

**Title of Session:** WebTools - MaMaMedia

**Moderator:** Pam Berger

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Room: After School Online Room

**BJB2:** We'll wait a couple minutes before we start, Pam

**BJB2:** then we can start with introductions, ok?

**PamB:** sure

**BJB2:** Pam, Margaret is a new TI member and is a librarian

**PamB:** I'm Pam Berger, a library/technology consultant from New York

**BJB2:** I showed her your [www.infosearcher.com](http://www.infosearcher.com) page

**PamB:** Cool, what kind of a librarian? school?

**MargaretTK:** Great! A sister librarian.

**PamB:** You're so wonderful, BJ

**MonicaG** joined the room.

**BJB2:** Hi, Monica. Welcome

**MonicaG:** Hello, BJB, longtime...

**MargaretTK:** I'm a school librarian for our SPED Dept. district-wide.

**BJB2:** we will be starting in a minute or so

**PamB:** Yup! what grades do you work with?

**PamB:** Hi Monica

**MargaretTK:** PrK-12

**MonicaG:** Hi, I'm currently between positions, moving back to the US from Australia... maybe in San Francisco in a couple of months

**PamB:** Great city.

**MonicaG:** Worked Pre-year(; some tertiary and other various things... last was working in a public library. Waves to Margaret

**PamB:** Well let's get started.

**BJB2** . o O ( you might want to give your web tools group a plug )

**BJB2:** Welcome to tonight's WebTools discussion. Pam Berger is our discussion leader.

**PamB:** Tonight, I wanted to show you a great website for kids....ages 13 and under

**PamB:** Are you familiar with MaMaMedia?

**BJB2** shakes her head no

**MonicaG:** I've heard it, but it was awhile ago.

**PamB:** The site offers digital tools kids can use to create their own stories, plays, artwork, inventions and characters. Launched in 1996 as an MIT Media Lab spin-off by Dr. Idit Harel, it's based on the principles of constructivism which holds that children learn best when they're actively engaged in building--or constructing--something they care about. In addition, the theory contends that kids are motivated by sharing their creations with others.

**PamB:** There are over 100 replayable activities and 2,000 evaluated websites...

**PamB:** They have over 5 million registered members and I can understand why.

**BJB2:** wow! that is a lot of members!

**PamB:** Isn't that amazing!

**PamB:** They have a special section of grownups....

**PamB:** Teachers section with around 20 articles and lesson plans...

**PamB:** and one for parents with activities they can do with their kids.

**PamB:** The founder explains the site by saying that kids need to do three things...

**PamB:** explore, express and exchange...

**PamB:** to learn the necessary skills in the digital age...

**PamB:** The first X, eXploring, takes advantage of kids' natural passion for learning and discovery. We all know that you have to give children an open, safe place in which to explore, whether that's a playroom filled with building blocks, or butcher paper spread on a kitchen wall for coloring. In this open space, it's not so much what your child makes as it is that she is in the driver's seat of her own learning experience

**MonicaG:** and with a part for parents and kids... sounds like it will help with some multigenerational catch up <grin>

**PamB:** Second is eXpressing, or learning how to use a vast palette of tools to become designers, builders and architects of your own ideas

**PamB:** The third X, eXchanging, is the sharing of ideas with others

**PamB:** Why don't you go to the site and look around the four sections: Surprise, Zap, Buzz and Romp and then....

**PamB:** come back and we can share our impressions...

**PamB:** The URL is <http://www.mamamedia.com>

**PamB:** let's come back 15 minutes or earlier...I'll be here.

**PamB:** If you click on the url another window should open

**PamB:** OK?

**BJB2:** Margaret and Paddy, you might want to look at that url later

**PaddyG:** yep

**BJB2** . o O ( might be too many java windows open )

**BJB2** . o O ( they have e-hugs )

**BJB2:** did you get to see the site, Monica?

**MonicaG:** Yep

**MargaretTK:** I click on MaMaMedia site map, and everything goes away.

**PamB:** What did you think?

**MonicaG:** when I clicked it put it in another window for me

**PaddyG:** I saw the front page

**MonicaG:** I just looked at the various things available in each of the areas you said....

**BJB2:** Margaret, the url will be in your transcript so you can look at the site later

**MonicaG:** Definitely is something that needs further exploration as far as time goes. Do you have to "join" to try out games and things?

**PamB:** No, but to save your stories or pictures, etc, you have to join.

**PamB:** they ask very little info and it's easy to join. I did...

**PamB:** and then I got to personalize my opening page. it was fun.

**MonicaG:** so I'll probably try it later, saw some things to try out with my son.

**PamB:** I have been exploring the site for days and i keep finding new games and activities

**BJB2:** would a site like that be blocked at a school, Pam?

**PamB:** I got hooked on Flipsticks...

**PamB:** little stick people you can program to dance.

**PamB:** it actually is the beginning of programming.

**MonicaG:** BJB, thinking it might have to be "approved" at some of the schools I've worked at but it probably would be readily down.

**BJB2** chuckles. Was this in the adult section, Pam?

**PamB:** No, BJ the kids section...I program them to the Irish jig...or sort of.

**BJB2** nods solemnly to Pam

**PamB:** I like the polls this site has for kids...they treat kids with respect.

**BJB2:** what age range is this site for, Pam?

**PamB:** Did anyone go into the Teachers and look at the lesson plans?

**PamB:** It's for 13 and under

**BJB2:** thanks. You did mention that. Sorry

**MargaretTK:** May need to leave y'all. My FireFox loving child had to send his laptop to be fixed. I'll try MaMaMedia after I log off. My "baby" is still off of school til next week. He's in his second year of electrical engineering

**PamB:** I wrote a story, created an invention, and had great fun exploring BLUE words in Party which is in the Romp section

**ChrisJ:** Just browsing thru MaMaMedia for the first time.

**BJB2:** I went to the grown ups section and was distracted by the e-hugs

**PamB:** Me too, I sent one to my 30 year old son - he loved it!

**PamB:** The site really follows what it says it is trying to do, teach using a constructivist approach...

**BJB2 . o O** ( the one about the clean room, Pam? )

**PamB:** I think that's very impressive --it's very difficult.

**PamB:** BJ did you know about the standing joke my son and I have about cleaning his room?

**MonicaG:** standing room only?

**PamB:** I always asked him to clean his room when he was a teenager-- I tried everything- but totally failed. Nobody saw the rug in his room for years....

**BJB2 . o O** ( this story sounds very familiar )

**PamB:** two years ago he was fixing my laptop and started to give me a lecture about cleaning up my "desktop" - We all laughed!

**BJB2** chuckles. They warn us about one day sounding like our moms

**PamB:** It freaked him out- we had reversed roles...I loved it!

**PamB:** ....my desktop is still messy and it drives him crazy.

**PamB:** Back to Mamamedia...

**BJB2 . o O** ( paybacks. Insanity is hereditary...you get it from your children )

**PamB:** Chris what do you think?

**PamB:** Does anyone have any questions or suggestions on how to use mamamedia with kids?

**ChrisJ:** I'm on a 56 K connection, and I've been looking through some of the information about Egypt.

**ChrisJ:** It's pretty fascinating.

**PamB:** in the parents' section?

**ChrisJ:** I'm not sure of the name of the section. "Romp" maybe from the main page.

**ChrisJ:** I'm not sure what you were looking at when I came in, so I just took off in a direction that interested me.

**MonicaG:** There seems to be a lot of stuff here, I'd think it would be useful for kids to explore on their own and then "report back" exploring and expressing <grin>

**MonicaG:** I think it wouldn't be as good for some "page" work unless it was decided ahead of time by the students themselves... would hate something so interesting to become drudgery

**ChrisJ:** I went to My Planet - Romp, and then chose Egypt.

**PamB:** My Planet has a few different countries...really interesting and supports the curriculum

**ChrisJ:** You could do a treasure hunt. Ask children to find specific information about a geographical area. Who could guess that I'm interested in travel?

**MonicaG:** Like the old "cybersurfari"?

**PamB:** Under Romp , look at Party and then choose a word.

**PamB:** this is such a clever way to explore words.

**PamB:** The Shell Party is very funny.

**PamB:** pie shell, clam shell, music shell, nut shell...

**ChrisJ:** We're looking at <http://www.mamamedia.com/>

**PamB:** it encourages kids to think out of the box and explore words

**MonicaG:** And will allow for the "pun" type of sense of humour to live on

**PamB:** exactly

**PamB:** it reminds me of the book published last year...

**PamB:** The Diary of a Worm

**MonicaG:** I can imagine using this website might be a good multi-age/grade activity as well...

**PamB:** 7 year old sense of humor---Loved it!

**PamB:** I agree, Monica.

**PamB:** Well it's time to say goodbye...

**MonicaG:** Thanks Pam

**PamB:** thanks for joining me

**PamB:** Come back next month

**ChantaratP:** bye everyone

**PamB:** Feb 10 at 7pm

**ChrisJ:** Thanks. This was an interesting site to explore.

**ChrisJ:** Bye!

**BJB2** hugs Pam goodnight



**BJB2:** thanks for a great discussion, Pam