

Title of Session: Social Studies Forum - The Pursuit of Happiness

Moderator: Michael Hutchison

Guest Speakers: Mark Setton, Allison Holzer, Pam GrayCurt Tucker

Title of File: 20080312ssfhhappiness

Date: March 12, 2008

Room: Social Studies Forum Group

MichaelH: Welcome to tonight's Social Studies forum

MarkSe: thanks I'm only a rookie

MichaelH: tonight's topic is one that we've been looking forward to around here for a long time, and we're looking forward to a great discussion.

MichaelH: Tonight, we'll discuss a positive psychology resource called "The Pursuit of Happiness".

MichaelH: But, before we start... let's begin with some introductions... would everyone like to tell us who you are, where you are located geographically, what you teach, etc.?

BJB2: I'm in Pennsylvania and teach communication

MichaelH is a social studies teacher in southwestern Indiana

ErinMD: I am from Indiana and I am studying elementary education.

MarkSe: I'm in long island New York and I teach East Asian philosophy

AdrienneF: I'm in Oregon and teach business practices to artists and creative, and facilitate arts-based programs in prisons, schools, non-profit, companies, etc.

PamG: I'm in California. I taught for many years but I am currently Curriculum Director for Road Trip Nation.

AllisonH: I live in New Haven, and I'm working as a Positive Psychology coach with students and teachers.

MichaelH: cool... it looks like all areas of the country are well represented tonight!

MichaelH: I mentioned about DETACHING the chat window and pop=up blockers a few minutes ago... does anyone have any questions about that?

PamG: Thanks, Michael...much better!

MichaelH: great!

MichaelH: ;et

MichaelH: let's go ahead and get started again

MichaelH: Mark, would you like to start by letting us know a bit about Pursuit of Happiness?

MarkSe: yes perhaps the best thing is to show you the two main components of the website

MichaelH: sounds good, Mark

MichaelH reminds all that if Mark types a web address, you can click it and it will open in a new browser window

MarkSe: before I do that perhaps I should say that we are a prototype at the moment

MichaelH: However, don't stray too long so that you can follow the discussion

MarkSe: we have many plans and we would love your input on those plans

MichaelH . o O (all links will be included in the transcript and they will be live)

MarkSe: ok so our plan is to become a virtual platform about human wellbeing that any educator around the world can access

MarkSe: as I mentioned we have a sort of yin yang structure, one is the history of happiness and the other is the science of happiness

MarkSe: this is the link to the history of happiness

MarkSe: <http://pursuit-of-happiness.org/projects.aspx>

MarkSe: as you will notice we try to cover global views of human happiness from Asia to the west

AllisonH: We're calling each historian on the page a "module"

MichaelH checks to see if everyone can see the page Mark linked to...

MarkSe: Curt who has just joined us is going to steadily transfer the content to various multimedia for students

MarkSe: the module on the Chinese thinker Mencius has already been "multimediated"

to a certain extent

MarkSe: Curt, could you take us on a little visit to the land of Mencius?

CurtTu: Hello

MichaelH: Hi, Curt

CurtTu: The concept of the Mencius material I created is a series of cards as in cards from a deck.

MarkSe: this is the link

AllisonH: <http://pursuit-of-happiness.org/mencius.aspx>

MarkSe: thanks curt

BJB2 . o O (please note the hyphens in Pursuit-of-happiness!)

CurtTu: These cards are of course virtual cards. The user clicks through them to get each Mencius concept we defined.

MichaelH: Curt, just curious... is this a Flash animation?

CurtTu: Yes

MichaelH: my elder daughter is a New Media grad... she'd love this

MarkSe: we will use the same format to introduce modern theories of psychology as well as historical views

CurtTu: Flash is my main tool for Multimedia creation.

PamG: and the site will also have lesson plans and activities that align with various grades and subjects

AllisonH: The lesson plans will be in download-able format, so can be accessed directly from the virtual platform.

CurtTu: SO they are "Flash Cards" :-)) for any of you old enough to remember the concept.

PamG smiles

MarkSe: each figure on the history of happiness will represent one module and we will construct minilessons on each as well as activities describing how the key ideas can be

applied in daily life

CurtTu: I design and use them for many purposes.

CurtTu: Some will include not only text and animation but also video and sound.

PamG: The mini-lessons will bring to life the personalities

CurtTu: All contained inside the deck.

MarkSe: the idea is for example, that a teacher covering China for global studies can provide a quick minilesson on Chinese views of happiness

CurtTu: Yes

PamG: as well as biographies for key historical and philosophical figures

CurtTu: And it's revealed in a compelling way.

MarkSe: we hope that can bring some of the dry history to life and make it relevant to the present

AllisonH: and also link to modern science

MarkSe: oh yes perhaps its time to introduce the prototype of the science of happiness pages...under heavy construction

CurtTu: And of course these mini-lessons can be done in a physical real world manifestation of the cards as well.

MarkSe: we only have text but this should provide a flavor of what we will be doing

AdrienneF: this is very very cool

MarkSe: science-of-happiness.wikidot.com

MichaelH: Mark, let me see if I can make that a link

MichaelH: <http://science-of-happiness.wikidot.com>

MarkSe: thanks!

CurtTu: IS there a way to make this forum discussion dialog box bigger?

MarkSe: <http://science-of-happiness.wikidot.com/>

MichaelH: whoops... sure thing Curt

MichaelH: do you see the ACTIONS menu at the top right?

CurtTu: Yep

MichaelH: click that, and select DETACH

MichaelH: that will make the window bigger and easier to navigate

CurtTu: Whew! That's better. :-)

MichaelH: should have mentioned that to you earlier

PamG: It's tough to read that tiny box as it flies by!

CurtTu: Yep lol

MichaelH: or, we could be trying to teach everyone speed reading!

PamG: That, too!

CurtTu: Speed tiny reading.

PamG: I find that my students had a difficult time understanding actions of some nations

BJB2 . o O (you can also select larger text from Actions)

CurtTu: Ahh Ok

CurtTu: Ok now I can really see the action!

CurtTu: Very nice Forum system!

AllisonH: Yes, I'm impressed too!

MichaelH: We like it... what is this, BJ, about the third generation of TI Chat?

BJB2 nods

MarkSe: I should say that we would really appreciate feedback from our friends on tapped in as you get acquainted with the website

CurtTu: So what is the interest of those involved here in the discussion concerning POH?

MarkSe: Allison had some questions about the best way of integrating the curricula

AllisonH: Yes, I was curious to hear from the teachers here...

AllisonH: do you see this material being best integrated into existing curriculum as mini-lessons?

AllisonH: Or...

MichaelH: Mark, are you considering specific lesson plans being added?

AllisonH: yes!

MichaelH: Cool...

MarkSe: yes we will have three levels of lesson plans for each module

AllisonH: or designed as whole units to use...

ErinMD: as a future teacher, I believe the website has very good qualities

MichaelH: I may be asking a lot here... but some teachers will want the lessons and modules to match somehow to standards... maybe NCSS?

BJB2: there is a huge push for character education...I think a lot of educators would be interested in integrating this idea into their lessons

AllisonH: Yes, we do plan to do that

MarkSe: were in the middle of applying for some grants in that very area

CurtTu: We are really running on two tracks of thought here.

PamG: We thought the lesson plans would incorporate interactive materials for many content areas

BJB2 listens

PamG: but the first focus would be SS

BJB2 . o O (grade levels?)

CurtTu: The science and history of happiness and ways to high light those with new forms of media.

AdrienneF: what is SS?

PamG: middle school and high school right now

MichaelH: . o O (social studies)

PamG: Social Sciences

AdrienneF: duh, of course

AdrienneF: LOL

AllisonH: =)

PamG: smiles

PamG: Sorry, I think everything is history!

AdrienneF: <----eating spaghetti, everything is about Italy for the moment

CurtTu: No it really boils down to good coffee.

MichaelH: That sounds pretty good, Adrienne...

AdrienneF: ;-) it's yummy

MarkSe: you're teaching Italy as part of global studies

MichaelH: garlic bread and a salad with it?

BJB2: Adrienne is the guest speaker for the Art of Storytelling discussion that follows this one...

AdrienneF: ah yes, in the schools here that is a piece of the language classes

BJB2: she uses some interesting formats to create and present stories

AdrienneF: indeed - thank you BJ

MarkSe: they had an April fools day piece on the bbc about harvesting spaghetti from trees

AdrienneF: LOL

AdrienneF: fun

MarkSe: that was a great piece of storytelling'

BJB2 . o O (the pursuit of happiness is a series of stories)

AdrienneF: tom foolery is indeed a classical, and oft overlooked form of ST

MarkSe: especially the history of happiness

AdrienneF: ST=story telling

AdrienneF: I really like this idea of happiness being illustrated through the different philosophers viewpoints

CurtTu: Good media has everything to do with good story telling.

AdrienneF: and see applications of the work in many different arenas

AdrienneF: beyond schools

MarkSe: telling jokes and appreciating them isn't dealt with yet...but perhaps we should work on it

AllisonH: On our blog, which is currently transitioning to a new wordpress.com site, we have a narrative interview between POH and Confucius: <http://poh-blissblog.blogspot.com/>

PamG: Biography!

MarkSe: Confucius lives!

MarkSe: and so do the rest of them if we succeed with the multimedia

MarkSe: I should mention that Sebastian in England is working on cartoon strips for the history of happiness

AdrienneF: this is the coolest. my former husband will TOTALLY dig this - he's writing a book that has Aristotle as one of the characters....this will be a great resource for him....

PamG: Graphic novels...cartoons....are extremely popular

MarkSe: we thought that might be a medium that would catch students attention

AdrienneF: and pursuing happiness is the core of the book

AdrienneF: good thinking on the graphic novels

MarkSe: I'd love to talk to him one day

MarkSe: I got the idea from Japan and Korea

AdrienneF: card decks are great too....there are so many ways to use them....

MarkSe: half of the students learn about their national histories from comic books

MarkSe: anyway one more medium is interviews with leading specialists in a kind of youtube short interview format

AllisonH: hahah, I was just writing that...

AllisonH: We're thinking on the same wave length this evening!

MarkSe: from mind to mind as the Zen Buddhist say

PamG: the lesson plans would use the information on the site, as well as link students, teachers and parents to other sites on the Internet

AdrienneF: have you folks heard of the Ignite presentations? Kinda like the TED presentations, but a tighter and shorter format....

AllisonH: We're thinking that variety in presentation is a good thing - for multiple learning style and to keep students engaged...

MarkSe: no I haven't

PamG: Yes, I have

CurtTu: The Ted presentations are wonderful.

AdrienneF: they have a format that is exciting and would be a great way to present these ideas, art, etc.

CurtTu: I am a member of the organization.

MarkSe: I agree

AdrienneF: in Portland ours is here: igniteportland.com

MarkSe: of TED?

CurtTu: Yes

AdrienneF: no Ignite

CurtTu: I am now.

PamG: Thanks for the link

AdrienneF: ahhh, TED rocks in a big way

AllisonH: Is this it? <http://www.ted.com/talks>

MarkSe: I think so

CurtTu: It certainly does.

MarkSe: the music is catchy too

AdrienneF: anyway - my presentation is here:
<http://youtube.com/watch?v=rM6qECYIE9I> - and you can use this format to tell stories with impact

CurtTu: They have a entire section on happiness.

MarkSe: you mean a TED section including the dalai lama I think

AdrienneF: 20 slide, 15 seconds per slide... a very small version of TED - but you could get kids to do the presentations....their interpretations of the materials....

CurtTu: The section includes several people.

MarkSe: that's a great idea to have the kids do it, better than the Dalai Lama

AllisonH: Yes! Cheers to that idea.

AdrienneF: yes - each child could choose their "fav" thought leader

BJB2: you also might want to check out www.nextvista.org

MarkSe: my apologies to the Buddhists

AdrienneF: and then craft the presentation

AdrienneF: present it alongside another 13 children who've chosen other happiness thought leaders

BJB2: next vista leads a presentation in Tapped In on the first Thursday of each month

MarkSe: I had no idea about next vista, thanks

PamG: Is that in the SS Forum, BJ?

BJB2: No, it's a separate topic, Pam

MichaelH: that would be another session, Pam... probably ASO, BJ?

MarkSe: I guess were running out of time but we hope to have some new treats for you next time

PamG: I can check the calendar...thanks

BJB2: Next Vista has some oriental roots also....the originator is a Japanese teacher

BJB2 . o O (April 3)

PamG: thanks!

CurtTu: Yes I must run. Supper and family are calling.

MichaelH: that would be great, Mark... we look forward to another session

CurtTu: Nice to chat with you all.

AllisonH: Thanks everyone!

PamG: Thanks!

MarkSe: thanks very much for the kind welcome

ErinMD: Thanks!

MichaelH: if you have a timeframe, Mark, we have April (at least the first half) and May open

BJB2: Thanks for presenting this information, everyone!

MichaelH: you can always e-mail me Mark, when you want to schedule.

MarkSe: we can try to have new material ready for April

BJB2 heads for the Art of Storytelling discussion

BJB2 waves bye

MichaelH: or we could go for May or early next school year...

MarkSe: ok ill see if we can do it by April or May, thanks

PamG: thanks, BJB

MarkSe: so long