

Title of Session: Frazel Features-We Gather Together: Thanksgiving in the Classroom

Moderator: Midge Frazel

Title of File: 20061113frazelthanksgiving

Date: November 13, 2006

Room: After School Online

JenniferSa: Hi, Midge This is my first Tapped In session. I'm looking forward to this.

MidgeF: Well, Tapped In is a lot of fun. I'm in Massachusetts and I see you in the South

BJB2: how did you find out about this discussion, Jennifer?

JenniferSa: I am taking an educational technology class at McNeese State University. One of our assignments was to attend a Tapped In session. I choose this one from the calendar.

BJB2: cool, Jennifer!

BJB2: we'll start with a couple tips to help you follow the discussion...

BJB2: and then we'll do introductions (brief)

BJB2: then Midge will do her thing

JenniferSa: sounds great!

MidgeF: You can read my blog entry for today while you wait, Jennifer

MidgeF: <http://midgefrazel.net/blog/>

BJB2: nice, Midge. Thanks

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler - one of the HelpDesk volunteers and I lead a math education discussion. I'm in New Jersey about 15 miles form New York City

BJB2 smiles...and David has just started our introductions!

BJB2: please tell Midge where you are located, what you teach, and what brings you to the discussion

MidgeF: I'm Midge Frazel, born in Rhode Island, living in MA, land of the Pilgrims

LinhN: Hello everyone, my name is Linh and I am a student teacher in Houston, Texas

BJB2: I'm a communications teacher in Pennsylvania.

JenniferSa: Hello. My name is Jennifer. I teach second grade in Lake Charles, LA

BJB2: Midge, I know you've been working all day on this presentation...

MidgeF: This is an informal session (you may relax and take off your shoes).

BJB2: and have a lot of material to share. So, are you ready to start?

LinhN: I'm ready to learn!

MidgeF: Yes, I have because I have gathered together a lot of information over the years

JenniferSa: I'm ready too!

MidgeF: about this topic of great interest to everyone who has learned about the people we call the Pilgrims

MidgeF: When I taught this in a workshop setting I had standing room only

MidgeF: You would think that teachers in Massachusetts would know everything about this topic

MidgeF: I was surprised to learn everything I learned in school, myself, was not really the right story

DavidWe . o O (standing room only is good)

MidgeF: This is the shock of being the teacher. You think that you learned the right things yourself

MidgeF: and then you start to realize that in the olden days we teach from textbooks.

MidgeF: History is especially interesting to discover new ideas being brought to the front because of the communication

MidgeF: of the Internet

BJB2 agrees!

MidgeF: I am a triple Mayflower descendant.

BJB2: wow!

LinhN: how interesting

MidgeF: At Thanksgiving, my grandparents told me that they were BOTH descended from Pilgrims.

KristiF: That would be interesting to bring into the classroom.

MidgeF: I thought that was nuts

LinhN laughs

MidgeF: and a big, fat, boring thing grownups said

MidgeF: But, I have researched what they said and they were right.

MidgeF: I am descended from George Soule, John Howland and John Alden

BJB2: how do you research the ancestry?

KristiF: Is that something that we could have students do?

KristiF: We've been talking about ancestors.

MidgeF: I have done almost all my genealogy by using the Internet

LinhN: what a great tool the internet is

MidgeF: That's a good topic for another session as I have written a book about connecting this to the classroom.

KristiF: ok.

LinhN: may I ask for the name of your book?

MidgeF: But, for today, I wanted to tell you that so you will know that kids think this is a big, boring topic

MidgeF: I have written eight books. (Snapping my suspenders with great importance!)

BJB2 chuckles. Thanks for the reminder, Midge, about what kids think is boring

LinhN: wow!

MidgeF: I will have you go to my bookshelf for that in a second.

MidgeF: So, let's go to my blog and read about Thanksgiving to start...

MidgeF: <http://midgefrazel.net/blog/>

MidgeF: Just let me know when you are back

MidgeF: (They are reading my big, boring blog)

KristiF: I'm back

BJB2: lots of information!

MidgeF: Thanks for reading that.

MidgeF: The newest tool for teacher communication is the Web 2.0 blog

LinhN: I'm also back

JenniferSa: I'm back also

MidgeF: Now, as a person with this background (and immigrant ancestors on my other grandparents), I decided to learn about this topic

MidgeF: So, I wrote a Web project with the title of Giving Thanks

MidgeF: <http://www.midgefrazel.net/wqthanks.html>

MidgeF: It has grown enormously since I added in more each year

MidgeF: Things have gone from simple coloring pages to primary source material.

MidgeF: It will take you forever to get done with all of it.

BJB2: what a valuable resource! Thanks

MidgeF: There is so much to consider with what we can teach in 2 and one half days

MidgeF: I personally feel that it is important to remember only a few points

MidgeF: The people we call Pilgrims never expected to be thought of this long. They were special in that they were compelled to go toward freedom

MidgeF: Just as immigrants are today

MidgeF: I know that all of you are stunned by all the links

MidgeF: To teach this topic it is important to remember that the Native Americans are trying hard to give the right point of view for their ancestry too.

MidgeF: And students should be exposed to learning that they do not all agree with what we learn in school

MidgeF: So, many teachers do not teach about this topic and end up using simple handouts and just cover the family, food and football of today

LinhN agrees

MidgeF: It is important to teach students that the Mayflower Compact is one of the basic cornerstones of our Constitution

MidgeF: But, the Internet can give us so many other things to cover

MidgeF: Take the Rock.....

SusanR listens

MidgeF: Jean Fritz wrote a very cool, and historically accurate book for kids that you must read

MidgeF: Who's that stepping on Plymouth Rock

MidgeF: It makes a great point about distinguishing fact from fiction

MidgeF: I love the Rock. It is so misunderstood

MidgeF: People still argue about its place in history but it is just a rock and just one of our symbols of freedom

MidgeF: Everyone who comes here wants to see the Mayflower II and Plimoth Plantation and I recommend that.

MidgeF: But, we must teach students important things like learning to respect other cultures

MidgeF: and to be thankful and to say thanks for what we have

MidgeF: I will let some of you ask questions now

BJB2: have you compared our Thanksgiving with the ways in which other cultures give thanks?

BJB2: . o O (or celebrate a harvest?)

MidgeF: Mostly giving thanks in other cultures involves religion

MidgeF: which is separate from the harvest

MidgeF: First of all, the 1621 harvest was probably in Sept. It is freezing on the hill in Plymouth right now

BJB2 nods

MidgeF: I think it is hard for teachers to get students to understand about being happy with what they have in our commercial and computerized world

SusanR . o O (Canadian and American Thanksgiving can be compared!)

LinhN agrees

MidgeF: Respect and thanks should start at home

MidgeF: Canada does have Thanksgiving in October when we have Columbus Day

MidgeF: The native people gave thanks with each harvest and with each hunting (and still do)

MidgeF: The curator of the Pilgrim Hall museum and I have become friends but just met face to face this past weekend.

BJB2 . o O (btw, there is an American Indian Studies discussion on Friday on the topic of Thanksgiving)

MidgeF: They actually have items that belonged to the Pilgrims (really called Forefathers)

MidgeF: This is Native American month

BJB2 nods to Midge

MidgeF: The Wamponaug Indians protest at the rock yearly. It is a basic American right of free speech

BJB2: what do they protest?

LinhN: good question BJ

MidgeF: Which is another lesson teachers can give based on this time of year between Constitution Day and now

MidgeF: The native people call Thanksgiving a Day of Mourning

BJB2: how sad!

MidgeF: They resent that they have been robbed of their culture and the real fact that we murdered them and took their land

LinhN: I see

MidgeF: I have read a lot about this and not all of them agree but it is a fact that we took from them more than we gave back

BJB2 nods

MidgeF: That's why they are a large part of the reenactments at the Plimoth Plantation

MidgeF: It is hard to remember that those who came here were very scared of the Indians and learned that from the settlers at Jamestown

MidgeF: I think you should watch The History Channel's program on Sunday called Desperate Crossing

MidgeF: It's linked to my main page

MidgeF: <http://www.midgefrazel.net>

MidgeF: Now, I will tell you that if you go to that page you can find my "bookshelf" of book titles

MidgeF: The book asked about is called Links to the Past and is about using the concepts of genealogy in the classroom

MidgeF: How are all of you doing out there? What resources did you look at that you liked?

BJB2: I liked the webquest

LinhN: I liked webquest also

JenniferSa: I liked the webquest, too.

MidgeF: Thanks. What many people like is the small Web presentation about the Rock (for younger students)

BJB2: I do a lot with symbols in my communication class

SusanR: I liked the scholastic site

MidgeF: Each day for the next week and week after that..I get over 2, 000 visits a day to my Web site. So, this is something of interest to teachers.

MidgeF: I was pleased that Scholastic put up good and appealing information for teachers

SusanR: o O (a good basis for comparison)

MidgeF: All of what I have put there is a bit overwhelming at first. There are also very good books for students made by taking photos at the Plantation

MidgeF: I also love the Pilgrims at Plimoth by Sewell

MidgeF: a classic and readable piece.

MidgeF: Remember, this is part of the history in my state but is mostly covered at third grade

MidgeF: The Mayflower Descendants (the National Society) and the Pilgrim Hall Museum have teamed up to write a curriculum called the Pilgrims and the Fur Trade

BJB2: two days in third grade is it?

MidgeF: It's a bit different and not restricted to this time of year

MidgeF: Yes, one thing to remember is that each state has standards which do not necessarily match the national standards

BJB2 nods

MidgeF: When I write I must follow National Standards but that doesn't help teachers apply the goals to their state standards

BJB2: Texas probably focuses more on the Alamo, for example

LinhN: yes

MidgeF: Yes, and California the settlement of the West

SusanR: What do you think of Wikipedia's coverage of Thanksgiving, Midge?

MidgeF: Alaska covers the Iditarod

MidgeF: Wikipedia is good for some topics and not for others

SusanR: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving>

MidgeF: I worry like librarians about being able to find the source of the information

MidgeF: I actually looked at that today as I know so many teachers are using Wikipedia for everything

SusanR: . o O (gives you a broad overview)

MidgeF: I think that teachers must decide on a piece of this to teach from the perspective of their own state

MidgeF: Some teachers liked the myth of the rock

MidgeF: Some teachers like to learn about the lives of the Pilgrims

MidgeF: Some teachers cover only the two primary sources

MidgeF: One teacher loved teaching about what they ate in the fall

MidgeF: That's why you must decide....

MidgeF: When you gather together

MidgeF: OK I am done. Please feel free to email me with ideas or comments

LinhN: thanks for the presentation

BJB2: thanks so much for a very interesting discussion, Midge!

LinhN: I've learned a lot

JenniferSa: Thanks Midge. This has been very informative and interesting.

MidgeF: You're welcome (and so my ancestors say, Thanks)

RebeccaSe: Very Interesting

MidgeF: You may go in peace and think about being thankful for what you have.