Title of Session: WriteTalk
Moderator: Sandra Shattuck
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Room: WriteTalk Group

BjB waves hi to Debbie and Tiffany

DebbieGP: I am the Technology Facilitator in our parish. I was formerly a business teacher for 23 years

TiffanyL: Do you use writing in your technology lessons within the classrooms?

SandraS joined the room.

DebbieGP: I am interested in finding ways for teachers to incorporate technology tools within their instruction that will help students improve their writing

SandraS waves to all

DianneA joined the room.

TiffanyL: in what parish are you?

DebbieGP: Lincoln Parish in north-central Louisiana

TiffanyL joined the room.

TiffanyL: I am in Avoyelles Parish

DebbieGP: OK

SandraS waves to BJ and Dianne and Tiffany and Debbie

DebbieGP: It is snowing in Ruston, and school has been canceled tomorrow

DianneA: Hi Sandra

TiffanyL: it is sleeting here in Avoyelles and we don't have school either

TiffanyL: we had half a day today

TiffanyL: hello Sandra

SandraS: I heard on the news that the weather was getting rough down there

SandraS chuckles

BjB hugs Sandy

SandraS hugs BJ

BjB: shall we start with intros, Sandy?

SandraS: Excellent idea!

DebbieGP: We dismissed today at 1:30; however, we did not dismiss from the school board office until 3:00 PM

SandraS: Please tell us where you're from and what you teach, and then we'll get started!

BjB . o O (and a reminder to go to Actions in the top right of the chat and select DETACH)

TiffanyL: I am from Avoyelles Parish and I teach English I 9th grade

DebbieGP: Technology/Instructional Facilitator for Lincoln Parish Schools in North-Central Louisiana. My home is Ruston.

SandraS: Welcome, Tiffany and Debbie!

TiffanyL: Thanks

SandraS bows to Dianne and BJ -- long-time Tapped In folks

SandraS: I teach writing and literature in northern Alabama, University of...

DebbieGP: I learned about Tapped In through an online technology class in which I am currently enrolled--EIT

SandraS: Dianne and BJ, did you already introduce yourselves?

SandraS: Excellent, Debbie!

TiffanyL: I am enrolled in the same class

BjB waves hi. I'm on TI helpdesk

TiffanyL: EIT

DebbieGP: Hello . . . I need to enroll in a virtual tour course

DianneA: sorry, I am from Wollongong NSW Australia, and my area is professional development, I am currently working with ESL teachers on thesis writing

SandraS: OK, great to have both of you. Debbie, did you check the Tapped In schedule for virtual tours?

DebbieGP: Yes, I have. I think I may take a tour on Saturday (I believe)

SandraS: I'm assuming you mean a virtual tour of Tapped In

SandraS: great!

DebbieGP: Yes, that is correct

SandraS: OK, well this evening we'll talk about writing.

SandraS: I start WriteTalk with a quick description of the National Writing Project

SandraS: Has either of you heard of the National Writing Project?

DebbieGP: No

TiffanyL: I have heard of it but have not implemented it

SandraS: OK, great -- NWP started in 1973 in Berkeley

SandraS: it's a professional development program that involves about 200 sites

SandraS: on college or universities

SandraS: and the main project is a summer institute

SandraS: where K-12 and university folks get together for an intensive 3-4 weeks

SandraS: the philosophy behind NWP is that teachers are the best teachers of other teachers

SandraS: (no canned professional development)

SandraS: that teachers teach writing more effectively if they improve their own writing

SandraS: and that writing is a powerful teaching and learning tool across all disciplines

SandraS: once a teacher participates in a summer institute, he or she becomes a teacher consultant and can participate in any NWP project

SandraS: such as writing retreats

SandraS: the annual meeting

SandraS: NWP also has several initiatives

SandraS: ESL

SandraS: Reading

SandraS: technology

SandraS: Any questions so far?

TiffanyL: not yet

DianneA ok by me so far

DebbieGP: no ?s

SandraS: Great!

SandraS: OK, we'll visit the website for a little bit.

SandraS: When you get the URL, click on it (hold down ctrl key to avoid popups)

SandraS: and when you go to the site, you may want to do two things:

SandraS: check the map in the upper right corner to find a NWP site near you

SandraS: (there are some great NWP sites in Louisiana!)

DebbieGP: great

SandraS: and then use the search box to find something that interests you

TiffanyL: ok

SandraS: then come on back here, and we'll talk about what you found

SandraS: Here's the URL

SandraS: http://nwp.org

SandraS: See you in a little bit!

DebbieGP: ok

SandraS: Anybody back yet?

DianneA: sort of ..

SandraS: LOL

DianneA: I am checking the EAP resources

SandraS: caught between teleportations...

DianneA: and keeping my eye open in case there is action here

SandraS: finding anything helpful?

DianneA: just scanning at first and exercising my divided mind

SandraS: the only way to be in the 21st C....scanning, multitasking....

DebbieGP: I found the closest NWP site is at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches (my alma mater)

SandraS: Tiffany and

SandraS: Debbie, are you back yet?

SandraS: cool!

DebbieGP: I entered Writing with Technology and several articles/topics were displayed

SandraS: You'll find high quality articles

SandraS: almost all written by teachers

DebbieGP: For example: Writing Project Examines Technology in the Classroom

SandraS: The Quarterly is the NWP's journal -- it's now entirely online

DianneA: and hitting the wrong buttons

SandraS: Debbie, each NWP site usually has a tech liaison

SandraS: so there's a big focus on technology

DebbieGP: great

SandraS: Tiffany, did we lose you?

SandraS: You can get more specific projects like digital stories

TiffanyL: I am here

SandraS: or using blogs

SandraS: Yeah! What did you find, Tiffany?

TiffanyL: I had the opportunity to looks up some information on assigned writing and taught writing

SandraS: Sounds intriguing...

DebbieGP: I have just gotten more involved with blogs through this EIT class in which I am enrolled

SandraS: Great -- you'll find articles on blogs and wikis and discussion lists on the NWP site

DebbieGP: Wikis are growing in popularity with our teachers in Lincoln Parish

SandraS: And if you look at the screen above this chat section, you'll see something called the Whiteboard

TiffanyL: I found it interesting that we as teachers are guilty of everything in the "assigned writing" column and do very little of the "taught writing" that is suggested here

SandraS: I've got links to 2 huge resources on the NWP site

SandraS: yes, once you start working with the NWP, you learn so much more about the huge field of writing pedagogy

SandraS: Can you give us an example of those two different kinds of writing, Tiffany?

TiffanyL: I did find an interesting statement about making writing relevant. One way this could be done is when teaching literature to do this is have students write on the "theme" of a story rather than analyze or describe. Since themes are lessons to our lives, why not have students delve upon those aspects of literature

SandraS: makes sense, eh?

SandraS: I'm finding something very interesting with my second-semester freshman comp. students--

DebbieGP: I had detached my chat . . . now that I have attached, I see the whiteboard section

SandraS: we've just finished their short story papers and I gave them the option to do a critical paper or a creative paper

TiffanyL: assigned writing is more of the teacher giving the topic or "assigning" the topic. Taught writing gives the students more freedom to explore and discover important topics of their own that is relevant to the content in class

SandraS: many students chose creative --

DianneA grins

SandraS: they could rewrite an ending or write a new story based on one of the short stories we studied

SandraS: They have come up with some fantastic stuff!

SandraS: And they're EXCITED about writing!

SandraS: And they understand the literature much better.

TiffanyL: I have given that choice to my students. Most of them were very creative with choosing to write a different ending to a story, but what do you do with those students who don't want to think outside of the box

SandraS: Hmm... what do you do with them?

TiffanyL: do you give them the "inside the box" choice?

TiffanyL: one that makes them more comfortable?

SandraS: That's not a bad idea...

SandraS: Start where the student needs to start...

SandraS: Some students prefer safety...

SandraS: They learn better that way.

SandraS: So maybe by providing choices, that allows the student to have more control over his or her learning...

DebbieGP: Could the students be allowed to "act out" the story up until the part where they take over the writing

SandraS: Another thing I would say about students who don't want to think outside the box....encourage students to read each other's writing...that way they get to see the range of writing and choices

SandraS: Great idea, Debbie -- allows for kinesthetic learning, different ways of learning

TiffanyL: my students just finished a research project on Romeo and Juliet and they had to research on their own. Wow, they were so scared. They wanted me to walk them through every step several times. How does a teacher deal with these issues of making students more independent?

TiffanyL: i like that idea debbie

SandraS: This is something I struggle with -- I keep telling them to trust their own minds, their own ideas....

DebbieGP: I was observing in a 6th grade class this week where the students were in groups and they each chose a character in the story to act out and then write the end to the story.

SandraS: Tiffany, what was the fear that your students felt with research?

SandraS: That sounds really interesting, Debbie.

SandraS: How did that exercise turn out?

TiffanyL: well they seemed as though they didn't know where to find information or they kept telling me "I can't find it" . maybe it was just a touch of them not wanting to do the work

SandraS: LOL, Tiffany...hard call to make, eh?

SandraS: If they have room to make mistakes, it's easier to take risks...

DebbieGP: True . . .

TiffanyL: that is right

SandraS: If I can make research relevant... I ask them about their own interests and how they find the answers to questions about a hobby, for interest....How is that different from finding information about Romeo and Juliet?

SandraS: But school research seems to not be related to REAL research...

TiffanyL: they had many options to choose from, and I believe that it overwhelmed them b/c for once they were not told exactly which topic that they "had" to do

SandraS: Ah...

TiffanyL: well in a way it was related to real life...they had to be wedding planners for the wedding that didn't happen

SandraS: Some students get frustrated if you don't tell them exactly what to do...

SandraS: Wow -- that sounds like it could be fun!

DianneA: I have a tool that helps make research relevant and it is based in writing a piece of practice anecdotal narrative

SandraS: Dianne, could you tell us more? That sounds really interesting.

DebbieGP: Yes, please do

TiffanyL: so for those students...do we just give them a push to trust their instincts?

DianneA just gets the file onto her desktop

SandraS: I think so, Tiffany.

SandraS watches Dianne open the file...

JenniferS4 joined the room.

SandraS: Hello, Jennifer.

TiffanyL: welcome Jennifer

JenniferS4: thanks

SandraS: Jennifer, we've talked a bit about the National Writing Project

SandraS: http://nwp.org

JenniferS4: I am not familiar with it

SandraS: and we're talking about motivating students

JenniferS4: I will check out the link

SandraS: research

SandraS: And Dianne is finding a file for us on making research relevant

TiffanyL: Sandra, do you have issues with students wanting to write as they text?

SandraS: Jennifer, would you like to introduce yourself to us?

SandraS: Where and what you teach?

DianneA: OK, here's the first assignment ...

JenniferS4: Yes

JenniferS4: I am sorry

DianneA: it helps that it is part of the assessment of a masters unit of study ...

SandraS: No problem, Jennifer.

SandraS listens to Dianne

DianneA: OUTLINE OF TASK

DianneA: Through the problem-posing vignette (PPV) you need to reflect on your past or current practice focusing on a particular event that troubled you or an area of your professional learning that you would like to explore through an inquiry process. These events can include your practice AND issues to do with the curriculum, planning, assessment, development of materials with groups of children, families, or colleagues or they may be professional issues to do with management, leadership or training in broader settings. These Problem-Posing Vignettes need to include thick and rich descriptions of the setting, those involved and the problem or issue you would like to address. The Problem-Posing Vignette must end with Focus Questions (2-3) that directs your audience to your role and the issue or problem that you are wishing to explore. These Problem-Posing Vignettes will play a significant part of the curriculum and assessment of this course and you will be expected to share them with your lecturer and your peers (in the appendix is an example of vignette to help guide you). FORMAT: PPV should be single spaces and only 1 page. Focus Question/s should be in bold at the end of the vignette. The PPV and focus question should be written in the first person – for example: How can I create a supportive environment where students feel able to take risks in their speaking of English as a second language?

JenniferS4: I teach in New Jersey and I am currently a student at NJCU getting my PHD in educational technology

DianneA: the PVV is set at 800-1000 words - one pager

SandraS: Thanks, Jennifer!

SandraS: A reminder that everyone gets a transcript of this session emailed to you

SandraS: So you'll have Dianne's assignment saved

SandraS: This looks excellent, Dianne

SandraS: research based in teaching practice

SandraS: How have students tended to react to this assignment?

DianneA: Sandra they are surprised ...

DianneA: firstly by the first person approach

SandraS nods

TiffanyL: for what age group do you do this assignment

DianneA: and then when they settle to that, how what they then do, because it is practice-relevant, how much they learn from the process

DianneA: masters of ed students most 25 years up

SandraS nods even more

TiffanyL: looks interesting

DianneA: I don't think it is age dependent however

DianneA: anybody should be able to tell a story of something that puzzles them ...

SandraS: so research begins from the inside out....whereas a traditional take on research is that it lives somewhere outside in some kind of objective land...

DianneA: then as a teacher you can scaffold the other processes to support the next big writing task the research report

SandraS: Sweet!

TiffanyL: Tiffany likes

SandraS: Any other questions about Dianne's assignment?

DebbieGP: what age group do you teach, Tiffany?

DianneA: when I was involved in a research unit with B.Ed students we also offered feedback to them on their literature review work, and we have 'working in progress' posters and findings reporting seminar

TiffanyL: 9th grade

DianneA: not all reliant on written work

SandraS: Nice -- multimedia?

DianneA: yes enthusiasts often prepared their presentation with PPts

SandraS: Excellent!

SandraS: OK, let's try one other thing

SandraS: if you'll look at the Whiteboard in the screen above the chat box

SandraS: you'll see two links

SandraS: on the bottom of the Whiteboard

SandraS: NWP Resources on Teaching Writing

SandraS: and

SandraS: 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing

SandraS: visit one of the links for maybe 2 minutes and then come back and tell us what you found

SandraS: That will be our last trip for this evening!

SandraS: Everyone ready?

DebbieGP: Yes

DianneA: Ha! first cab off the rank: "Use the shared events of students' lives to inspire writing."

SandraS: Great! Go ahead and visit the link...

DianneA: including 'research'!

SandraS: Ha!

SandraS: Perfect, eh?

DianneA nods to Sandra

DianneA: Here's another one to press my buttons: "8. Ask students to reflect on and write about

their writing."

SandraS: I love reflective writing...

SandraS: process

SandraS: Tiffany, Debbie, and Jennifer -- you back yet?

DebbieGP: Yes

TiffanyL: Use shared events of students' lives to encourage writing...at the age I teach

SandraS: Great!

TiffanyL: students are all about themselves...so why not have them write about themselves

SandraS: What did y'all find?

SandraS nods to Tiffany

DebbieGP: a fourth grade teacher has his students create comic strips together

SandraS: another way to use other media -- students can listen to podcasts, Student Voices -- write about what they hear...

SandraS nods to Debbie

SandraS: there are some good free programs for creating comics

SandraS: great way to promote collaboration

SandraS: OK, we're about at the end of our hour

DebbieGP: this engages their creativity, and teaches them critical thinking skills

SandraS: any last comments or questions?

SandraS nods to Debbie

SandraS: absolutely!

TiffanyL: does anyone know a good comic creator for students

SandraS: Comic Life

BjB: The next WriteTalk discussion will be on March 11.

SandraS: Thanks, BJ!

TiffanyL: Thanks everyone. This was insightful

SandraS applauds everyone

DebbieGP: Thank you . . . is Comic Life a free web site

BjB: Hope everyone returns to continue the discussion

SandraS: Thanks so much for your sharing!

SandraS: yes, Debbie

DebbieGP: Thanks.

DianneA: thanks Sandra and all

SandraS applauds Dianne

DianneA flits to next session

DebbieGP: Good luck in EIT, Tiffany ... I am sure we will "see" each other again

SandraS: I hope everyone has a good evening!