

Title of Session: Frazel Features: Thanksgiving, Pilgrims, and the Rock

Moderator: Midge Frazel

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MidgeF: People will hop in and out of the room so don't worry if you have to interrupt me. I talk a lot.

MidgeF: OK, Here goes....

MidgeF: Each year during this week, a strange thing happens to me. I like to call it the Pilgrim Madness and it is because of two things? technology and my ancestors. Alden, Howland, Soule, Brewster and Billington

MidgeF: Those are the First Comers or Pilgrims that I am descended from.

MidgeF: Most New Englanders who live here can claim one or two so I am not special.

MidgeF: You should read Nathaniel Philbrick's book Mayflower. It is a good read

MidgeF: In 1999, I bought my first digital camera and went to nearby Plymouth on a warm summer day to practice using it. The camera saved the photos to a floppy disk and yes, it still works but I have owned two more cameras since then. I was amazed at the difference having a digital camera makes!

MidgeF: I created a workshop for teachers I called "Giving Thanks" and used the photos to make a kind of Web slide show. It was standing room only. I had to turn people away. Who knew Pilgrims could be so popular!

MidgeF: They would have been embarrassed to know all this fuss for such religious people

MidgeF: But, they were lucky to have lived. 50% of them died the first winter

MidgeF: Since then, my service provider gives me stats on who visits my Web pages, which ones they look at and which country they live in. Last year, 22, 000 people visited my Web site on this the full week of school before Thanksgiving! I would estimate that I will surpass this mark this year.

MidgeF: Isn't that amazing?

MariadungT: yes!

SusanR: wow!

ElissaM: That's great. It is a great resource!

MidgeF: It is hard not to sit all day and watch!

KaraLM: haha! I bet you feel really proud

MidgeF: I am lucky that Kathy Schrock told them never to charge me for the extra bandwidth

MidgeF: Teaching about this time period is a lot harder than it looks and is filled with legends, misconceptions and arguments. This makes great classroom ideas for critical thinking BUT?

MidgeF: It seems most of the teaching about this time period begins at the very lowest grades where well meaning teachers use the days next week to tell the children about the people who were here first, "The Indians" and the people who came here, "The Pilgrims" and had together a big feast we call Thanksgiving. The materials they use to do this are outdated and simplistic. It's the only real fact I can be sure of.

MidgeF: I deleted much of the non essential materials this year.

MidgeF: So, what should be taught? It's hard to say, in today's politically correct world. Let me take you to that slide show that I made in 1999 and let you take a look. Let me know you've looked at it by typing 'Back' when you are done, OK?

MidgeF: <http://www.MidgeFrazel.net/rockslid1.html>

MidgeF: I will sing the Plymouth Rock Galop while you are gone

MidgeF: Gobble..Gobble..

ElissaM: Back

MidgeF: By the way, there really is a Plymouth Rock Galop

MidgeF: Library of Congress sheet music

NaomiAR: Back

DevetteG: I'm back

ElissaM: What an interesting slide show. I really liked the links throughout the slide show. The pictures are great!

MidgeF: Wow, Naomi read fast...must be an English teacher.

NaomiAR: Yes I am!

MariadungT: back

DevetteG: I agree with Elissa great slide show.

MidgeF: I am glad you liked it. I designed it to look like a little book.

KaraLM: back

MariadungT: yes. I agree. links and pictures were great!

MidgeF: One teacher in West Virginia said his kids loved it and they will most likely never see my Rock.

NaomiAR: It was very readable...I'm teaching freshman reading classes right now, and that's sooo important for kids who are such visual learners these days

KaraLM: This is awesome!! I did not know a lot of the facts you included

MidgeF: Me either...the first book I read had the WRONG facts!!!!

MidgeF: They did not do their research...

MidgeF: From this point I began to gather links to Web sites that would help teachers with the history of the Plymouth area and to manage the vast amount of information that concerns this topic. I created a very short WebQuest and I made a whole unit for one of the classes for my Masters. I have linked them together into one area. To use these resources, you only have to go to one place. One page is for teachers to use to learn about the history and the second page is filled with materials that can be used in the classroom. I'll give you the URL in a minute.

MariadungT: yep. I learned a lot from your slide show.

KaraLM: Isn't it amazing how many people have the wrong information- and try to teach it in class?

MidgeF: Yes, and that's a big problem that existed even when I was in school.

MidgeF: One lesson in particular (that I did not create) has students discussing the myths BUT it is for grades 6-8. Let me know you've looked at it by typing 'Back' when you are done, OK?

MidgeF: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=65

MidgeF: Jeff needs to read Jean Fritz's book called Who's That Stepping on Plymouth Rock?

BJ . o O (I also recommend 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus)

BJ: by Charles C. Mann

MidgeF: That's actually on my list....

JeffC: I do?

MidgeF: Yes, it is hilarious. Great reading for adults and kids

JeffC: ah... ok... if it's funny!

MidgeF: All her historical fiction books for kids are all well researched and funny

NaomiAR: Back

MidgeF: Great! You can scroll back on this screen Naomi and see our discussion while you were gone.

NaomiAR: I have used those ReadWriteThink lessons from Int'l Reading Association before, they are very good for kids

KaraLM: back

MidgeF: Questions so far?

DevetteG: I'm back. Great lesson for grades 6-8.

NaomiAR: Especially my freshmen, who are all reading at lower grade levels but need high interest, high quality material

MidgeF: A tough grade range

ElissaM: I really like this lesson. I think it is a great lesson for students to really be able to think on their own.

MariadungT: back

NaomiAR: Higher level thinking is very important right now

MidgeF: A lot of those lessons are like that and I think they are worth looking at before you work up your own

NaomiAR : I agree

MidgeF: Good, you guys are doing great!

DevetteG: You can also integrate it with other subjects

MidgeF: I am kinda pushing you a bit.

KaraLM : It's fun!

MidgeF: I am a firm believer in mixing up subjects.

MidgeF: But, I suspect most teachers prefer to work with the materials at Enchanted Learning since they are not supposed to teach this history except at the lower grades. Take a look at these fun activities and notice that not all of them portray the people of that time as they really were. I prefer the ones about turkeys and leaves. Let me know you've looked at it by typing 'Back' when you are done, OK?

MidgeF: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/thanksgiving/>

MidgeF: singing the Galop....

MidgeF: The easiest critical thinking question is...why are there no photos of the Pilgrims or the Native Americans?

DevetteG: Great resource but I agree with you.

MidgeF: Thanks...but unfortunately it is hard to decide what we should be teaching

KaraLM : back

ElissaM: Back.

NaomiAR : Back. There are some great resources on that Enchanted Learning site. Do they have resources for higher grades as well?

MariadungT: back

DevetteG: There are so many different stories out there.

MidgeF: Not really it was created for homeschoolers I think

ElissaM: I really love this website. When I use this site as a resource I do have to pick and choose very carefully.

MidgeF: They have a great picture dictionary in different languages.

KaraLM : I agree, Elissa. You have to do your research before you just print, copy, and pass out.

MariadungT: I think I saw that at the very bottom

MidgeF: Well, see that's the problem. No one is sure what we should tell kids about the pilgrims as we only have two primary sources to draw from

MidgeF: Bradford Diary and Mourt's Relations

MariadungT: yep. that's what I was thinking.

MidgeF: My daughter teaches K and it is hard because kids from other cultures don't know what Pilgrims are but still celebrate.

MidgeF: Most schools go with the "Harvest" idea and the Giving Thanks

MidgeF: Let me tell you about the problems I face hosting this information!

MidgeF: This week a great thing and an awful thing happened. Awful first. One person sent me an email telling me (in a very misspelled email) that I was perpetuating the myth that the Pilgrims wore buckled clothing and stood on the Rock simply because I used a graphic that Discovery Education gives free for teachers to use. I removed it from most of my pages and replaced it with the cropped photo you will see there now of my own Thanksgiving centerpiece on my own table. I did not respond to that person's email.

MidgeF: Let me know you've looked at it by typing 'Back' when you are done, OK?

DevetteG: I asked my Kinder class what does Thanksgiving mean and they said giving thanks

MidgeF: <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/clipart/clip/pilgrims.html>

MidgeF: At least they did not say football

KaraLM : haha- Devette- mine said it was about food!

ElissaM: I am currently doing my student teaching in kindergarten. For the past two days we have acted out the story of how the pilgrims came to America and what they did when they got here. It has gone very well. My students seem to have a real understanding of it. They are all so excited to do more activities.

MariadungT: I am student teaching prek and they have no idea what thanksgiving is

MidgeF: Well, in a way both answers (except football) are right.

DevetteG: When I was young I said turkey. LOL!!

MidgeF: Yes, so you see the problem.

KaraLM: back- I don't think the icon is bad- that person is just taking it too seriously

MariadungT: yes. I agree with Kara.

MidgeF: Since I love the Rock and its story, I do like it

DevetteG: I like it too!!

MidgeF: I left it on the Web Hunt I have.

MidgeF: The great thing that happened is that a young college student is writing a research paper to try to prove that Plymouth Rock is the same rock that was on the shore when the Mayflower arrived. It has been fun consulting with him and giving him real references in print and on the Web.

MidgeF: Which I actually researched. I am a Rock nut.

ElissaM: I like the picture.

MidgeF: Another problem is Plimoth Plantation

ElissaM: It would be a really great picture to use in Kindergarten.

MidgeF: It is not free and people think when they come here that the Pilgrims lived on that spot. They didn't

MidgeF: Yes, you could tell them the story of how everyone moved the Rock.

MariadungT: I think I will use it with my prek class too

MidgeF: And stole parts of it.

MidgeF: I also have been working with Google's Page Creator online Web page making software to give people a chance to learn about the area of the waterfront in Plymouth. It's not finished as yet but here it is! Let me know you've looked at it by typing 'Back' when you are done, OK?

MidgeF: <http://midgef.googlepages.com/home>

NaomiAR: Back

MidgeF: I have a lot more photos and ideas for the page but I think I will be running out of time

KaraLM : Back

ElissaM: back

DevetteG: I like it I'm learning a lot from you.

MidgeF: I didn't know about any of the monuments except for the Massasoit and the Rock which I saw as a teenager.

KaraLM : That is amazing- in all my years of school- no teacher ever showed me a picture of the REAL Plymouth Rock- I did not even know one really still existed

ElissaM: I think that this is a great site as well. I love the pictures. This would also be a good time to discuss how many amazing monuments have been moved throughout history.

MidgeF: But, it is weird being descended from Pilgrims. My grandparents toasted to the Forefather's when I was a kid.

MariadungT: back

KaraLM : This site will be even better when you are finished- I can't wait to see what you going to add!!

MidgeF: I thought they were nuts. They were both Mayflower descendants.

MariadungT: yep. I have never seen a real photo of the rock

MidgeF: Oh, I forgot.

DevetteG: This is a great visual aid and I know I'm a visual learner.

MidgeF: My photos are creative commons shareable

MidgeF: That means you can use them as you wish with just my name as credit.

MariadungT: I love the links on the side too

KaraLM : Wow!!! Thank you!!

MariadungT: yes! thank you!!

DevetteG: I'm saving every webpage this information is amazing I will definitely credit you

MidgeF: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/midgefrazel/sets/72157602331744892/>

MidgeF: I put them all here so you can download them in any size

MidgeF: I found this page this week.

<http://www.elite.net/~runner/jennifers/thankyou.htm>

KaraLM : thank you again!

MariadungT: thank you. I will definitely credit you when using these

DevetteG: Great!! Thank you!!

MidgeF: It's Thank you in different languages

MidgeF: I promised to give you the link for the whole project

MariadungT: great pictures on flickr

KaraLM : You're just full of surprises and information!!

MidgeF: And finally, here's the link for your own browsing!

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

DevetteG: That is so cool!!

MariadungT: wow! I cant believe there are over 460 languages!

MidgeF: It is something I feel is very useful for teachers. Last week 21, 290 visits to my whole site. I am still in shock

ElissaM: That's great!

KaraLM : I think we all will be adding to that number in the next several days!!

DevetteG: You have a lot helpful information and I'm going to sharing with other teachers making sure you get credit for all you work.

MidgeF: See my Pilgrim photo? Even my own Pilgrims are not politically correct. They are supposed to be John and Priscilla Alden

MidgeF: My husband thinks I own the Rock and should be a tour guide.

MariadungT: this was really informative and helpful. I will be spreading the wealth with other teachers

DevetteG: I agree you know a lot!!

MidgeF: I know you will have a lot of fun looking this over and I hope you don't get too tired.

KaraLM : hehe- This is just wonderful! I will be spreading the wealth, too Mary- & we will be crediting you the whole time

MidgeF: I could write a whole book about this.... but it's only a week out of the year.

MariadungT: I think you should

DevetteG: Tired.. this was interesting!

KaraLM : So- you know people will read it!! Especially teachers!

MidgeF: You are released back to your own life now. Thanks for coming. Sue's sessions are always good too.

DevetteG: Thank you much for your great resources!!!

NaomiAR: Thank you for the ideas!

KaraLM : Thank you so much!! I will be returning to more of your sessions- this was so interesting!!

JeffC: Thanks Midge for a great session.

KaraLM : Thank you so much, Midge!

MidgeF: OK My bathrobe is calling...Goodnight.

MariadungT: thanks for everything!

BJ: Thanks, Midge.