These definitions are by the Partnership for 21st century skills. Most of us in schools are already familiar with this aspect. The orange shaded boxes are what is currently being tested under NCLB...but all of them are slated for assessment

FerdiS: Let's see the next: 21st century learning skills:

<http://oii.org/ferdi/21stCLearningSkills.gif>

FerdiS: Gee, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore, do you?

FerdiS: All of us here use these skills all the time (or we wouldn't be here, eh?)

FerdiS: But our students, even if they are online more at home than at school, are left to chance in terms of developing these key areas

FerdiS: Comments? questions? arguments?

FerdiS: Or would you like me to continue?

LoriCou: Continue please

CarolFH: Please continue

SusanR: continue

GwendolynG: continue

FerdiS: OK, these learning skills require using 21c tools:

<http://oii.org/ferdi/21stCLearningTools.gif>

FerdiS: Again, this is not terribly ground breaking....hold on to your seats for the next three

FerdiS: We know that these tools only deliver on their promise when used in context.

Here is a view of what 21c context includes: <http://oii.org/ferdi/21stCLearningContext.gif>

FerdiS: Again, these concepts are only extensions of good teaching, whether or not one uses technology. I believe one can not succeed without good teaching: technology makes good teaching even more essential to good learning

FerdiS: Another shock for people is 21st century content. These items are what employers and policy makers tell us people will need for success in school, life and work (sounds like the Big6, eh?) <http://oii.org/ferdi/21stCLearningContent.gif>

FerdiS: With global awareness, maybe we will stop calling French and others "foreign languages"

LoriCou: But, what about the basics. Kids need to know how to read and write first.

FerdiS: with financial, economic and business literacy, maybe we'll have greater accountability for how public and private funds are spent?

FerdiS: Lori, that's why we started with Core Subjects (the first slide)

FerdiS: But they are only the starting point, not the finish line

LoriCou: So, you're not saying replace the first slide's contents, just add to it?

FerdiS: If we are to design for success for all children, we need to find ways to make sure that we do some of these other things during the 160-180 days we see kids each year

FerdiS: Let me make an analogy: I heard it said "there is no way to peace. instead peace is the way"

FerdiS: We don't get to 21st century skills using the ways that have so far not succeeded in bringing us 19th century skills

FerdiS: that's where the Big6 comes in

FerdiS: Please let me give the last slide, then we'll be able to move into greater depth with our conversation, OK?

LoriCou: OK

FerdiS: Here's the whole bloomin' thing...you'll have to scroll to the right to see assessment: <http://oii.org/ferdi/21stCenturyLearning.gif>

FerdiS: Can we agree that this is all a lot to swallow, that it is not likely to happen anytime soon without a major shift in priorities and behaviors?

FerdiS: (like maybe in time for 22nd century skills?)

CarolFH: It's overwhelming!

FerdiS: Would you like to see how I'm trying to do this in my music class? I have a url I can share

GwendolynG: yes, please

CarolFH: please ,do

FerdiS: OK, you know I'm a music teacher....I took this gig for two reasons

FerdiS: first, I love music

FerdiS: second when I tried teaching 21st century skills as a computer teacher, I didn't get to see all the kids on a regular basis. Now I'm a "prep" so I see all 430 each week

FerdiS: Being somewhat subversive and a little creative too, I mixed it up as you'll see on this page: <http://oii.org/ferdi/Big6Music.html>

FerdiS: You may want to bookmark it and come back to it when you have more time, if you're interested. I'd like to point out a couple features that may help you connect these ideas to your work

FerdiS: If you substitute "Media Research" for "Music Performance" you can do most of these in any subject area

FerdiS: Contemporary Literacy = 21st Century skills, because we're using technology to create (or as we'd say in Big6, for synthesis)

FerdiS: If you click on the Big6 icons, you'll see a series of inspiration maps that show what the questions are for both sides of the equation

FerdiS: This certainly could work for Art...having students illustrate a story, and pick a soundtrack to go under it. We've used projects like this to have students create a "virtual holiday" in France (and they had to figure out budget, currency conversion, travel and lodging...in grades 6 to 8)

FerdiS: Questions, comments, reactions? (in other words, your turn ;->)

LoriCou: can you give some more examples of ways to use the Big 6 in other curricular areas?

FerdiS: Sure, how about you provide a scenario...that may make it more meaningful.....what area and age level are you teaching now?

LoriCou: I'm a K-5 librarian. My past classroom teaching experience most recently was in 4th and 5th grades.

FerdiS: OK, so for the classroom teacher with whom you work most closely, what's being studied now or next? pick a focus, please

LoriCou: 4th grade - Economics

FerdiS: Cool. Depending on how deep you want to go, let's think about a hypothetical invention and its effect on the economics of our daily life

LoriCou: ok

FerdiS: I just read that scientists at Los Alamos discovered a way to double or triple the effectiveness of solar collectors for producing electricity. We're only a few years away from not needing oil anymore

FerdiS: what is the effect on: the price of gas? the price of food? the price of heating and powering our homes, schools and offices

LoriCou: Huge

FerdiS: Determining what it is becomes our task definition

GwendolynG: How would you state it?

FerdiS: Now, having the kids brainstorm which aspects they'd like to tackle offers them opportunities to develop Task Definition skills themselves, but it's OK to do it for them if they're just learning the Big6

LoriCou: example please

FerdiS: I would try to state the Task in a way that is compelling and relevant to their lives. So I might create a scenario: our school has been asked by the state legislature to evaluate the effects on local communities if the new solar collectors become available by the time they are graduating high school. They are to make a presentation to their local legislators suggesting policies that maximize the positive economic effects and minimize economic disruptions if this new technology proves its worth

FerdiS: How's that?

FerdiS: In real life, it would be great to do this before a live audience of community members, and perhaps even broadcast it over local access cable

LoriCou: This sounds similar to the introduction in a WebQuest.

FerdiS: Information Seeking Strategies could be brainstormed too...yes, webquests are examples of problem solving activities that are information based, and so are completely compatible with Big6

FerdiS: They do all the work they just call it by different names

FerdiS: Location and Access are big issues for kids doing Internet Research, as is Use of Information (extracting relevant, accurate data)

FerdiS: Synthesis is the hardest part for students, and it gets harder as they progress through the grades. It's been said that the biggest reason for the decline in NAEP scores has to do with the increasing importance synthesis plays in answering more sophisticated questions and tasks

FerdiS: Finally, Evaluation gives both us and our students the opportunity to "learn from what we're learning" by knowing if our product is good and our process is efficient, and if we'd do things differently next time in order to do them better

FerdiS: Right now, we're teaching an online course in the Big6 for the University of Washington, and I'm amazed by the projects educators are coming up with over the course of the 10 week session. You can start any time you want to (rolling admission)

FerdiS: I'll see if I can dig up the url....

JeffC: <http://www.outreach.washington.edu/dl/courses/EDCI494TA/>

JeffC: how about that one?

FerdiS: Thanks! you beat me to it!

FerdiS: Also, let me share the url for online resources gathered for my book "Information Technology for Learning: No School Left Behind" <http://www.oii.org/IT4L/>

FerdiS: The resources for I&T Teams is at: <http://www.oii.org/IT4L/chap5.htm>

MichaelHo joined the room.

BJ: Hi, Michael. Welcome

MichaelHo: Hi BJ...just looking around. Hope I didn't interrupt an event.

BJ: you missed a terrific discussion, Michael

FerdiS: I hope this session has provoked some new ways of thinking about the daunting challenge of providing our students with the skills they'll need for success in school, life and work, now that we're already into the 21st century

FerdiS: yes, but there will be transcripts, Michael ;->

LoriCou: Thanks!

GwendolynG: thanks

FerdiS: I've found that the Big6 allows me to get past "overwhelm" and work more effectively with others, building teams so we can share the weight instead of the wait

CarolFH: I'd like to learn more about the 21st c assessments you indicated on your slide.

FerdiS: So would we all...they don't yet exist!

FerdiS: But I'm working on some right now, using online, collaborative relational databases

BJ: Ferdi, your next discussion is May18, right?

FerdiS: You can learn more about that at the ICT Literacy website www.ictliteracy.info

BJ . o O (maybe you'll have some of that ready by then)

CarolFH: Sounds like a great Big 6 Task Definition in the works!

FerdiS: well my next discussion is there on April 27. I'll have to let you know about May 18, it's right before my anniversary and I hope to be celebrating!

FerdiS: Thank you all for coming! See you soon online!

BJ: thanks, Ferdi. Please email me about May 18. I need to get the calendar done

CarolFH: Thanks for taking the time to educate us. I'll be joining the UofW Big 6 class soon.

SusanR: Thanks Ferdi. Lots to peruse and reflect upon.

FerdiS: We all learn together...thanks for coming!

BJ waves goodnight. Enjoy your dinner, Ferdi

SusanR: I plan to use The Super 3 with special education students

FerdiS: excellent! thanks for mentioning that!

FerdiS: bye!