Title of Session: Professor Garfield Foundation
Moderator: Madelyn Ferris
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Room: Professor Garfield Foundation Group

MadelynF: Let me just give you a brief "tour.

MadelynF: First, you go to professorgarfield.org

BJB2 listens to Madelyn

JeffC: I'm there

BJB2: www.professorgarfield.org

MadelynF: Okay. There are really two major parts of this site. The kids' section which is where you should be now.

MadelynF: The second part is the Teacher's Lounge. You can find it in the bottom navigation buttons OR right in the page there is a scrolling bar that you can hit that says teacher's lounge.

JeffC: right... where next?

JeffC: ok... teacher's lounge it is then.

MadelynF: Okay, there is a lot here. Our focus (primary) is literacy. At the yellow menu bar you'll see several areas

JeffC: the teacher's lounge doesn't look as fun as the student area... surprise!

BJB2: http://www.professorgarfield.org/parents_teachers/home.html

BJB2 . o O (teachers aren't supposed to have fun, Jeff ;-))

JeffC: should I take the electronic field trip? I know... teachers never get to have any fun.

MadelynF: The Kids Content will basically take you to each area on the kid's site, where you just were.

JeffC: ok... I'll go to kids content... btw... images aren't loading in Firefox in the field trip link.

MadelynF: If you look at Instructional Materials, this is where the rubber starts to meet the road for teachers. Content by standards. Then, under each basic area of literacy, we are building out tools and activities for kids and teachers.

BJB2: I'm especially interested in the inclusion topic

MadelynF: I'll make a note of that.

MadelynF: Okay, if you went back to Kids content, I'll tell you about those sections briefly.

MadelynF: The Reading Ring uses the comic strip to help kids learn to read. It allows the child to put the panels in order (just 3 panels) and then asks some comprehension questions.

JeffC: great... I've recommended comic strip generators to others... kids love 'em.

MadelynF: The G-cubed game is by far one of our most popular. It is a trivia game that you can play against the computer or another child if they're in the room.

BJB2: is this the comic strip developed by what's his name?

MadelynF: The content currently is for 3rd grades approx. We're building content for more of a middle school focus.

JeffC: excellent

MadelynF: Uh, yea, that would be "The Big Guy" - the High Rama Lama....MY BOSS. Yes, Jim Davis

JeffC: I bet Bj loves the artbot stuff.

MadelynF: The art Bot is very popular. These videos are great and we're going to put some of them on Teacher Tube pretty soon. Just to get the word out.

JeffC wonders if Jim could show up on January 6th... I bet we'd get quite a few participants then!

MadelynF: Knowledge Box is content given to us by Pearson, by grade, by subject matter. Some really good stuff here.

JeffC: Pearson *gave* you something? For *free*?

MadelynF: Everybody wants Jim to show up!!! I bet he will one of these days.

MadelynF: Our CEO has a personal relationship with Pearson. So they're allowing us to use this Knowledge Box content. They've been great partners.

JeffC drops dead of a heart attack.

MadelynF: Very funny......

BJB2: the inclusion stuff is from Schwab Learning, Jeff. They always had great stuff. PGF has the support of some pretty heavy contributors

JeffC: the site really looks incredible.

MadelynF: You will want to look at the Think Aloud Books in the Teacher's Lounge, the Easy Readers, the Word Wall and the Comics Lab.

MadelynF: Everyone LOVES the Comics Lab.

MadelynF: For the very young child, I think we have one of the best Phonemic Awareness areas out there. This is Transport to Reading on the kids site.

JeffC is looking for think aloud books in the teacher's lounge... hasn't found it yet.

MadelynF: Go to Instructional Materials -- Think Aloud Books

JeffC: got it

JeffC: ok... so really... this site is completely cross-curricular...

JeffC: you could be showing it in WriteTalk, ArtsConnected and other groups here as well.

BJB2 nods to Jeff.

MadelynF: Yes, that's the plan. We have several books that are downloadable with T. Guide and review questions

BJB2 . o O (which is why I thought it should have its own group...both here and in the student campus)

JeffC: everything free and ad free there? (uh... except for the obvious fact that kids will want more Garfield paraphernalia!)

MadelynF: If you look under Vocabulary, you'll see Easy Reader books.

MadelynF: Yes, it's all free, safe, fun, etc...And yes, you're right. It continues to "build the brand" so it's win/win all the way around.

BJB2: Bob mentioned something about Ron Howard contributing books?

JeffC: how many people work on the site?

MadelynF: Actually, you're close. It's Henry Winkler. Henry has dyslexia and has co-authored several books called "Hank Zipzer."

JeffC hopes that the site never "jumps the shark."

MadelynF: So Henry is going to allow us to put a book on our site and we can publish audio too and in English and Spanish

JeffC: that's great

JeffC: that was going to be my next question... any plans to make the site multi-lingual?

MadelynF: Henry is a really nice guy.

MadelynF: Yes, we definitely want it to be bilingual. We have Garfield strips in Spanish right now. On garfield.com (our entertainment site) they are presented together.

MadelynF: For example, we have already hired someone to do the audio for the Hank book and the Fluency activities coming up.

MadelynF: With regard to staff, we have an internet staff of about 4 people. One full time animator and designers. So, it's pretty lean.

MadelynF: Our goal is to get operational funding soon;

MadelynF: I would be remiss if I don't mention Sparktop. This is THE premiere LD site on the net

BJB2 smiles happily

MadelynF: We acquired it from the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation a year ago. It is web 2.0 and completely safe. Every single piece of content is review BEFORE it goes up. We have a busy team of 5 contractors reviewing content day and night.

MadelynF: You can go in as a guest and just look around and do stuff. But you have to be registered to do the community features. And you WILL be checked out thoroughly.

MadelynF: Anything else I can answer at this time?

BJB2: most of the stuff you've shared is reading...is there a math and science component?

JeffC: are there any plans to make it possible to register... and have it community based?

MadelynF: Only in the Knowledge Box area. But we have a proposal in with a major Indiana university for a STEM initiative aimed at middle school girls.

MadelynF: Jeff, is your question about PGF site or Sparktop site?

BJB2: cool

JeffC: it's about prof garfield

JeffC: Madelyn, are you familiar with QuestAtlantis?

MadelynF: Yes. we'd like to do that. In fact, when we get all of our assessment pieces up (for teachers) it will be necessary to have user name/password so you can get to your kids scores.

MadelynF: no, I'm not familiar with them.

MadelynF: Bob L might be

JeffC: since you mentioned Indiana... I think that's where QA is based... their interface is astounding... I'm wondering if the two sites hooked up...

MadelynF: Hmmmm....funny how sometimes you don't even know what is going on in your own backyard...

MadelynF: I'll check it out and speak to Bob. We love collaboration

JeffC: the net has a very large backyard.

JeffC: that's why I tell students... the best search engine is... human collaboration.

MadelynF: No kidding....hard to keep up through occasional google searches

BJB2: I know you're pressed for time, Madelyn. Thanks so much for taking the time to explain some of the features of PGF

MadelynF: No problem. It's been fun. Jeff, nice to meet you!

MadelynF: Okay. Great ideas, Jeff. Happy Holidays everyone!

BJB2: have a safe and happy holiday!

BJB2: see you next year :-)

MadelynF: You too!

JeffC: ditto