

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

BJB2: hi, Suzan!

BJB2: did you figure out how to detach the chat?

BJB2: so, did you figure out how to detach your chat, Suzan?

SandraS tries to remember where Escondido is...

BJB2 . o O (Actions is in the top right of the chat window)

BJB2 thinks Escondido is in California

SuzanMV: yes, it makes things easier to read

SandraS nods

BJB2 nods to Suzan

SandraS: But where in CA?

SandraS: SoCal, eh?

SuzanMV: Escondido in California

SuzanMV: Southern California

SuzanMV: I work in a high gang area

SandraS: Ah, OK

SandraS: and you're in middle school and doing special education

SuzanMV: I enjoy my job, it just gets frustrating sometimes because most of the kids think life is gangs, welfare and having babies early

SuzanMV: Yes, 6th grade, contained classroom

BJB2: do you know about the CreateNow program, Suzan?

SuzanMV: the students go out for P. E. and Exploratory

SandraS: www.createnow.org

BJB2: great organization, Suzan.

BJB2: they have a newsletter

BJB2 . o O (thanks for the url, Sandy)

SuzanMV: tell me about this site

SandraS: Oh, Wow -- the front page of the website advertises something called "LA Street scenes"

SandraS: ..everybody has a story

SandraS: that could relate to our topic of writing

BJB2: well, since this is Sandy's discussion, we'll let her lead the way

SuzanMV: ok

SandraS bows to BJ and defers

SandraS: I'd love to hear about the site, too

BJB2 . o O (I was going to include that topic in my art of storytelling discussion too, Sandy)

SandraS: ah...

SandraS: do you want to say a little bit about the site for Suzan, BJ?

SandraS: and then we'll get going on WriteTalk?

BJB2: I've known about the organization for many years....was started by a woman in California....Jill Gurr

SuzanMV: I can just go to the site after this session, I don't want anyone to be held up

BJB2: they've come a loooong way and really do some great stuff with gangs and at risk and risk kids

SandraS: no problem, Suzan

SandraS: <http://www.createnow.org/about/events-la-street-scenes-3>

SandraS: looks like they're in LA

BJB2: the url will be in your transcript so you can also look later, Suzan

SandraS: Some excellent resources and programs there.

BJB2: Jill started out offering stuff nationally, but had to narrow the focus to California

SandraS: Ah...

SandraS: but it looks like a model others could follow

BJB2: I mentioned the group because you said about gangs, Suzan

BJB2 nods to Sandy

SandraS: Excellent to see models that act on solutions

SandraS wonders if Suzan got involved in the site

SandraS: Suzan, are you back here?

BJB2: they connect kids with screen writers, producers, film makers, song writers...lots of creative writing

SandraS: I noticed that -- and also lots of visual arts, multimedia

SandraS: very exciting

BJB2 nods

BJB2 has created the segue to writing for Sandy

SandraS bows deeply

BJB2 winks

SandraS: We just need to see if Suzan resurfaces...

SuzanMV: ya, I'm here

JeffC joined the room.

SandraS: oh, great!

SandraS waves to Jeff

JeffC waves

SandraS: So, Suzan, we usually start with introductions

SuzanMV: I am thrilled to check out the site, we are always looking for new ideas

SandraS: We're a small group tonight

SandraS nods to Suzan

JeffC: yup

BJB2 didn't see Jeff sneak in!

SuzanMV: I am a special ed teacher, 6th grade, mild/moderate disabilities

SandraS: Thanks, Suzan

SuzanMV: Most of my students are also second language learners

JeffC opened the trap door quietly and snuck in.

SandraS: Excellent

SandraS: I teach writing and literature at the college level in Alabama

SuzanMV: I have tried the Write Inst workshop

JeffC: I'm on Helpdesk here... pop in and share a website or three.

SuzanMV: We also look at our CELDT scores and where the second language learner is at their writing level

SuzanMV: I also rely on student samples of authentic writing and also build from that baseline

SandraS: That sounds excellent, Suzan

SandraS: BJ, did you get to introduce yourself?

SuzanMV: my students writing pieces seem to become stronger as their reading levels get stronger

SandraS: important reading/writing connections

BJB2: I'm on Tapped In helpdesk and am a retired correctional ed teacher

SuzanMV: I implement high frequency words constantly

SandraS: excellent!

SandraS: Thanks, BJ.

JeffC: do you use Wordle, Suzan?

SuzanMV: Most of my students are Spanish Speaking and the English sounds need to be developed

SuzanMV: no, what is Wordle

SandraS: Well, let's talk about the National Writing Project, which has lots of resources for ELL folks

JeffC: <http://wordle.net>

SandraS: I usually start WriteTalk by introducing the National Writing Project

SuzanMV: ok

JeffC: go for it

SandraS: And we can also talk about Wordle in a bit...thanks, Jeff!

SandraS: Jeff and BJ have heard my introduction a gazillion times!

JeffC steps away from the keyboard for a bit... and also suggests <http://www.tikatok.com> and <http://www.shmoop.com> for later.

SandraS: But have you heard of the National Writing Project, Suzan?

SandraS: Thanks, Jeff!

SandraS: NWP is a professional development organization for K-16 teachers

SuzanMV: no

SandraS: It started at UC Berkeley in 1974

SandraS: it's federally funded

SuzanMV: k

SandraS: and has about 200 sites

SandraS: housed at universities

SuzanMV: wow

SandraS: we'll visit the website in a second

SandraS: but there are three main tenets of NWP

SandraS: 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 an effective learning tool across all subjects

SandraS: the main project at each site is the summer institute

SandraS: usually takes 4 weeks and is intensive

SandraS: k-16 teachers get together and read about writing, share teaching demonstrations, and WRITE together

SandraS: it's a fantastic experience

SandraS: so when we go to the website, you can check the map in the upper right corner

SandraS: to see where the closest writing project site is to you

SandraS: there should be a link to a website for that site

SandraS: and you can see about the summer institute

SuzanMV: ok

SandraS: there's a national conference

SandraS: and writing retreats

SandraS: and several projects

SandraS: liked the ELL network

SuzanMV: I would like to see if the district would pay for this

SandraS: lots of work done on writing and ELL

SandraS: they wouldn't have to pay

SandraS: you usually get graduate credit

SandraS: or you get a stipend

SandraS: each site is different

SuzanMV: from who

SandraS: the sites are usually in education schools or English depts.

SandraS: so they can set up to offer graduate credit

SandraS: again, depends on the site

SandraS: at the site I went to here in Alabama, we received a stipend

SuzanMV: ok, I would like to present the information

SandraS: Well, let's visit the site

SandraS: just go there

SandraS: check the map and a site near you

SandraS: then use the Search box

SandraS: you can type in "ELL" or "digital storytelling" or anything you're interested in

SandraS: just see what you get

SandraS: explore for a couple minutes and then come back here

SandraS: just let me know when you're back here and we'll continue talking

SandraS: here's the website

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

SuzanMV: k, excited

SandraS: Here's a link to a whole list of ELLresources on the site:

SandraS: <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/programs/ell?x-t=resources.view>

SandraS: I just saw that NWP got a MacArthur grant!

SandraS: Suzan, any questions? or comments?

BJB2: great about the grant!

SandraS: I know..and it's focused on digital literacy..

JeffC: back

SandraS: Hey, Jeff.

SandraS: We're waiting for Suzan to come back...

SandraS: Suzan, are you there?

SuzanMV: no, I was just writing down the web site

JeffC: anyhow... cool... well... have you ever looked at tikatok Sandra?

SandraS: Oh, excellent...

BJB2: the url will be in your transcript, Suzan

JeffC: you'll get a transcript of this session, Suzan.

SandraS: Suzan, when you get your transcript, you'll have all the URLs right there

SandraS: As a member of Tapped In, you get a transcript of any interaction emailed to you

JeffC notices that BJB and Sandra agree with me.

SuzanMV: ok, still getting use to this, didn't think about the transcript

SandraS: LOL

SandraS: not to worry, Suzan

SandraS: I still forget!

SandraS: Any questions about the site, Suzan?

SuzanMV: this session has been very exciting with all these new sites to look at

SuzanMV: I don't really have any questions, I am really looking forward into exploring them and sharing with my staff

SandraS: We can continue talking about NWP and what you do in your classroom, but Jeff, do you want to introduce tikatok and wordle?

JeffC: sure

JeffC: I'm more of a tikatok introducer than wordle though

SuzanMV: that would be great, thanks Jeff

JeffC: tikatok is an online book starter

SandraS: oh, cool

JeffC: it's web2.0 which means it's free to use... also free to read books written by others...

SuzanMV: what do you mean online book starter

JeffC: it is also a vanity press, so writers may publish their books for 15 soft or 18 hardcover.

JeffC: I'll tell ya!

JeffC: teachers create accounts and also student accounts

JeffC: students login and customize their account... then they start a book

JeffC: they pick from about a dozen icons... aliens/family/sports/etc.

SuzanMV: wow, that sounds exciting

JeffC: then under each general topic there are subtopic starters they may choose from.

JeffC: they are then asked a few questions (usually names, etc.)... click "continue" and their book is started.

SuzanMV: this would be a great technology and language arts lesson

SuzanMV: do I need to get district approval or parent signatures?

JeffC: it's a rather easy to use interface where students type in a text box (some marginal add-ons like color, size, etc.) and images.

JeffC: it's encouraged to have each student put in their parent's email address... but you'd have to ask your people there if parental permission is necessary.

JeffC: obviously one of the end results for tikatok is hope that parents will purchase a hardcover copy of the book their kid made.

JeffC: I volunteered at my youngest son's school today and got four kids started on books.

SuzanMV: or the teacher can as an end of the year gift

SandraS: great idea!

JeffC: if you want to try it as a student, just go to <http://www.tikatok.com> and login: fgds password: fgds

JeffC: of course I'd recommend registering as a teacher at some point and trying it out for yourself.

SuzanMV: I do a lot of that stuff, buy dance tickets, clothing, buy lunch, pay for field trips

JeffC: there ya go

JeffC: I'm thinking long term of how to work this in with my district, especially for ELD students.

JeffC: perhaps get grants to pay for student written books, etc.

SandraS: grants would be a great idea

SandraS: library money?

SuzanMV: I think in order to do that, we should be real knowledgeable and present the benefits of this

JeffC: I think that anything anyone does on the net that ends up costing money is grant worthy for schools to consider.

SuzanMV: the budget just shortened our librarian's hours and many of the teachers were

pink slipped, it would definitely have to be a grant

SandraS: wow...I'm sorry to hear that

JeffC: ok... the other sites I mentioned were shmoop and wordle. <http://www.wordle.net/>

JeffC: wordle is a word aggregizer (uh... is that a word?)... anyway... you copy/paste in blocks of text (from wherever) and wordle makes "word clouds."

SandraS: Wordle is great especially for visually oriented/spatial learners

SuzanMV: monies are so tight, we are also losing a program that was offered to our student during the school day which include 7 healthy habits, homework support, organizational skills and the teachers were let go

JeffC: they're very cool for getting students to visualize what's "important" in the passages.

SuzanMV: that would be great because many of my students have visualization processing issues

SuzanMV: having a tool like this would help support IEP goals and what has been offered to the student to address the area of need, thanks

JeffC: yup... yw

SuzanMV: I would like to thank everyone for all the wonderful sites, and I can't wait to research them. This was a good discussion, very informative.

JeffC: the last site I wanted to share is shmoop... <http://www.shmoop.com> ...it might be a bit advanced for ELD or SPED students, but it's an excellent site for literary analysis, as well as U.S. History.

BJB2 looks at the clock on the wall....almost at the hour.

SuzanMV: thank you again, signing off

BJB2: Suzan, this group meets once a month...next discussion is May 14

JeffC: gnite Suzan

SuzanMV: ok

JeffC: good luck!

SuzanMV: good nite

BJB2 waves goodnight

SandraS: Suzan, thank you so much for sharing your ideas at WriteTalk

BJB2: I reminded Suzan that the next WriteTalk is May 14

SandraS: and huge thanks to Jeff and BJ for jumping in

SandraS: Great!

BJB2: Thank you, Sandy, for leading the discussion

BJB2 waves goodnight

SandraS: Thanks to all of you!

SandraS: Goodnight all!

JeffC: gnite

BJB2 hugs

SandraS: Take care

SandraS jumps on hoverboard and whooshes off flashing the peace sign