

Title of Session: Global Project Based Learning

Moderator: Linda Ullah

Title of File: 20050324gpbl

Date: March 24, 2005

Room: Hot Tub Conference Room

LindaU: Let's start with introductions... I'm Linda Ullah. I run a technology integration staff development program at Foothill College in the San Francisco Bay Area, but I was a K-12 teacher for many years before I took this role.

SarahMW: I am Sarah. I go to the University of Houston in Texas and I am a preservice teacher for Math 4-8th

YvonnePH: Hi, My name is Yvonne and I am a Pre-Service Teacher at University of Houston

ErinC: I'm Erin and I am completing my education degree at the University of Regina, with Sam!

LindaU: Let me know who you are, where you are from. what you do (student or teacher.. and why you are interested in global pbl --and what is your experience with it

CarolMu: Hi I am Carol and I am a technology coordinator for a school in New Jersey.

SarahMW: I have no experience with it.

SamanthM: Hi, my name is Sam (that's a girl!) I am in my fourth year of elementary education at the University of Regina Saskatchewan

LisaWar: Hi, my name is Lisa. I am a pre-service teacher from U of H

JasonDe: I'm a 1st and 2nd grade teacher in Canada with some technology coordination within the school

PatriciaP: Hi I'm Pat and I'm a history teacher

PatriciaL3: I am a preservice teacher at the University of Houston.

LindaU: Hi Pat.. where do you teach

PatriciaP: Sorry, Massachusetts

LindaU: Since we have a newish group.. I'm going to start with some basics...

LindaU: First let me ask.. What does the term "global project based learning" mean to you?

ErinC: creating awareness of other cultures and countries...making a difference in the world

LindaU: good

SarahMW: I really do not know.

LisaWar: interactive communication, working with others around the world

LindaU: good

PatriciaL3: how we and what we are learning affects the world

PatriciaP: Well, I'll take a shot. Global could also mean encompassing different modes of learning as well as cultural differences

SamanthM: I think that it means using technology to guide students with their learning on global level and taking the learning outside the classroom by connecting it to other parts of the world

CarolMu: creating an awareness in our classrooms that we are part of the world community

LindaU: excellent

LindaU: Hi Erin.. introduce yourself..

LindaU: Robert Rutan identifies four key global literacies in his book (page 29):

LindaU: These literacies are 1. Personal Literacy: Understanding and valuing yourself

LindaU: 2. Social Literacy: Engaging and challenging others.

YvonnePH: What is the title of the book?

LindaU: 3. Business literacy... focusing on mobilizing your organization

LindaU: and 4. Cultural literacy.. valuing and leveraging cultural difference

BjB: I like the idea of literacies

LindaU: His book is entitled BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AND NATIONAL CULTURES

LindaU: I like to frame the discussion about gpbl and schools around his literacies... can you imagine why?

PatriciaP: The students will be able to apply learning to their personal lives

LindaU: yes

LindaU: and??????

PatriciaP: make appropriate connections to society

ErinC: literacy is the universal goal of education systems around the world

LisaWar: students need to be familiar with all these forms. They are important to communicate in society

BjB is not sure about business literacy. The language of business is very culturally based, is it not?

LindaU: yes, but how is literacy (reading and writing) different from global literacy?

SamanthM: global literacy may be understanding the world?

LindaU: I look at our organization as our schools, BJ

BjB: ahhh...thanks, Linda

LindaU: yes Samantha. why is this important

LisaWar: It means understanding the world you live in

LindaU: Rutan says that workers and leaders in the our global economy must become globally literate

ErinC: I meant literacy in general not relating to reading and writing but being aware and able to communicate on a variety of different levels

LindaU: It is my personal belief that as educators we must help our students become globally literate citizens of the world.

LindaU: ah communication.. good.

PatriciaL3: We must understand and respect others in order to effectively communicate.

LindaU: language differences can be a teaching tool

LisaWar: I agree

LindaU: that is one advantage of taking on a global project in your classroom... It can also be a challenge.

LindaU: What other advantages can you think of for connecting your students with students in other places?

SamanthM: they see different cultures and learn from children their own age

SarahMW: They can learn to respect other cultures

ErinC: encourage exploration and curiosity

SarahMW: And respect the differences between them

ErinC: break down stereotypes and prejudices

YvonnePH: They could also see many similarities with other cultures

LindaU: yes... for example students at JL Stanford Middle School in Palo Alto CA are involved in a global exchange project with students in China

PatriciaL3: the world is greater than the classroom.

ErinC: how are they finding that project Linda?

ErinC: China's education system is so different!!!

SarahMW: Using this in the classroom also gets students interested in students their own age which they think is interesting.

LindaU: yes, but the ministry of education is very interested in global pbl.

SarahMW: How do they communicate?

PatriciaP: also reduces fear of the unknown

SamanthM: It shows them that even though we may have different cultures and do different things that the other children are just like them

SarahMW: With the language barrier?

ErinC: Chinese students learn some English in school don't they??

LindaU: What they are doing is year-long virtual exchanges with students in China which involve creating short movies illustrating various aspects of their everyday lives and sharing them on a secure website.

ErinC: that is very neat!

LisaWar: that is so neat

LindaU: All Chinese students now study/learn English as a standard part of their curriculum.

SarahMW: WOW!

SamanthM: neat

LindaU: These movies include culture, sports, school, community, family and other themes.

ErinC: How would you begin to set something like that up?

ErinC: it sounds amazing!!

SarahMW: Which content area is this particular project geared towards?

LisaWar: perhaps Social Studies

LindaU: Let's take a look at the Student Plane Web site that they are using to do this project. <http://studentplanet.org/> (Click on the blue URL)

SamanthM: that is such a great idea and such a unique opportunity for students

ErinC: what a great resource!

LindaU: You might want to look at some of the movies.

SamanthM: yeah

YvonnePH: amazing

LindaU: When you are done looking.. please share thoughts, ideas...

PatriciaL3: This is definitely better than reading about other cultures. Students are getting first hand accounts from children their age.

ErinC: I agree

ErinC: they can vicariously experience the other culture through video!

PaulaWi: Using quick time, you could probably use this for reading when doing a story about a character from a culture.

LindaU: When I went to China the first time.. I went to the Great Wall where students were taking their field trip.

SamanthM: It is such a great idea. It definitely makes it 'real' for them instead of reading it in a book.

ErinC: and personal too not like any other video that you would view

PatriciaL3: It also promotes student's awareness of their own lives.

LindaU: I thought.. wouldn't it be great to put digital cameras in their hands.. give them a wi fi connection and let them share their field trip with students in other parts of the world in real time

ErinC: yeah!

SarahMW: Linda... I only watched one of the movies all the way through, but it seems that there is no talking involved.

YvonnePH: that would be cool

PaulaWi: View says so much more than words can say.

SarahMW: It shows their way of life.

LindaU: I had the same thought in Giza when bus loads of students were taking their school field trips there.

PatriciaL3: what type of follow-up activities go along with watching the videos?

LisaWar: I really like the digital picture idea

SarahMW: The big question of "How is America different?"

PaulaWi: Could you have students do their own version and compare?

YvonnePH: that is a good idea

SamanthM: Yeah, Paula, that is what I was wondering

SarahMW: Even the tools that the bike repair man was using were different.

LindaU: The Palo Alto students are taking pictures of their homes.. food, ways of living, etc... and sharing them with their Chinese partners.

SarahMW: This would be interesting to American students

SarahMW: Are they like Pen-Pals?

LindaU: They are writing emails, sending photos and videos and sharing each others' cultures.

SarahMW: Neat!

LindaU: Now take a look at this site: Photographer Peter Menzel has published a wonderful book called MATERIAL WORLD. Some of the photos from this book can be found at:

LindaU: <http://www.menzelphoto.com/gallery/mw.htm> How could you use these photos as the starting point for a project to help students value each others cultures?

LisaWar: ePals is also really neat

YvonnePH: I watched the video on Street Games....looks like older men playing Chess....although their pieces look very different

LindaU: yes.. ePals is a great place to start.

LindaU: Yvonne.. similarities and differences in cultures are important to share.

ErinC: have them write captions for the pictures...about what is going on...

SarahMW: You could use the pictures in a Photo Story project

PaulaWi: At one workshop I attended, students created movies with Windows Movie Maker where they took videos of students as they went through their school day. It would be interesting to see what a school day is like for students elsewhere.

SarahMW: And then have the students create Photo Stories of their own cultures

LindaU: yes.. sharing a school day is a great multi-cultural exchange

SamanthM: That is such an awesome idea!!

LindaU: Take a look at the Peter Menzel site and suggest how this could be used in for a cross-cultural project.

PaulaWi: I feel any topic that our kids can relate to would be interesting to do this type of activity for comparison with other cultures.

LindaU: Patricia that web site is <http://www.menzelphoto.com/gallery/mw.htm>

SarahMW: Students could take on picture and write what they think is going on in the picture.

SarahMW: Then maybe they could come in contact with students of that culture and ask about the picture.

ErinC: there are also landscapes that could be used in geography

LindaU: In some ways what the Palo Alto and Chinese students are doing is similar, don't you think?

SamanthM: They could do some kind of research project on the cultures and events that are displayed in the pictures

PatriciaP: They could explore why the homes are different from their homes... exploring geographical differences etc

SamanthM: comparing communities

PatriciaP: environment, materials available

LindaU: How many misconceptions do we have about other parts of the world?

ErinC: many!!

SarahMW: A whole lot!

PatriciaP: tons

LisaWar: This would eliminate many of them

LindaU: For example are you aware that China is building subdivisions (housing) that is quite similar to our housing developments in the US?

PatriciaP: It would show the students that others are not that different from them, even if they live a half a world away

PaulaWi: In the past I've had students do webquests where they investigate and compare things like a meal served for the Chinese New Year and compare it to their New Year meal. Video of the actual holidays would be even better!!!

SarahMW: Students should be exposed to other cultures.

LindaU: Yes... and how does that differ between Chinese living in this part of the world and Chinese living in China?

SamanthM: it makes it real

SarahMW: At first it does not seem interesting, but the similar attributes of each culture will help the students gain understanding and interest.

LindaU: Just to change our focus a bit.. How can we use global projects to help children in other less fortunate parts of the world?

SamanthM: we can have our students develop plans to help them-such as making shoe boxes around Christmas

SarahMW: We can show our students what it is like in other places, and that may inspire them to want to help.

PatriciaP: If our students are more aware and understand other cultures they hopefully will be better citizens of the world

LisaWar: It could be a class project. Maybe a class can adopt another.

LindaU: what about countries that don't celebrate our holidays?

SarahMW: Pictures speak louder than words!

SarahMW: Send them pencils and paper!

ErinC: Project Love, schools here send school supplies

SamanthM: we could research their holidays and allow students to gain a better understanding

SarahMW: Great Idea!

PatriciaP: you need to find some commonality

PaulaWi: An understanding of the beliefs of other cultures help them understand why they do things the way they do.

PatriciaP: if not holidays... then broaden it to celebrations and why we/they celebrate

LisaWar: Research the countries first, perhaps

PatriciaL3: Perhaps pick some American classics, such as baseball and collect gloves, bats, balls and send them to other less fortunate children.

SamanthM: it would definitely promote acceptance for others values and beliefs

ErinC: in my internship we studied interdependence and cultures around the world..we did Operation Christmas child and had a guest speaker from a very poor country.. Haiti

ErinC: that guest speaker really encouraged the children and they organized the entire shoebox thing themselves...

PaulaWi: Could a class "adopt" a class in a third world country?

LindaU: Take a look at Free the Children: Free the Children <http://www.freethechildren.com> is an impressive project. It was begun by Craig Kielburger in Toronto, Canada when he was just 12 years old. Craig is now in his 20s and the organization he formed and his varied projects continue to make an impressive difference for the children of the world.

SamanthM: yeah I bet...it helps when it is actually first hand accounts

YvonnePH: Our church did Operation Christmas Child, some children included their picture in the shoeboxes

LindaU: Yes Erin.. we are all interdependent... good point

ErinC: our class added pictures too and it was a great touch...personalized it

SarahMW: Health Kits is a good idea.. from the website

LisaWar: That sounds so neat

LindaU: I recently worked with two fifth grade classes who raise over 1200 for Tsumani relief and decide to donate to Free the Children because of the organizations mission, lack of administrative costs and the fact that the 5th grades could choose how the money would be used.

ErinC: wow! what kinds of fundraisers did you do?

ErinC: or was it donations?

SamanthM: What an awesome experience for those kids...very empowering

YvonnePH: that is very impressive

JasonDe: we made Christmas cards, using our colour printer at school, and used the money to purchase hens and roosters through World Vision.

SarahMW: These types of projects can also help students realize how fortunate they are!

LindaU: The students put "penny jars" in every classroom and in the office. They sent a newsletter home to all parents asking for them to send some extra "lunch money" with their children to school so the students K-8 could donate part of their lunch money.

LisaWar: I bet it really gets the students and families involved

ErinC: that's wonderful

LindaU: Bj has a wonderful school bus ride to share with you.. The web site is:
<http://www.andycarvin.com/video/baramati-captioned.mov>

SamanthM: ahh very nice

LindaU: Take a look at this movie.. and see if it gives you any ideas for a project.

LindaU: It may be a bit slow to load.

BjB: it's a big file.

PaulaWi: I still use dial-up, so I know mine is very slow.

SarahMW: BjB..tell us about it then

ErinC: good idea!

LindaU: You might want to bookmark it... It is an amazing video.. you get to see the "old" way of life in India along with an attempt to bring technology into the schools via a traveling mobile lab.

BjB: it's a movie about a school bus that has been fitted with computers

LisaWar: I'll have to check it out

LindaU: It is important to know that many places in the world don't have as much access to technology (including the Internet) as we do.

BjB: Andy Carvin shows the children learning basic computer programs...

SarahMW: I got it!!!

BjB: and then shows you that only children who go to school have access to the tech

ErinC: that was obvious Linda when I visited the Dominican!

BjB . o O (a great contrast)

LindaU: yet, even in remote villages an attempt is being made.

LisaWar: Yeah, I agree. Some take it for granted

ErinC: there were no computers only in internet cafes for the tourists and the people that could afford it!

LindaU: Exactly, Erin.. Internet connections in poor countries are still extremely expensive

ErinC: I couldn't imagine not having technology... I am totally dependent on it now!!!

SamanthM: yeah me too

YvonnePH: Absolutely

SarahMW: This is a neat site!!

SarahMW: It is like a tumbling bus where students tumble expect they have computers!!

SarahMW: And are learning how to use the computer!

LindaU: I hope I've been able to wet your appetite and give you some ideas on how you might consider integrating a global project or two into your curriculum... and some understanding of what the possibilities could be, and what some of the constraints might be...

YvonnePH: thanks for the great information and ideas!

YvonnePH smiles

ErinC: yeah thanks...

LindaU: Any final thoughts

SamanthM: yeah it was very informative

SarahMW: Thank you Linda and Bj

SamanthM: thank you so much

ErinC: I will be integrating these projects into my future classroom!!

LisaWar: thanks so much for the links and great info!

BjB: Linda will be back next month with more great ideas

PaulaWi: Great discussion. You've given me such great ideas!!

ErinC: excellent!

LindaU smiles

BjB . o O (April 28)

LindaU thinks so.

LindaU: I hope you'll share your ideas next month.

LindaU: bye all.. this was fun...

ErinC: thank you it was very informative!!

BjB hugs Linda. Thanks for a great discussion!

LindaU: Another great group.. I have to run.. My husband is leaving for Japan and other Asian destinations tonight.