

**Title of Session:** CyberSavvy Kids Online

**Moderator:** Nancy Willard

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Room: After School Online Room

**NancyEW:** Hi all

**DavidWe :** Hi, Nancy. Glad that you could get here

**DavidWe :** Okay, Nancy's here.

**DavidWe :** I've encouraged folks to have a short intro ready for when YOU are ready, Nancy

**EmilyW** joined the room.

**DavidWe** steps to the back of the room

**EstherO:** hello, I'm Esther and I'm also a pre-service teacher at the University of Houston

**NancyEW:** I am ready. It just sometimes takes me awhile.

**DavidWe** nods and smiles

**DavidWe :** For all of us, Nancy

**DavidWe :** Have a good session. I'll be in Reception...

**NancyEW:** Thanks David

**DavidWe :** Welcome, Nancy

**NancyEW:** Hi all. So why don't you tell me who you are and what you would like to talk about?

**YvonneN:** my name is Yvonne and I'm a preservice teacher from the University of Houston

**VanessaMM:** I too am a preservice teacher at UH

**MercedesP:** I'm also a pre-service teacher at UH.

**EstherO:** I'm Esther and I'm also a PUMA student from UH

**MichelleTJ:** My name is Michelle and I am a pre-service teacher at the University of Houston as well

**KariBj:** Hi, Nancy my is Kari and I am a preservice teacher from Montana State University. This is my first online chat. I am just looking forward to the discussion.

**MagnoliaA:** My name is Magnolia and I am bilingual teacher in Pasadena but also a student at u oh h

**EmilyW:** I am Emily and I am in Dallas, TX. I am a recent college graduate and web designer. I also volunteer at Tapped In.

**NancyEW:** So I am getting the impression I am an "assignment" for a certain preservice class in Texas. Thank goodness for Kari from the North

**MagnoliaA:** not just an assignment

**NancyEW:** No sorries. What is your class and what would help you most to talk about related to Internet safety?

**MichelleTJ:** Technology in the classroom

**YvonneN:** our class is a technology in the classroom ...

**NancyEW:** OK that helps. Actually I had a call from a reporter from some town in Texas this week. She wanted to ask about an incident where some students had been communicating in an online community and the online argument had then resulted in a fight at school

**MercedesP:** yikes.

**EstherO:** oh wow

**MagnoliaA:** wow

**YvonneN:** oh

**MichelleTJ:** That is interesting.

**KariBj:** I was personally looking forward to hearing about technology in the classroom in other places than Bozeman.. I have taken a technology enhancement and I wanted to see how much implementation there is in other states/cities.

**MagnoliaA:** I think our school is moving more towards it

**MichelleTJ:** I was watching Dr, Phil and he was talking about bullying on the internet as well

**EstherO:** I wanted to know a little about computer/internet usage in the elem. class

**YvonneN:** our school has a great huge computer lab and all, but I don't see the students using it very often

**MercedesP:** true.

**YvonneN:** most kids use the computer to take AR test

**VanessaMM:** The computers at my school are old

**YvonneN:** ours play games from pbskids

**NancyEW:** So let's talk a little about the current status of computers in schools and how well they are being used for effective educational activities

**KariBj:** Sounds good

**EstherO:** great

**MagnoliaA:** ok

**YvonneN:** some of the computers in my school look really new

**MercedesP:** The teachers I've been placed with use the web to provide images that support lesson content.

**YvonneN:** but when I tried to access it ... it was difficult to start and shut down

**EstherO:** the students in my class just use the computer to take those AR tests

**YvonneN:** one of my teachers uses the internet spontaneously to show things to her class

**NancyEW:** What are AR

**NancyEW:** tests?

**EstherO:** they are becoming annoying considering all of the great learning websites there are

**KariBj:** I had the privilege to be in a school where they have a mobile mac lab. It was composed of laptops with internet access. It proved to be a great tool. and we did some pretty neat lessons with them.

**EstherO:** they are tests that the students take after reading a book

**YvonneN:** like when a storm occurred, she got onto channel 2's doppler system and the kids observed and watched the traveling of the storm

**EstherO:** a lot of schools reward the students after taking so many tests

**YvonneN:** Accelerated Reader tests

**MercedesP:** Students must accumulate a certain number of points through the tests as part of their schoolwork.

**NancyEW:** So far we have had reports that you are seeing computers used for tests, playing games, rewards, and some use for actually educational activities. Does this sum up what you are seeing?

**EstherO:** it seems that the students are taking the tests for the wrong reasons

**YvonneN:** yeah

**EstherO:** not for the love of reading but for prizes

**VanessaMM:** I don not think I am seeing enough

**MagnoliaA:** yes I think so

**KariBj:** It depends on the school for me. One school a lot and some others not so much

**NancyEW:** Yeah, well this actually fits into part of the problem with trying to actually implement some of the exciting ideas that you may be learning about in your university classes.

**MagnoliaA:** I definitely agree

**EmilyW** wonders what Nancy thinks computers are being used for in schools and educational activities

**NancyEW:** So much of the focus is on testing -- which leads to the use of computers for drill and practice or computerized tests. Which is not, IMHO, the best use of the technology

**EmilyW** agrees with Nancy

**NancyEW:** But if you are a beginning teacher, it will be challenging to work yourself into a school and then start to try to do some new things

**YvonneN:** I agree

**MercedesP:** I believe so.

**EstherO:** yes

**KariBj:** I know, but I am up for the challenge. There is so much you can do with technology to supplement lessons. It would be nice to see this happening more often. They don't have to be a separate lessons. They should be joined

**YvonneN:** it seems like the teacher would have to provide everything ... because there is such a lack of support when it comes to technology ...sometimes

**NancyEW:** One of the main things that I focus on is the safe and responsible use of the Internet in school (as well as out). And one of the major concerns I have is that when computers are used for playing games and rewards, there is a lot of misuse of the technology -- trying to get to inappropriate sites and engaging in harmful communications.

**EstherO:** as far as safety and usage

**EstherO:** what are some ways that one can assure that students are or will follow them

**EstherO:** should certain precautions be taken

**YvonneN:** aren't there programs or software that can be used to help prevent these things on the net

**NancyEW:** The absolute BEST precaution is a teacher who has developed some exciting, relevant learning activities that actually make use of the Internet resources for learning

**EstherO:** so should we limit what we allow the students to access

**EmilyW:** Nancy, how can playing games not be a good resource for technology?

**NancyEW:** Almost all schools have installed filtering software. This only leads to false security that these concerns have been taken care of.

**NancyEW:** Emily, have you seen some of these games????

**EmilyW:** I guess not

**YvonneN:** sometimes I believe that the games can be useful

**YvonneN:** but they're bling bling distracts the students

**EmilyW:** What type of games are you referring to?

**EstherO:** yes, especially if they are created by the teacher

**YvonneN:** and they are just playing it just because it seems cool

**MercedesP:** one approach I've seen is to place a list of sites on "favorites" and the kids get to chose only from that list

**NancyEW:** Generally the kinds of games that students are using as rewards and Internet recess are not all that helpful.

**VanessaMM:** what about software games?

**YvonneN:** I think those are okay

**EmilyW:** Can you name some examples?

**MagnoliaA:** I use a geoskills social studies cd and it has a lot geography

**EstherO:** I've seen alphabet and number software in early childhood classrooms

**VanessaMM:** like Oregon Trail

**KariBj:** I have found some sites that worked well with math

**MercedesP:** The kids I'm with now like storybook related software.

**NancyEW:** There are some good educational games. What kinds of criteria would you use to consider those games for your classroom? I am talking about overall criteria -- that you would want to apply to any "game"?

**EstherO:** relevance, and developmentally appropriate

**NancyEW:** Ok, what else?

**EstherO:** I think it is important for the games to be interactive as well

**KariBj:** I think with about any resource you just need to preview some and critique them for what they are and then make a decision about if you want your students using them. Having a list of favorites has been helpful for me and the time I have used the computers

**NancyEW:** How would you define "interactive"?

**KaseyM:** content level for all students

**EmilyW:** I created criteria for games in a class assignment 2 years ago

**YvonneN:** it has to be in appropriate and fit into the curriculum

**NancyEW:** Any other criteria?

**YvonneN:** I think the game should cause the kids to think

**EstherO:** interactive, like keeps the children interested, moving and that it stimulates the senses

**YvonneN:** and problem solve

**EmilyW** is looking for the link

**KaseyM:** Interactive= students, teacher and game are involved to accomplish one task

**NancyEW:** What features do you think will create the conditions for the more higher-level thinking?

**MercedesP:** I agree with Yvonne, the kids should walk away from the computer perhaps able to apply something they've been engaged in computer/software-wise.

**KaseyM:** higher-level questions, or deductive questions

**NancyEW:** Have any of you worked with Inspiration?

**KariBj:** problem solving

**KaseyM:** yes

**MichelleTJ:** yes

**KariBj:** Yes

**EstherO:** having several levels, so that all children can experience challenge and not frustration

**EstherO:** yes

**MercedesP:** I'm getting more familiar with kidspiration right now.

**NancyEW:** How would you compare the kinds of learning activities that students can be involved with using software like Kidspiration/Inspiration as compared to say Oregon Trail?

**EmilyW:** Here is the survey I created -  
<http://members.aol.com/eaw1924/gamingsurvey.html>

**MichelleTJ:** I love inspiration because it allows students to organize their thoughts, but it still requires they develop their own thoughts

**EmilyW:** and the explanation <http://members.aol.com/eaw1924/formexp.html>

**KariBj:** I agree

**EstherO:** software like inspiration allows for imagination and reflective thinking

**KariBj:** it has some really neat capabilities

**NancyEW:** which do you think contributes to higher level problem solving?

**YvonneN:** software programs seem to promote higher level thinking .

**YvonneN:** more so than internet games

**EstherO:** maybe the Oregon trail, since students are presented with a life like situation

**MichelleTJ:** definitely inspiration, because a software program like Oregon Trail doesn't really require much thinking (If I remember correctly)

**KaseyM:** Both to a different extent but perhaps Oregon trail

**KariBj:** I would say inspiration

**KaseyM:** they have to weigh out the consequences for what ever decision they make

**EstherO:** I like inspiration, but the Oregon trail requires the student to make decisions dependent on thinking ahead

**EmilyW:** I like simulation games

**MercedesP:** I haven't had much exposure to simulation software.

**NancyEW:** Interesting. Because I really think that Inspiration really provides the opportunity for the development of higher order thinking. This kind of activity will take kids much farther than any simulation kind of game

**YvonneN:** what's a simulation game?

**EmilyW:** What do you mean by inspiration games?

**EstherO:** at our program we have been required to use inspiration and I had no idea of the possibilities

**NancyEW:** Inspiration is not a game. It is software that can help kids learn to organize their thoughts and develop concept maps. There was some recent research referenced in a discussion group I am a member of and generally the research indicated that young people who used computers for writing papers and finding resources did significantly better than students who were engaging in game playing

**MercedesP:** kidspiration has some really neat templates for graphic organizers in areas like language arts and science.

**EstherO:** kidspiration, the child version, is super user friendly

**KaseyM:** If this is the case I do not think that the two can really be compared

**MelissaHea:** You can find lots of simulation games on Nick.com

**NancyEW:** Inspiration is an "open world," where all of the other games you were referencing are "closed world" games -- the kids do what the creators of the games encourage them to do.

**EstherO:** even really young students have no problem using it

**KaseyM:** Inspiration is a great organizational tool

**EmilyW:** What is Inspiration?

**MercedesP:** If nothing else, maybe the game playing should be first limited to typing/keyboard skills (using typing software.)

**SusanR:** A mind mapping tool, Emily

**EstherO:** personally, just organizing thought to where they are laid out is inspiring enough to go out and do more

**EstherO:** I imagine that the students are encouraged to do the same

**YvonneN:** I think the use of inspiration and kidspiration is great and promotes higher level thinking

**EstherO:** it helps them really understand their ideas and helps them elaborate them

**MelissaHea:** Are inspiration and kidspiration the only applications that can be used?

**YvonneN:** but I also agree with Kasey that games and that software are not comparable

**NancyEW:** Inspiration is a software program that allows kids to create concept maps and outlines of the information they are working with. Kidspiration is a younger version. The difference between these and simulation of drill and practice games is that the kids are adding the content. And when kids are creating and organizing the content, their little brains are working much more than when they are simply responding to the game cues.

**NancyEW:** Well, one level higher up from Inspiration would be using word processing to write papers, graphics software to illustrate concepts, spreadsheets to organize and analyze data and the like.

**KaseyM:** This is true but that is the difference between games and a tool to gather ideas

**EstherO:** I think this software is allowing students to begin taking more responsibility for their learning

**YvonneN:** but what are your thoughts on comparing software games vs internet games?

**MercedesP:** I think most web-games are tied to commercial products/media.

**MercedesP:** Software steers clear of that connection for the most part.

**YvonneN:** I think that software games help promote higher level thinking than internet games ...

**MercedesP:** Plus, web games might have pop-ups and banner ads that might tempt kids outside of the game-sites.

**YvonneN:** internet games seem to be so ...

**YvonneN:** simple

**EmilyW** agrees with Mercedes

**YvonneN:** I don't know

**YvonneN:** what are your thoughts Nancy?

**MelissaHea:** What are we really talking about here? We seem to be all over the place.

**NancyEW:** I think the vast majority of Internet games are schlock -- which is the least offensive work I could type in a forum like this.

**EmilyW:** My career goal is to design educational games for the web, so I am all for educational games

**VanessaMM:** That's great!

**MercedesP:** Neat!

**EstherO:** games can be beneficial but are limited, tools on the other hand can go a lot further

**YvonneN:** cool

**DavidWe** wonders about the difference between "games" and "tools"

**NancyEW:** There are certainly places for educational games, and they are certainly better than the internet games -- which are generally violent or gambling or contain advertising. But the more appropriate uses of technology IMHO are the basic productivity tools that allow kids to create, analyze, present their own information

**EstherO:** I agree

**DavidWe** . o O ( but... )

**EstherO:** just think about all of the tools we use

**DavidWe** listens

**EstherO:** word processors and databases

**EstherO:** they help us create and present what WE choose

**DavidWe** : My fountain pen does something similar

**NancyEW:** And that forces us (and our students) to think

**EstherO:** yes, and gain the skills needed for this century as well

**DavidWe** has an opinion

**KaseyM:** True but games give a building block for most students (people)

**EmilyW** listens to David

**DavidWe** : What's the goal, for most of us?

**DavidWe** . o O ( in education )

**DavidWe** listens

**KaseyM**: Learning

**VanessaMM**: For students to learn

**DavidWe** : to learn what?

**EstherO**: to facilitate students' learning

**MercedesP**: My goal is to help kids become problem-solvers.

**DavidWe** likes Esther's phrasing

**DavidWe** likes Mercedes' statement better

**EstherO**: to act as a guide not as a presenter of information

**DavidWe** : Obviously we are trying to help students become...

**YvonneN**: to create a safe learning and though provoking environment for the kids

**DavidWe** : Many things, IMHO, can help in that process

**DavidWe** : games, tools, fountain pens....it's a long list, IMHO

**YvonneN**: IMHO?

**DavidWe** : In My Humble Opinion

**YvonneN**: thanks

**DavidWe** . o O ( small disclaimer )

**DavidWe** : We all have "tricks of the trade"

**DavidWe** : We all have favorites

**DavidWe** listens to others

**DavidWe** didn't mean to put a damper on the conversation

**NancyEW:** I think the most important thing is really looking closely at what technology tool you might be intending to use and determining how this is helping kids to be problem solvers, learners, etc

**YvonneN:** I believe that we should use everything in moderation and that it should be an advancement to what we teach

**EstherO:** agree

**EstherO:** yes, an enhancement

**DavidWe** smiles

**YvonneN:** thanks Esther ... my bad

**YvonneN:** enhancement is the word!

**EstherO** smiles

**NancyEW:** I would recommend the work "intentional" Are you using a game because it is on the computer/Internet or because it really will help your students meet certain learning goals?

**DavidWe** . o O ( advancing with enhancing tools )

**YvonneN:** smart play on words

**YvonneN:** agree ... these tools should be helpful in reaching learning goals for the students

**NancyEW:** We are about at the end of our session. What kinds of thoughts will you take away from this session?

**KaseyM:** I would never use anything just because it is on a computer but because it "adds too" the lesson and the goals

**YvonneN:** ditto

**EstherO:** that careful consideration should be taken before implementing technology in the classroom

**YvonneN:** ditto

**EmilyW:** As someone who has studied computers and instructional technology, it is important to use a game in education to meet learning goals.

**DavidWe** : It's expensive and can fail, all too frequently

**VanessaMM**: A lot of research and planning on the teacher's part

**YvonneN**: ditto

**MercedesP**: true.

**EstherO**: true

**NancyEW**: According to my clock, it is time for our session to be over. So I would like to thank you for coming today.

**EmilyW**: For example, if I were to develop a game to be used for education, I would start off by creating learning goals for the game, before the actual development of the game.

**EstherO**: thanks, Nancy

**DavidWe** : Thanks, Nancy. Missed the middle of the conversation, but thanks for letting me add to it at the end

**YvonneN**: thanks Nancy

**KaseyM**: thanks Nancy. everyone have a good night

**MercedesP**: thank you : )

**VanessaMM**: Thank you

**SusanR**: Thanks, Nancy