

**Title of Session:** WriteTalk: Gaggle Net

**Moderator:** Sandra Shattuck

**Guest Speaker:** Stephanie Newton

**Title of File:** 20080508writetalk

**Date:** May 8, 2008

Room: WriteTalk Group

**SandraS** joined the room.

**BJB2** cheers. Hi, Sandy!

**SandraS** hugs BJ

**SandraS** waves to Michael and Claire

**MichaelJH:** I don't know how to do those things Sandra, but I'm waving back...lol

**LaurenKa:** me too, waving...: )

**SandraS** applauds Michael

**SandraS:** just type a colon and whatever action you want

**SandraS** waves

**ClaireP** dances

**SandraS:** so if I type ":waves"

**ClaireP:** haha

**LaurenKa** waves

**SandraS:** ooooh

**SandraS:** yeah Claire and Lauren

**MichaelJH:** oh duh...

**ClaireP:** woohoooo

**SandraS:** quick learners...

**MichaelJH** waves

**StephaniLN** joined the room.

**SandraS** applauds Michael

**StephaniLN**: Hello everyone.

**SandraS**: Hi, Stephanie!

**MichaelJH**: well, you learn something everyday

**StephaniLN**: Hi, Sandra

**SandraS** jumps on her hoverboard and does a flip off the left sequoia

**BJB2** sighs with relief...hi, Stephanie

**MichaelJH**: Hi Stephanie

**StephaniLN**: Hi, Michael

**MichaelJH**: dang Sandra...you got the moves

**SandraS**: Stephanie will be talking about how she's used Gaggle.net, so we're very glad she's here

**SandraS**: lol, Michael

**SandraS** turns on the meditative fountain

**StephaniLN**: I will do my best

**JeffC** joined the room.

**SandraS** waves to Jeff

**SandraS** passes around warm chocolate chip cookies and espresso

**JeffC** waves... mentions <http://www.epals.com> (yeah i know... topic is gaggle.net!) and lurks since I have to head out and deal with kids, etc.

**SandraS**: thanks, Jeff

**ClaireP**: yup

**BJB2**: Sandy, would you like to start with introductions?

**SandraS:** sure

**SandraS:** sounds good

**SandraS:** We usually start by introducing ourselves.

**SandraS:** Where are we? What do we teach?

**SandraS:** . o O ( not an existential question.... )

**SandraS:** I'm in Huntsville AL where I teach literature and writing at the college level

**BJB2:** I teach remedial communication and am in Pennsylvania

**FredS** joined the room.

**SandraS** waves to Fred

**SandraS:** we're just doing introductions

**ClaireP:** I'm in San Diego and I teach high school biology

**StephaniLN:** I'm in Belleville, IL I teach in Brooklyn IL and teach middle school literature, math and social studies

**LaurenKa:** I'm in El Segundo, CA-I teach computers to grades 3-8

**BJB2:** we're just starting introductions, Fred....where you are located and what you teach

**FredS:** sorry new at this. science 6th grade Chicago

**MichaelJH:** Hi, I'm from San Diego, CA, and I teach 10th grade English and a classmate of Claire's at SDSU. I thought that was you Claire, but I wasn't sure.... :)

**SandraS:** excellent!

**SandraS:** We've got two science teachers!

**FredS:** I was reading the writing project

**SandraS:** and a nice range of grades...

**SandraS:** Welcome to WriteTalk!

**SandraS:** I start with a quick introduction to the National Writing Project

**FredS**: thanks

**SandraS**: and then we'll move right on to Gaggle.net

**SandraS**: I'm very pleased that Stephanie is here this evening

**SandraS**: at the last WriteTalk, several people asked about safe web-based email

**SandraS**: Stephanie talked about gaggle.net and she's been using it in her classrooms...so she'll give us her experience

**SandraS**: and we'll talk about using email to teach writing...

**SandraS**: So here's the quick spiel on the National Writing Project or NWP

**SandraS**: It's a professional development organization started in 1974 at UC Berkeley

**SandraS**: federally funded

**SandraS**: there are about 200 NWP sites around the country

**SandraS**: all housed at universities

**SandraS**: serving primarily k-12 teachers

**SandraS**: NWP has three tenets:

**SandraS**: 1) teachers are the best teachers of other teachers

**SandraS**: 2) teachers teach writing more effectively when they improve their own writing

**SandraS**: 3) writing is a great learning tool across all subject areas

**SandraS**: The main program at each site is the Summer Institute

**SandraS**: these are intensive and can be taken for grad. credit some times...or you might get a stipend

**SandraS**: but let's take a quick look at the website

**SandraS**: you can see a map in the upper right corner

**SandraS**: so you can see if there's a site near you

**SandraS:** just check the map

**SandraS:** then please use the Search function

**SandraS:** type in anything you're interested in

**SandraS:** journal writing

**SandraS:** science

**SandraS:** technology

**ClaireP** left the room.

**SandraS:** and see what pops up

**SandraS:** then come back here

**SandraS:** Everybody with me?

**SandraS:** Here's the URL:

**SandraS:** <http://nwp.org>

**BJB2:** hold down the ctrl key on your keyboard when you click on the url

**SandraS:** thanks, BJ

**SandraS:** if you want to visit the National Writing Project website for a couple minutes, here's the URL

**SandraS:** <http://nwp.org>

**FredS:** Sandra I have to go but would like more information on this. Can I get it emailed to me at school?

**MichaelJH:** We have one at UC San Diego

**SandraS:** you'll have a transcript emailed to you Fred

**SandraS:** and the information so far will be right there

**SandraS:** cool, Michael

**FredS:** perfect

**FredS**: thanks

**SandraS**: sure!

**SandraS**: UC San Diego has a fairly large site, I think

**FredS** left the room (signed off).

**MichaelJH**: I'm looking through it right now

**SandraS**: excellent

**SandraS**: should be a link to the site's webpage

**MichaelJH** brb dog needs in

**SandraS**: OK

**SandraS**: Is everybody back here yet?

**BJB2** nods

**ClaireP**: yes

**StephaniLN**: yes

**LaurenKa**: yes

**MichaelJH**: yes

**SandraS**: OK, wonderful...any questions about the NWP before we go on?

**StephaniLN**: There is definitely a lot of useful information on the site

**SandraS**: yes, there's tons!

**SandraS**: The Quarterly is the online journal

**SandraS**: has been in print for a while

**SandraS**: just moved solely to online version

**StephaniLN**: Last time I know we looked at some of the journal topics

**ClaireP**: is it subscription?

**SandraS:** No, Claire

**SandraS:** all free

**StephaniLN:** and I was looking for any information they had on research I was doing for another class

**SandraS:** so let's say you're wondering about how to use digital storytelling

**SandraS:** inputting that search term would net you a lot of links and information

**StephaniLN:** I also liked some of the topics found in the journal writing we looked at last time

**StephaniLN:** this time I looked up information on math and found some more useful information

**SandraS:** yes, in the 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing...

**SandraS:** oh, great, Stephanie

**SandraS:** If you just type in "30 Ideas" into the search box

**MichaelJH:** how long is the summer institute?

**SandraS:** you'll get a publication that gives quick ideas

**SandraS:** and links to a longer article

**SandraS:** usually 4 weeks, Michael

**SandraS:** varies from site to site, but most of them are intensive and 4-5 weeks long

**SandraS:** Well, since email is our topic....let's try a search on the NWP site and see what comes up

**SandraS:** go to <http://nwp.org> and just input "email" into search box

**SandraS:** we'll meet back here in a minute or so....

**SandraS:** anybody back yet?

**MichaelJH:** yes...I just skimmed over the first article...very interesting

**SandraS:** yes, I skimmed it too...I'm looking forward to reading it later....

**LaurenKa:** lots to read..

**SandraS:** Yes!

**ClaireP:** back

**SandraS:** I noticed two articles on using email in the classroom.

**StephaniLN:** Yes

**SandraS:** OK, looks like we're here.

**SandraS:** Let's start with a practical question, and then I'm going to turn the discussion over to Stephanie...

**SandraS:** How many of you use email in the classroom, and if not, what keeps you from using it?

**ClaireP:** I use email to communicate with teachers and occasionally students submit assignments

**MichaelJH:** I use e-mail to send homework assignments, reminders, to answer questions and give feedback to my students.

**StephaniLN:** I don't necessarily use email in the classroom, but I have emailed assignments to a few students who are absent and they have submitted work through email also.

**ClaireP:** students also send me questions through email... but it's rare

**SandraS:** OK, so mostly I'm seeing email as a way to communicate...mostly administrative stuff..?

**LaurenKa:** I want to use email, but not everyone has an address.

**LaurenKa:** that is, the students...

**MichaelJH:** I've also accepted work via email, but I give a deadline, like say 8 pm.

**MichaelJH:** true Lauren, some of my students don't have computer access at home.

**StephaniLN:** Through goggle.net you can change so everyone has an email account.

**SandraS:** Stephanie, do you want to jump in?

**ClaireP:** that's true for me too

**SandraS:** Let's talk about Gaggle.net

**ClaireP:** ok

**SandraS:** Stephanie, how did you start using it?

**SandraS:** What do you use it for?

**SandraS:** And can you tell us something about it?

**StephaniLN:** Gaggle.net allows a teacher or technology coordinator to set up accounts for all students in your building

**StephaniLN:** There are three different versions

**StephaniLN:** One is a free version which is what my school district uses

**StephaniLN:** The downside to the free version is that you get several popups

**StephaniLN:** Through the subscription version it eliminates some of the popups

**StephaniLN:** and through the Licensed site I think it eliminates all popups

**StephaniLN:** The school district I work for had a high school English teacher and the tech coordinator set up accounts for all students and teachers

**SandraS:** So how do you use Gaggle.net?

**SandraS:** And why not just have students have email addresses through any old service?

**StephaniLN:** They set it up because it was easy and free to do

**StephaniLN:** While not all students have internet access at home, there are computers in all of the classrooms and several of the teachers let students on multiple times a day

**StephaniLN:** Some of the ways that I have used gaggle.net is set up blogs

**SandraS** applauds blogs

**StephaniLN:** I have created blog posts to have students connect aspects of literature lessons to their own lives

**MichaelJH:** cool

**StephaniLN:** or just to answer certain questions from the books

**StephaniLN:** The high school English teacher has the students do daily journals on their own blogs.

**SandraS:** What has your experience been with the blogs?

**ClaireP:** as a reflection activity?

**StephaniLN:** We also have teachers emailing students word documents through their email account

**SandraS:** What works? What are the glitches? Are they worth it?

**StephaniLN:** The glitches are that the gaggle.net site has been going through some maintenance the last few days

**StephaniLN:** during the day, so students can not get on to answer their blogs

**ClaireP:** is it routine maintenance, so you know when to expect when they are down?

**StephaniLN:** because they can not get on until after 2:30PM our time

**StephaniLN:** I am not sure if it is routine work or not.

**MichaelJH:** However, it sure beats hauling a bunch of journals home to grade and saves trees. ;)

**SandraS:** I know there are other free email programs like Gaggle.net

**ClaireP:** Definitely!

**SandraS:** Chalk.com is one

**SandraS:** Gaggle.net ensures a safe environment

**ClaireP:** what do you mean by safe?

**SandraS:** and teachers can read all the emails from students, block email

**SandraS:** no spam, no porno

**MichaelJH:** I like the profanity filter

**StephaniLN:** The teacher or administrator gets several emails from everything that is submitted by students to approve before students comments or blogs are accepted. This is another glitch.

**ClaireP:** I see

**SandraS:** you can use search terms to look for problems

**StephaniLN:** However it keeps the use of bad words out of their blogs or comments

**SandraS:** let's take a look at the site...check out what they do...then come back here... so Stephanie can tell us more

**SandraS:** <http://www.gaggle.net>

**MichaelJH:** I was a nerd and looked through it before we started.

**SandraS** applauds all nerds

**MichaelJH** bows

**SandraS:** Nerds unite!

**LaurenKa:** I signed up a few months ago but lost my log in and password, I just emailed their admin...think that will be enough?

**SandraS:** I'm pretty sure, Lauren

**SandraS:** I went ahead and got an account

**SandraS:** Anyone who wants to play with, I can add you to the Tapped In classroom I've got set up.

**StephaniLN:** There are also message boards, discussion boards and ways to set up chats.

**LaurenKa:** I like that I control passwords and can view if necessary. It is better for parents.

**StephaniLN:** However, I have not used these features yet.

**SandraS:** I could set you to "School teacher" so you would be able to play with the permissions

**SandraS:** That's important, Stephanie...that there are also message boards and chat

**SandraS:** Everybody back here?

**LaurenKa:** yes

**MichaelJH:** I also like the idea of having pod-casting tools

**ClaireP:** I see

**StephaniLN:** Today I looked more at the Teacher Guides, Teacher Frequently Asked Questions, and Administration Guide to see if I can start using some of these other features.

**SandraS:** oh, yes...podcasting!

**StephaniLN:** Sometimes the students say the blogs are too much or too long, but at other times I have students who want to know if we are going to be working on blogs and if new posts have been added. I definitely like hearing this.

**SandraS:** What did you think, Stephanie?

**SandraS:** I agree!

**SandraS:** blogs can really get students excited about writing

**SandraS:** And they can add pictures, links to YouTube

**SandraS:** unless you disallow that

**SandraS:** so the main thing is that the teacher has a lot of control

**StephaniLN:** I am hoping that the blogs and having questions that connect the students lives to what we are reading will help them on the state extended response questions

**SandraS:** sounds good~

**StephaniLN:** We really have seen a lot of excitement with the students in our building.

**SandraS:** How so?

**StephaniLN:** When students are creating their own blogs they are coming up with their own topics, examples being Top Five Actors/Actresses I like, Top Five Reasons Brooklyn is the Best City, Top Five Rappers

**StephaniLN:** They have become more creative with their writing

**SandraS:** Cool!

**StephaniLN:** While we, as teachers, have topics just in case they do not know what to write about they have been able to come up with topics on their own.

**SandraS:** Great!

**ClaireP:** it sounds like an educational myspace

**MichaelJH:** lol

**SandraS:** and because of the safety features, you could use this in second grade...

**LaurenKa:** I have found that they thing about what they are going to post more because of how many people will see it. It has been a good thing.

**ClaireP:** where the students can post whatever they want, but it is filtered

**SandraS:** great description, Claire!

**LaurenKa:** think..

**SandraS:** Lauren, do you use Gaggle.net blogs? or something else?

**MichaelJH:** It's funny how some students will struggle with writing in class, but get them on a blog...

**SandraS:** absolutely, Michael...

**LaurenKa:** blogspot right now. I make it open to everyone without an email account for the hour that we do it and then I close it.

**ClaireP:** some students are so used to typing so often that when a pencil is in their hand, it hurts to write for so long

**SandraS:** oh, wow...that's an interesting idea, Lauren

**SandraS:** lol, Claire...

**StephaniLN:** Sometimes the high school students wonder why their posts do not come up, so they are now trying new things or coming up with new words for the profanity words, but as an administrator you can add to the word list to block comments

**LaurenKa:** it gets me around them having to have an email

**SandraS:** would you consider Gaggle.net, Lauren?

**SandraS:** although Blogspot has many more options to the blogs...

**LaurenKa:** that's what I am moving towards because they need an email address

**LaurenKa:** then they can post at home too

**SandraS:** If anyone wants to play with Gaggle.net, you can give me your full name and email address and I can add you to the Tapped In classroom.

**StephaniLN:** Definitely

**LaurenKa:** yes, please

**ClaireP:** I am a coordinator for a collaboration between my school, UCSD, and SDSU, so I will probably have them invest in a license for this because it will be a 2 year program

**SandraS:** And Stephanie, we should be able to find you by searching on Gaggle.net

**StephaniLN:** ok

**ClaireP:** there's a directory in gaggle.net?

**StephaniLN:** Sandra is there a WriteTalk Group Next month

**SandraS:** yes

**SandraS:** we meet every second Thursday

**StephaniLN:** Claire there is a directory in gaggle.net, but I am not sure how far out it goes too

**SandraS:** Do you have an idea for next month, Stephanie?

**StephaniLN:** I am not sure if you are set up with a school if the school is the only directory you see, Claire

**SandraS:** As soon as I'm done here, I'll add y'all.

**SandraS:** And I'll make sure you have school teacher status.

**MichaelJH:** thanks Sandra

**LaurenKa:** thanks

**SandraS:** Sure!

**StephaniLN:** Have you ever done anything on how to get students to write on what they are thinking while reading?

**SandraS:** Oh, yes...

**SandraS:** there's one thing I use...

**SandraS:** a double-entry journal

**SandraS:** I have a handout I can upload here

**SandraS:** let's see if I can find it...hang on

**MichaelJH:** That would be great!

**SandraS:** does anyone know about double-entry journals?

**LaurenKa:** sure.

**StephaniLN:** I do a little.

**MichaelJH:** same here

**SandraS:** excellent...Lauren and Stephanie, do you want to talk about them?

**LaurenKa:** it's a good way for students to recall what they read chapters later

**ClaireP:** sounds great

**SandraS:** one reason I like them is because it helps them to find what they're thinking

**SandraS:** not what they think they're supposed to be thinking

**MichaelJH:** Or to write questions about something they don't understand

**LaurenKa:** gives you a point of reference for knowing how much they are retaining as well.

**StephaniLN:** Write a Quote that made them think on one side and write what it made them think about on the other side

**SandraS:** such great stuff!

**SandraS:** ok, I've uploaded "double-entry2.doc"

**SandraS:** under the "Files" section of this room

**SandraS:** if you go to the left menu above

**SandraS:** click on Files

**SandraS:** it will be the first file

**ClaireP:** thanks

**MichaelJH:** thank you

**SandraS:** we're about out of time...

**LaurenKa:** thanks!

**StephaniLN:** Thanks

**ClaireP:** Thank you for the info

**SandraS:** Thank you all for coming and sharing your expertise!

**SandraS:** Look for a welcome email from Gaggle.net if you asked to be signed up

**SandraS:** and if you join the WriteTalk group, you'll get our meeting reminders

**MichaelJH:** Great meeting and chatting with you all!

**SandraS:** and you can post anything you want to the Discussion list

**SandraS:** Thanks, Michael.

**ClaireP:** Have a good evening everyone!

**SandraS:** You, too, Claire

**SandraS:** Take care, all