Title of Session: Teachers-in-Training
Moderator: Dianne Allen
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Room: Teachers-in-Training Group

ParthS joined the room.

DianneA: Hello Parth

DianneA: Welcome

BjB: I'm going to announce...hang on

ParthS: Hi Dianne and BJB!

ParthS: I'm glad to be here ... my apologies for the delay (just getting used to the chat interface)

DianneA wonders what brings Parth to today's session

DianneA is open to what others bring to this session

DianneA: Parth, I see that you are new to the interface ...

ParthS: well, I'm currently a "pre-teacher" about to graduate and would like to ultimately help design "progressive" curriculum for schools combining conventional methods along with transformational methods

DianneA listens for more details

ParthS: and so would love to get your insight and guidance as to tools, resources, and even orgs I can get involved with once I complete school in a few mos :-)

DianneA: Parth can you share with us a bit of your background?

DianneA: BTW I am based in Wollongong, NSW Australia ...

DianneA: my area is professional development ...

ParthS: sure and likewise I would definitely like to learn about yours ... I've worked with youth in various capacities over the past 5 years, from being a big brother, tutor, etc ... most recently I was a board member for YJA, an international youth organization where we had created a 3 day convention for about 700 youth with nearly 160 sessions from

spirituality, leadership, activism etc, with about 60 speakers

ParthS : oh great!

DianneA: and while my first teaching area was science, I have had educative roles in pubic library work, management, strategic planning ...

ParthS : excellent, I've definitely had management experience in volunteer contexts at non-profits

DianneA: so my question about your interest area is this ...

ParthS : yes :-)

DianneA: in the teaching you expect to go into in a few mos, do you anticipate being able to implement a 'progressive curriculum'?

ParthS : oh and I also recently launched a business where we empower small business owners and non-profits in creating a strong online presence through web design and online community building ...

ParthS : ideally, I would like to, but I feel that might be a bit ambitious at this stage in the game

ParthS : there's a lot I don't know and much I don't know that I don't know ... so I would like to work for say a charter school or an educational organization starting Sept

DianneA: OK then tell me what do you understand by 'progressive curriculum' .. what would that look like on the ground for you?

ParthS : I'm currently located in SF, but will be moving to Chicago .... for me, it's where there's the conventional learning about science, math, English, etc but also using art, music, etc get kids to engage in conflict resolution dialogue, engage them in conversations about "identity" and the "self"

ParthS : and support them in critically questioning the culturally, socially inherited conversations they may see themselves entrenched in

DianneA nods

SandraS joined the room.

DianneA: I can see some of the youth work experience coming through

ParthS : for some "similar type activities" see www.challengeday.org

DianneA: Hi Sandra

SandraS waves to Dianne and Parth

SandraS: Hello!

ParthS: Hi Sandra!

DianneA: Sandra usually runs WriteTalk at this time Parth

SandraS nods

ParthS: Very cool, can you say more about that?

DianneA: but it looks like she had no starters, and you started to talk here about what you were looking for ...

SandraS: BJ suggested I join you since WriteTalk is a bit empty...

DianneA nods to Sandra

BjB . o O (pooling our resources sounds better ;-))

DianneA: and Parth, Sandra is looking for ideas for a progressive curriculum

ParthS: excellent!

DianneA: which I have just extracted from him. He means something like ...

DianneA: **ParthS**: I'm currently located in SF, but will be moving to Chicago .... for me, it's where there's the conventional learning about science, math, English, etc but also using art, music, etc get kids to engage in conflict resolution dialogue, engage them in conversations about "identity" and the "self"

DianneA: **ParthS**: and support them in critically questioning the culturally, socially inherited conversations they may see themselves entrenched in

SandraS: wow

ParthS: Sandra, I was just sharing with Dianne that last year the non-profit I was involved created a variety of interactive sessions designed to get students to explore their "location" and how they "locate" themselves in the world

SandraS: not a small task, eh?

DianneA nods to Sandra

ParthS: lol...nope, that's the fun of it! :-)

DianneA: and I was just about to scratch around and ask for US experience!

SandraS: sounds excellent

ParthS: can I share an activity we did to give you a sense of that?

DianneA: Yes, I like what Parth is suggesting ...

SandraS: there's some place-based writing that the National Writing Project has done

ParthS: hmm, interesting

SandraS listens to Parth

DianneA: but I also wonder if it is something that can be accommodated in the 'school system'

DianneA: that being somewhat different from a non-profit

ParthS: I think the conversation of education is something that if expanded to the community and family, can have a real impact on youth

SandraS: I'd love to hear about the activity you mentioned, Parth

ParthS: so we had 20 students and created two "tribes" Tribe A and Tribe B

ParthS: each tribe had to do the same activity which was create a living abode out of pvc piping (about 4 ft high), bedsheets, and yarn

ParthS: Tribe A on one side of the room and Tribe B on the other

ParthS: Each tribe had their own "tribal values" such Tribe A, communication could only happen with eye contact, and communication b/w men had to be facilitated by women

SandraS: cool!

DianneA grins

ParthS: also out of the 4 materials: bedsheet, pvc pipe, yarn, and scissors, each side only had 2 out of 4 of the materials

DianneA: sounds like something quite testing

ParthS: Tribe B had opposite "tribal values" where no eye contact could be made during communication, and communication b/w women had to be facilitated through men

SandraS: interesting

ParthS: so with each side only having partial materials, they had to "negotiate across differences"...with Tribe A, only people with "short hair" could do the negotiating/bartering

DianneA reminds me of some of my adult dispute resolution simulations

ParthS: and with Tribe B, only people with "glasses" could do the negotiating/bartering

ParthS: we wanted to create some "arbitrary conditions" as well, highlighting how aspects of culture as socially created

ParthS: no, if a person broke any of these "tribal laws" they were put in exile for 10 mins and had to simply observe

ParthS: the activity was about an hour...after 20 mins, 3 members from each tribe had to switch while maintaining their tribal values but couldn't let their new tribal members know what they were

DianneA wonders if Parth was involved in the design of this activity/ event/ learning experience

ParthS: after 40 mins, into the exercise, we took ourselves (the facilitators) out of the role of authority and told each tribe that they could now create their own tribal values - whatever values/laws they would see fit to enable them completing the task

ParthS: then a 30 min discussion afterwards

ParthS: a lot came out of the rich post-discussion - issues of authority, of being "the other" when a member from one group moves into another, issues of gender, equality, negotiations , etc.

ParthS: ~the end~ :-)

DianneA nods from a simulation much of the real value occurs in the debrief

SandraS: lots of learning

DianneA: and some users of simulations fail to recognize this and plan adequately for it

DianneA: Parth, I asked earlier ..

DianneA: if you were involved in the design of this activity/ event/ learning experience

ParthS: yeah! ... so I would like to incorporate these "real life learning" along with conventional learning as well

JeffC joined the room.

ParthS: <anticipates the inquiry>

ParthS: (Hi Jeff)

SandraS: Hey, Jeff!

DianneA: were you involved, Parth, in the design of this activity/ event/ learning experience

ParthS: yes, Dianne? .. you were about to ask? ... yes, we put several hours of discussions into creating the context of the activity and the end experience we wanted to leave the kids with

DianneA: and did the design deliver the goods as far as you were concerned?

ParthS: and they were hs juniors and seniors - we were a little anxious to see if their maturity matched our intention and it did with flying colors

ParthS: their feedback was very raw...some kids talked about their experience of moving from one school to another, or being of a certain culture trying to negotiate in another culture

ParthS: in fact, we had to cut the discussion short due to time, we were pleased w/their level of engagement

SandraS: sounds powerful

ParthS: there were many sessions we had led prior to this one as "ice breakers" to get kids related to each other

DianneA: OK, what does the 'we' as in 'we put several hours of discussions into creating ...' have hidden in it: how many?; what background?; did someone bring the basic idea?

ParthS: (nice tappedinorg tweet, btw! LOL)

BjB smiles

SandraS: tapped in is twittering?

ParthS: we were fellow organizers ... there were 3 of us and each of us i think brought a certain spiritual orientation

BjB nods to Sandy...I'm the tappedin twit tappedinorg

ParthS: the theme we wanted to work with was "culture as a social construct"

DianneA: right, so let's have a closer look at this learning experience ...

DianneA: 1. it took a team to design and run and for 20 mixed hs students ...

DianneA: there was pre-session preparations of the students .. how long did that take over how many weeks?

ParthS: so we wanted to create some "arbitrary tribal values" to reflect that at some point all values, traditions started as a "thought" then a "conversation" which eventually got a lot agreement - then became a theory and eventually a social norm

ParthS: the pre-session preps were over 3 days of sessions ... we had 3 major themes or segments of sessions ... first was "identity", then "community" and last "activism"

DianneA: how long were those individual pre-session prep sessions?

ParthS: so we had about 7 different activities going on in 7 rooms with 20-30 kids each over 3 hours - each session was 1 - 1.5 hour each

DianneA nods

DianneA: and for the 'main event' what was the time frame from beginning to end?

ParthS: prior to the convention, youth had to register online for the kinds of sessions they wanted to participate it

ParthS: we had planned the whole thing over 11 mos ... 3 days of convention activities, during the day, we had these day sessions and in the evening social activities

ParthS: started Fri. morning at 9a until 7p with 2 meal breaks - an hour to change clothes, and from 8p-11p social activities ... we held the convention at a hotel resort in Chicago

DianneA: sorry I was asking about the time required on the day for the Tribal formation activity and debrief .. but the other information you have given us is significant too Parth

ParthS: oh, the whole activity was 1.5 hour

ParthS: sorry, I wanted to give you a context :-)

DianneA now looks to Sandra and BJ and thinks back to her high school experience ...

SandraS: LOL

SandraS: yeah, nothing like that

ParthS: lol...neither was mine, lol

BjB: nor was mine.

DianneA: teaching science .. the most time I had at any one time was 80 minutes and just me to 35+ children from the one age group

ParthS: we had kids fly in from all over the country...raised about 200k over 11 mos - it was a fierce endeavor, lol

SandraS: wow!

SandraS: fantastic work!

ParthS: it was our team :-)

DianneA: so this learning experience design is 'outside' normal schooling framing Parth ..

ParthS: yes

DianneA: that is why I asked earlier about to what extent you expected to be able to deliver different schooling ...

BjB: what I enjoyed most was the comment that the students rose to your level of expectations...that's a big factor that teachers often overlook

DianneA: if you can then there is some point in working at the design ...

ParthS: as I enter into teaching, I would like to incorporate these elements in the classroom or "out of classroom"

DianneA: if not, then the task and objective needs to be different, ...

ParthS: yeah, that's a great point BJ the sessions around "identity" were all about speaking to their inner genius and potential

ParthS: the kids started out a little resigned and cynical b/c they had gotten so much

social programming that they're not this or not that

BjB . o O (learned helplessness)

DianneA: don't completely forget that experience but be aware that the designing to deliver the learning intended needs to be cleverer ...

ParthS: so Dianne your earlier point, we did a little of "self building" with them before they were ready to take on a session like the "Tribal Experience"

DianneA nods

SandraS: scaffolding the exercise

ParthS: well said Sandra :-)

SandraS: Tribal Experience is also experiential

SandraS: crucial

ParthS: VERY, it's their every day life ... especially the "negotiating across differences" part

ParthS: they started getting that life isn't always about getting agreement for what you want, but rather learning how to actively listen, communicate and work together

DianneA: OK team Parth asked earlier do we have any tools and resources to help Parth do this in an ordinary schooling situation?

ParthS: or even any orgs that you know of that I could teach w/or work w/ in these capacities

SandraS: sounds like a great exercise for a social studies class -- talking about culture

DianneA: that is a better and more useful question Parth

ParthS: great idea Sandra!

ParthS: <smiles at Dianne> both r useful :-)

SandraS: I was thinking about what I saw here on Tapped In at the Second Life group

SandraS: 8th grade social studies...groups studied culture by building villages in Second LIfe

SandraS: but that was more about learning about other cultures...

ParthS: very interesting though!

SandraS: also somewhat experiential because of having to produce artifacts

DianneA thinks that it could be done over a year's curriculum, with appropriate design, but that one of the first steps for Parth will be negotiating permission to be progressive with a group and with curriculum, with the powers-that-be in the school

BjB: one option, Parth, would be to write an article about your project for the Tapped In newsletter asking for participating teachers.

DianneA wonders if the middle school structure is shifting to allow some more of this kind of innovation and relevance development?

ParthS: great suggestion BJ

ParthS: Dianne, great point ...

BjB: Johnathan Chase's Learning from Lyrics is an example of that taking place, Dianne

DianneA nods to BJ

ParthS: it's interesting talking about "relevance"

DianneA: Parth we are about out of time for this session

DianneA: and I regret I have another commitment ...

BjB: to whom is "it" relevant?

SandraS: http://sites.google.com/a/go.rbe.sk.ca/tsl-grade-8-culture-project-2008/

ParthS: what would u need to teach or provide in education to help eradicate those things that drive people to become criminals?

SandraS: sorry

DianneA: BJ can we do some advertising of this discussion for the July Teachers-in-Training session?

SandraS: link to the Teen Second Life culture project -- Canada schools in Regina

BjB: The next Teachers in Training discussion will take place on July 9...but you could join this group and start posting to the discussion board...see if you spark any interest

ParthS: how do we teach emotional maturity integrated with learning math, science, etc.?

DianneA: so that we can extend our consideration of the issues a the next session

DianneA nods to BJ

DianneA: Parth do you know how to join this group?

BjB: maybe invite John Chase to the session too...I'd bet he would have some good input

ParthS: BJ how could I write for the newsletter? ...

DianneA nods to BJ

BjB: just write the article and email it to me, Parth   BjB@tappedin.org

ParthS: Dianne, not sure how can I join the group?

ParthS: (BJ, what are the parameters? length, characters, etc.)

DianneA: see the green i besides the Teachers-in-training group name in your main window?

DianneA: click on that

DianneA: and when the profile of the group page opens click on the Join This Group link

ParthS: ah yes, nice!

SandraS: Good luck, Parth!

BjB: probably about three paragraphs....with a way in which to contact you for more info...

SandraS: Thanks, Dianne, for letting me join this evening. Wonderful discussion.

SandraS: Take care BJ!

BjB hugs Sandy...you too!

ParthS: Thank you everyone!

SandraS jumps on hoverboard and whooshes off flashing the peace sign

SandraS left the room (signed off).

DianneA: OK I must fly ... we can get back together in July to follow through live, and we can do something in-between to see if others are interested in this discussion

ParthS: btw, Dianne, do you have an e-mail?

ParthS: I would love to collaborate moving fwd

DianneA: Parth you can email me through Tapped in

ParthS: great!

DianneA: thanks Parth

DianneA waves bye for now

BjB . o O (when you ID a person you will see that option, Parth)

ParthS: <wave goodbye to everyone in gratitude>

BjB waves bye. Thanks for a stimulating discussion!

BjB heads to bed after a long week. Goodnight.

ParthS: BJB, quick question!

BjB listens

ParthS: sorry, need 30 sec of ur time ...

BjB: I'll be working on the June newsletter this weekend

ParthS: I'm trying to find Dianne's e-mail on her profile but can't same to locate it

ParthS: oh wow, awesome!

ParthS: let me know if there's anyway I can help :-)

BjB: under online information....you should see username, email

ParthS: my skill sets include writing, doing layouts, using facebook, twitter, and other community building tools

ParthS: her e-mail is "private"

BjB: then send her a saved message

ParthS : \<scratches my head\>

ParthS : lol ...sorry I'm a ludite when it comes to navigating thru this site

BjB : do you see an envelop next to her Username?

ParthS : cool, got it!

ParthS : thank you sir!

BjB : great! You're welcome, Parth. Sounds like you have some very useful skills that we might want to plumb ;-)

ParthS : anytime :-)

BjB . o O (we let you relax and get used to the TI environment before we pounce, right Jeff?)

BjB : any more questions?

ParthS : let me know I can support you increasing our followers for tweeter and do we have a fb group?

BjB : no fb group yet

BjB : can you embed tweets in a fb page?

ParthS : I'm sure it's late ur time ... feel free to engage me anytime about that at - YUP!

ParthS : and depending on our budget, we could send out "timed" tweets on a regular basis as well

ParthS : http://www.postlater.com/

BjB : cool. I'm trying to pull all the fragments into the greater whole. Budget? We don't have a budget....all helpdesk is volunteer.

ParthS : ah I c ... I think there are many free svs offered to nonprofits

BjB : Jeff and I are logged in here about every day if you get inspired ;-)

BjB : now I really do have to get going. Thanks, Parth.