

Title of Session: WriteTalk
Moderator: Sandra Shattuck
Title of File: 20070913writetalk
Date: September 13, 2007

Room: WriteTalk Group

SandraS: Welcome to WriteTalk.

SandraS: We have a big crowd tonight, Sheryl!

SherylM: Do I need to sign up Sandra?

SandraS: Why don't we get started?

SherylM nods

SandraS: Sheryl, I'm assuming you and BJ know each other?

BJB2 nods

SherylM: Yes! I think I may know you also, but I can't place where?

SandraS: Hmm. Have you been to WriteTalk before?

JenniferEB joined the room.

SherylM: no

SandraS: OK, that's likely the only place we would have met....

SandraS: Hi, Jennifer.

SherylM nods

JenniferEB: hello everyone

SherylM: Hi Jennifer

JenniferEB: Jenny's fine

SandraS: Yeah, West Tennessee Writing Project!

JenniferEB: woohoo

JenniferEB: and I sent an e-mail

SandraS: to whom?

JenniferEB: WTWPer's I believe

SandraS: ok, great!

SandraS: Well, we've got a small group tonight...so we'll all be able to talk a lot!

SherylM grins

BJB2 thinks Jenny should join the WriteTalk group

SandraS: Let's start with introductions...what you teach and where...

SandraS: Oooh, great idea, BJ

JenniferEB: Jenny thinks so too

SandraS: Yeah!

JenniferEB: 2nd grade Ripley TN

SandraS: college writing and lit., Huntsville AL

BJB2: Jenny, above this chat window is write-talk your way on in... note

DavidW joined the room.

DavidW waves

SandraS waves to David

BJB2: scroll down on that note to This is the group room for WriteTalk

DavidW: Hi, Sandra

BJB2: and click on the green i

SandraS: Hi, David.

BJB2: join this group and then click on room view to get back to the welcome screen

BJB2 . o O (after you join, you might want to go to Actions in the top right of this chat window and click on detach. Makes it easier to follow the chat)

SherylM: I am a parent of a sophomore. I develop prof dev and deliver; teacher for over 30 years; science, math, elem. etc; working to develop web2.0 stuff with what I have already done.

SandraS nods to fellow parent of a sophomore...

SandraS: David, did you want to introduce yourself?

DavidW: I'm David Weksler. I'm one of the HelpDesk volunteers and I lead a math and technology discussion in Tapped In. I'm in New Jersey

SandraS: I just had one of those technology aha happy moments...we're all over the country but right here talking about writing all at once.

SandraS: OK, so I usually start with a quick spiel about the National Writing Project

DavidW likes that about Tapped In

JenniferEB: rural TN feels very connected now

SandraS: and we've got Jennifer here to help, since she's done a Summer Institute at a Writing Project site in TN

SandraS nods to Jennifer

JenniferEB: whatever I can do

SandraS: NWP has been around since 1974

SandraS: professional development group that 's federally funded

SandraS: almost 200 sites nationwide

JenniferEB: WTWP has been at it for 15 years I believe, not bad for some hicks in the sticks, eh?

SandraS: located at colleges usually in English or Education departments

SandraS: some of the best NWP sites are in the sticks!

SandraS: lots of great writing gets done there, eh?

JenniferEB: UofTN at Martin in English

SandraS: Thank, Jennifer.

SandraS: The main project at each site is the Summer Institute

SandraS: which takes different forms at each site

SandraS: but usually there are about 20 teachers, mostly k-12, and some university folks

SandraS: and it's intensive

SandraS: often 4 weeks

SandraS: lots of fun, I think

JenniferEB: WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE!

SandraS: one colleague I invited to attend finally said, "It's like boot camp for teachers!"

SandraS: because we do so much

BJB2 smiles

SandraS: Jennifer, would you be willing to say a little bit about your experience?

JenniferEB: You asked for it!

SandraS: go for it!

JenniferEB: This was the most fabulous prof. devel. ever

SandraS grins

JenniferEB: I never felt much like a writer before WTWP

JenniferEB: each day we had to produce something so I became a writer

JenniferEB: toute suite

SandraS grins more widely

JenniferEB: the lessons taught by others were fab too

DavidW wonders if we'll be seeing Jennifer on NWP promotional material soon

JenniferEB: a high school chem teacher gave

JenniferEB: a great lesson I can use for my 2nd graders

SandraS: cool!

JenniferEB: I'm on the cover of the WTWP brochure and quoted inside

DavidW: way to go!

SherylM smiles and nods

JenniferEB: We had some wonderful educators and I learned so much from them and about myself

JenniferEB: sigh

SandraS: some folks ask how you could have one group with such a variety of grade levels

JenniferEB: can't wait for next June, they've invited me back

SandraS: but Jennifer just mentioned the magic that can happen....like using a high school chemistry lesson in 2nd grade....

JenniferEB: good question, that was the amazing part

JenniferEB: I had them rockin' with a lesson on Readers' theater

SandraS: that sounds way cool!

JenniferEB: the HS chem teacher got ALL excited and the HS English teachers too

JenniferEB: We little people teachers know more than we're given credit for sometimes

SandraS: Absolutely true...

SandraS: if there's anything I get from NWP gatherings, it's how many talented and passionate teachers are out there

JenniferEB: AND how similar our situations REALLY are

SandraS: Yes.

SandraS: So the Summer Institute includes participant writing, response groups, teacher demonstrations...

SandraS: sometimes mini-marathons

JenniferEB: that was fun

JenniferEB: we're doing classroom inquiry throughout the school year too

SandraS: Once a teacher participates in a Summer Institute that teacher can do pretty much anything in NWP

SandraS: oh, excellent

SandraS: that's really the revolutionary part of the organization...

JenniferEB: and What does that mean exactly?

SandraS: school reform comes from within, and from teachers

SandraS: and the NWP really supports teachers in writing their experience

SandraS: I think that's revolutionary

SandraS: So, there's a lot of emphasis on professional writing

SandraS: Which simply means teachers writing about the profession of teaching

JenniferEB: that's right up my alley

SandraS: and there's a fantastic resource called The Quarterly

SandraS: the NWP's journal

SandraS: which is now online completely

SandraS: so let's take a quick look at the website

SandraS: which has just gotten a complete overhaul

JenniferEB: I'm on dial-up, nothing's quick around here ;)

SandraS: Sheryl, if you want, you can find a writing project site near you

SandraS: there's a map

SusanR joined the room.

DavidW waves to Susan

SandraS: sorry about that, Jennifer!

SandraS: Hi, Susan!

SusanR: Hi David

SusanR: Hi Sandra

BJB2 waves hi to Sue

SandraS: So if you want to go to the site for a quick minute and then come on back...

SusanR waves to BJB

SandraS: It's at <http://www.nwp.org>

SandraS: Everybody back?

DavidW nods

SherylM: yes

BJB2: you showed us the search feature last month, Sandy...

SandraS: Great

SandraS: Thanks for reminding me, BJ

SherylM: Wichita is the closest site to me

SandraS: The site has an excellent search feature

BJB2: I've used that to send info to a math teacher on how to integrate writing and math

JenniferEB: oh we forgot about the e-anthology!

SherylM: yes

JenniferEB: publish online and get comments from all over the country

SandraS: Oh, that's great, BJ!

JenniferEB: the things I read were terrific

SandraS: yes, the E-Anthology is a phenomenal resource

JenniferEB: and once I braved putting something up, the comments I received were

invaluable

SandraS: The search engine will take you to relevant articles in The Quarterly

SandraS: and in the Voice, which is more for NWP news

SandraS: The Quarterly is for the teaching of writing

SandraS: Jennifer's talking about an online anthology

SandraS: where Summer Institute participants can upload their creative work (fiction, poetry)

SandraS: or pieces on teaching

SandraS: or comments on the Summer Institute

SandraS: and then get feedback from all over the country

SandraS: Let's see if I can find the link on the NWP site...

BJB2: Jennifer, one of the advantages to joining the writetalk group...

BJB2: is that you can now post to the threaded discussion board...

BJB2: and get reminders of upcoming discussions

DavidW: Jennifer, what was the chemistry teacher doing at a NWP institute?

SandraS: David, good question...

BonnieHa joined the room.

SandraS: because one of the central tenets of NWP is that writing is a great learning tool for all subject areas, Summer Institutes welcome teachers from every subject

DavidW understands writing across the curriculum

DavidW waves to Bonnie

BJB2 waves hi to Bonnie

SandraS: right, so it really gets practice in Summer Institutes

SandraS: when you've got a science teacher demonstrating a science lesson using writing...

SandraS: and an English teacher takes away a great idea for a lesson plan...

SandraS: strange and wonderful connections seem to happen...

SandraS: Hi, Bonnie.

JenniferEB: David, I believe we're going for lots of content areas and grade levels

DavidW: having better writing about science is one push to encourage people to be more interested in science - it makes it accessible, understandable

JenniferEB: there was sp ed., chem, history and all grades

SandraS: I agree, David.

JenniferEB: she was VERY talented in that department, she also fancies herself a writer, and I concur

SandraS: Any questions about National Writing Project before we move on?

BonnieHa: Good evening, everyone. Sorry I'm late.

SandraS: Bonnie, do you want to tell us what you teach and where?

JenniferEB: no tardy slip necessary

BonnieHa: 7th and 8th grade language arts, in a Chicago suburb.

JenniferEB: anywhere Morton Grove?

JenniferEB: that's anywhere NEAR Morton Grove?

BonnieHa: My hubby works in Morton Grove! I'm in Lansing...south suburb.

JenniferEB: grew up in MG

BonnieHa: Cool!

JenniferEB: now live in rural TN, teach 2nd

SusanR: How are you enjoying teaching 2nd grade, Jennifer

SusanR: I spent most of my career in 2nd grade!

JenniferEB: been teaching in the same room for 10 years--- luckily there's new kids each

year!

SusanR . o O (favourite grade)

DavidW: Jennifer, do you know that Susan leads a K-3+ Resources discussion?

SusanR thanks David for the plug!

SandraS can recommend Susan's wonderful group!

JenniferEB: I'm feeling like a groupee tonight! BJ, point me in the right direction again

BJB2: Jenny, click on the Tapped In tab at the top of your screen

BJB2 . o O (the web window if you detached)

BJB2: and then click on calendar in the blue menu bar

BJB2: Sue's next K-3 Session is September 25

BJB2 . o O (all the events on the calendar are real time text chats)

SandraS: let's talk about challenges and hopes for writing this year

SandraS: Our topic is Jump-start Back to School Writing

SandraS: One topic we can also talk about is teachers as writers.

SandraS: Anyone have any concerns about teaching writing this year that they want to share?

SandraS: Any exciting plans?

SandraS: Challenges?

JenniferEB: I'd been having a tough time getting them off of love stories for a topic so I tried something new today

SandraS listens

JenniferEB: we folded paper into eighths

JenniferEB: I asked them to write a word, or sentence, or picture of something they could write about

JenniferEB: modeled it first

JenniferEB: we used our think time for this

JenniferEB: then we shared at tables

JenniferEB: then we spent another 5 minutes adding to our lists from what we heard from our neighbors

SusanR: neat

SandraS: how did you use the paper folded in eighths?

JenniferEB: most of them have close to 16 topics for tomorrow

JenniferEB: wrote a word, sentence or picture in each box

SandraS: got it

SandraS: that's what I thought

SusanR: wonderful idea

SandraS: great idea!

JenniferEB: NO MORE, I love my mama. . .

SherylM: giggles

JenniferEB: ok, I know I'm dreaming, but they folded up and put it in a pocket of their writing folder

JenniferEB: now at least I know there's SOMETHING I can direct them to

JenniferEB: at least for tomorrow's topic!

SandraS: also excellent that they got to talk about their ideas

SandraS: collaborate on the prewriting stage

JenniferEB: someone else? what do you do when they say they have nothing to write about?

SandraS: usually I find some kind of whacky prompt

BonnieHa: Or...when they say..."How long does this have to be?"

SandraS: like...write about green

SherylM: I have story starter strips

JenniferEB: oooooooooooooo I like that

SandraS: story starter strips...how do you use those, Sheryl?

JenniferEB: One of our groupies has a bunch of quotes she draws from, too high school for me, but I think I may start collecting some

SherylM: Well, it depends, but I have a set of subject related ones typed up...then I cut, they pick; there are related activities for building a topic by drawing

SandraS: I love the integration of drawing with writing

SherylM: some friends of mine liked to write them on tongue depressors

SherylM: kids draw

SandraS: oh, that's a great idea...the tongue depressors

JenniferEB: imitation is the sincerest

SandraS: form of flattery

SandraS: it seems as if we've just gotten going, but we're at the end of the hour...

SandraS: any suggestions for future WriteTalk topics?

BJB2: before Sandy runs out of time, another reminder that the next WriteTalk discussion is on October 11

SandraS: Thanks, BJ!

JenniferEB: thanks Sandra!

SherylM enjoyed the evening

BonnieHa: Thanks! ;.)

SherylM: and the info about the project

SandraS: Thanks for sharing your ideas, Sheryl!

SherylM smiles

JenniferEB: and thanks BJ for the help

SandraS: If you want to read an excellent article about writing with students, I've put a link to it in the window above.

=====

See Tim Gillespie's article, "Becoming Your Own Expert -- Teachers as Writers" (*The Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 1, November 1985) at

<http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/1708>

=====

SandraS applauds BJ!!!

SandraS: great argument for writing with students

SandraS: well written, too!

JenniferEB: thanks again and TTFN!

SandraS: same to you Jennifer...thanks for all your input!

SherylM: TTFN

SandraS: Nice to see everyone!

DavidW: Thanks, Sandy

SandraS: Thank you, David!

BJB2 waves goodnight. If you have any thoughts before the next discussion, post to the discussion board

SandraS: Yes, please do!

SandraS: Good night, all!

DavidW waves bye