

**Title of Session: Social Studies Forum - PBS Teacher Source**

**Moderator: Michael Hutchison**

**Guest Speaker: Mary Hanlon**

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Room: ASO

MichaelH: Welcome to tonight's Social Studies Forum session....

MichaelH: Tonight, we're going to look at the revamped PBS TeacherSource site...

MichaelH: and our guide tonight is our special Guest... Mary Hanlon from PBS

MichaelH: As we always do, let's start with a short introduction session...

MichaelH: My name is Michael Hutchison, and I'm a Technology Curriculum facilitator for a school district in southwestern Indiana

BJ: I'm a teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for TAPPED IN.

MaryGuest1: I work at PBS in our Interactive Learning group--have been here for 5 years--before that was a high school English and Biology teacher.

MichaelH looks to Kathryn and Nancy

MichaelH: Mary, I think we're ready to take a look at the site and some of the changes...

NancyHe: I teach for Michigan Virtual HS and am multitasking, sorry

MaryGuest1: Great. Point your browser to <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/> and we'll get started.

MichaelH: all everyone has to do is click on the web address that Mary just posted, and we'll go there :)

MaryGuest1: TeacherSource is almost 5 years old and is designed to be a "one stop shop" for all things K-12 from PBS.

KathrynV: I design curriculum and provide professional development for teachers. Sorry so late.

MaryGuest1: The site provides curriculum resources (about 4,300 free lesson plans and student activities) all correlated to the state standards.

MaryGuest1: It also points teachers to our online professional development courses (TeacherLine), video product, TV schedules, and more.

MaryGuest1: Finally, the site provides information about PBS stations' education outreach activities for site visitors who "localize" the site by providing their zip code.

MaryGuest1: We started to plan a redesign about a year ago, to try to make the site easier to navigate--it had gotten hard, as we developed a lot of deep content, to find things particular to your subject and grade level.

MaryGuest1: The biggest change is the look of the site (new colors, etc.) and probably the second most obvious change is the area on the right side of the homepage that says, "Personalize TeacherSource." Click into the link that says, "Create a Profile."

MaryGuest1: This should put you at this page:

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts\\_pref\\_form.html?address=/teachersource](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts_pref_form.html?address=/teachersource)

MaryGuest1: Is everyone on this page that has form fields??

KathrynV: yes

MichaelH: Mary, if a teacher already subscribed to the newsletter, or personalized it with their local station, do they already have a profile?

MaryGuest1: You can personalize in a combination of ways--each is optional.

MaryGuest1: Michael, folks who have already subscribed will need to re-subscribe--details are coming in the newsletter this week (tomorrow).

NancyHe: this is great :)

KathrynV: This really is amazing!

MaryGuest1: Looking at the form, you'll see that there are two ways we can remember you: automatically (we set a cookie on your computer, best if you don't have to share it) OR you can choose to log in each time (if you share a computer with other teachers)

MaryGuest1: Second, we ask you for your zip code so we can help you identify your local PBS station.

DAunP joined the room.

MaryGuest1: Hi DAunP, we're on this page of the TeacherSource Web site:

MaryGuest1:

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts\\_pref\\_form.html?address=/teachersource](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts_pref_form.html?address=/teachersource)

MaryGuest1: Third, we ask you to identify grade range and subject area (again, this is optional).

MaryGuest1: And finally, we ask you if you want to subscribe to the e-mail newsletter (again, optional).

MichaelH: DAun, you can click on the link Mary just typed, and it will take you to the page we're at :)

MaryGuest1: Try entering some combination of these things. I'll wait a second and then we'll go on!

DAunP: ok, I'm new here. I work with special ed students 7-12 grade.

MaryGuest1: If you have entered some info on the form page, click on "Save Profile" at the top or the bottom of the page.

MaryGuest1: Next, you should see a page that asks you to confirm what you've entered. Everyone see it?

MaryGuest1: It looks like this:

KathrynV: yes

MaryGuest1:

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts\\_pref\\_info.html?address=/teachersource](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts_pref_info.html?address=/teachersource)

JeffK joined the room.

MaryGuest1: If everything looks like what you chose, then click "Done" at the top or the bottom of the page. Otherwise, you can click on "Edit" on any item and change it.

BJ waves to Jeff.

MaryGuest1: Hi JeffK! We're looking at this site:

MaryGuest1: <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/>

MichaelH waves to Jeff

BJ: click on that link, Jeff, to open a new window

JeffK: Hello everyone

MaryGuest1: OK!! Now for the excitement. You should be taken back to the main PBS TeacherSource homepage, but it should look different!

MaryGuest1: Are you with me??

KathrynV: Mary, I really like the page.

MaryGuest1: The changes you'll notice include these:

MaryGuest1: 1) homepage features in middle of the page will have changed, if you picked a particular subject area and/or grade range.

MaryGuest1: 2) Some of the features may have TV air dates/times under them, if you identified a PBS station AND if your station is airing it this week.

MaryGuest1: 3) Farther down the page, you'll see TV schedule highlights (primetime and kids shows)

MaryGuest1: 4) in the yellow area on the right, you'll see programming that is airing farther out (two weeks) that we recommend, so you can plan for taping it.

MaryGuest1: ... and any time you want to add new personalization features, or change what you selected, you just go to "Edit Profile" in that right-hand area, or click "My Profile" on the top navigation bar.

MaryGuest1: Everyone with me??

MichaelH is

KathrynV: yes

MaryGuest1: Did your page change?

MichaelH: Mary, I learned something already..... the Nova program on "Lincoln's Secret Weapon" looks really interesting

MaryGuest1: Terrific!

NancyHe: I got a little diverted in the lessons for NovaOnline

MaryGuest1: We just relaunched this yesterday morning. You guys are my first test group to walk through that personalization process. I am interested in your reaction.... is it easy to use? Anything confusing?

MichaelH: Nancy, there's so much good stuff here, it's easy to get sidetracked

KathrynV: Oh I'll be back to the site later to read and do more! =>

MichaelH: I really like the personalization feature, Mary... makes it easier for me to find specific programming I can use

MaryGuest1: If you look at this page again (the form page)

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts\\_pref\\_form.html?address=/teachersource](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/preferences/ts_pref_form.html?address=/teachersource) was there anything that confused you?

MichaelH: It seemed easy to me to set the profile up, Mary

NancyHe: I agree. Very intuitive

MaryGuest1: I'm glad... we worked on it for a long time!

MaryGuest1: One of the other things I wanted to show you is the search:

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/search.htm>

KathrynV: the No login please was a bit confusing to me.

MaryGuest1: You should see a form page that allows you to perform a keyword search. The default is set for searching for lesson plans, but that pull down menu in the center of the page also allows you to specify you want to look for books or recommended Web sites.

MaryGuest1: Thanks Kathryn... that's good feedback. We'll look at it again!

MaryGuest1: You can limit the keyword search by grade range and subject area. Try out a sample search!

MichaelH found a lesson pretty easily with a single keyword

MaryGuest1: The results should give you descriptions, info on curriculum topics, grade range, etc. etc.

MaryGuest1: If you searched for lesson plans, you'll also notice a button called "Standards Match."

MaryGuest1: ... this allows you to see which state standards that particular lesson plan addresses.

NancyHe: Can I do a compound word search?

MaryGuest1: If you go back to the main search page (click "start over") you'll see that further down the page, you can also search for video products, online courses, and TV schedules (by keyword)

MaryGuest1: Nancy, I think so! Try it out.

NancyHe: For instance, I want to search on "computer history" but got links to "history" and to "computer" but not on the phrase

MichaelH: maybe do a boolean search?

MaryGuest1: Hmm... see what you mean. I just tried it. This is running a modified Google

search protocol, and I will have to check and see why it won't allow compound words!

KathrynV: Mary, this is incredible!

CindyL joined the room.

MaryGuest1: Again, good feedback!

BJ: Hi, Cindy

MaryGuest1: Cindy, we're looking at the PBS TeacherSource Web site, at its search tool: <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/search.htm>

MichaelH sees what Nancy is saying... I tried "computer history" in quotes, and it didn't work, either

NancyHe: exactly. And +computer +history doesn't work either

CindyL: Hi everyone

MaryGuest1: Now, everybody try to click into a subject area (Arts, Social Studies, etc.) in the left navigation.

MichaelH: neither does computer AND history

MaryGuest1: Again, if you have personalized by grade range, your feature on a subject page will reflect elementary vs. secondary students. See

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/soc\\_stud.htm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/soc_stud.htm) as an example.

MaryGuest1: Again, you'll also see air dates beside features if a program is airing this week.

MaryGuest1: If you use those two drop-down menus at the top of the page, it will lead you to a text listing of lesson plans and activities that correspond to particular curriculum topics.

MaryGuest1: Try it out!

MaryGuest1: For example, you'll land on a page like this one:

MaryGuest1: [http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/social\\_studies/3-5\\_us\\_west.shtm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/social_studies/3-5_us_west.shtm)

MaryGuest1: This shows you all the stuff we have on Westward Expansion, U.S. History, for grades 3-5.

MaryGuest1: Each of them can be correlated to state standards by clicking that "standards match" button.

MaryGuest1: ... some of these pages (we call them "inventory pages" of lessons) are really long--we're working on further subdividing them to make them easier to use.

MaryGuest1: Here's a good example of one that's too long:

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/social\\_studies/high\\_civics\\_civilrights.shtm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/social_studies/high_civics_civilrights.shtm)

KathrynV: will you further categorize them?

MaryGuest1: We're also working on a navigation issue--that is, if you click out to look at any one of these lessons or activities, it's hard to get back to TeacherSource.

MaryGuest1: Kathryn, we want to develop more refined categories (those choices in the drop-down menus) so that there will be fewer items on each page. If you guys have suggestions about those new subdivisions, I'd love to hear them!!

MaryGuest1: We are trying to make them correspond to standards, and also how curriculum gets taught/grouped in schools for different age levels. So in high school, for example, it made sense to try to group resources for U.S. history chronologically, since that's usually how it gets taught...

MaryGuest1: ... or am I wrong??

MichaelH: I think you're right, Mary, although the focus in Indiana is on 20th Century history... and a lot of the pre-20th stuff gets shunted off

KathrynV: Hmmmm...you could also come at it from the concepts

MaryGuest1: ... obviously, we also have resources listed in multiple categories.

MaryGuest1: I just wanted to show you a couple other things on the site before we run out of time...

NancyHe: is there a way to start at a page of state standards, then get a page full of links that correlate?

MaryGuest1: ...but seriously, ANY feedback (about those topics, or about the site more generally)--I'd love it if you'd e-mail it to me at [mhalnon@pbs.org](mailto:mhalnon@pbs.org).

MaryGuest1: ... but for right now, check out this page:

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/recommended/rec\\_books\\_social.shtm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/recommended/rec_books_social.shtm)

MaryGuest1: ...we work with librarians at ERIC who recommend non-PBS books and Web sites for us each month. These are grouped by subject area, topic, and reading level.

MaryGuest1: ... we currently have about 2,000 recommended/reviewed books and Web sites in this database.

MaryGuest1: Everyone see what I'm talking about?

KathrynV: yes

MichaelH does

NancyHe: yes

MaryGuest1: You'll notice on the right that you can also search the database of recommended books--faster than paging through the archive.

MichaelH: Mary, do you have to select a grade level here first, and then a subject area?

MaryGuest1: Same thing is true for recommended links:

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/recommended/rec\\_links\\_social.shtm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/recommended/rec_links_social.shtm)

MaryGuest1: Michael, you shouldn't have to choose a grade level... I'll note that this is unclear.

NancyHe: having trouble finding computer history here too

MaryGuest1: It's the same search engine back-end, Nancy... I'm going to check on this tomorrow!

MichaelH: I clicked US History and saw elementary level books... wonder if it might be better if there was a drop box to specify a grade level.

NancyHe: nod 41 "Results" but can't find a match

KathrynV: Is it that you have a choice of how you search?

MaryGuest1: Last, I wanted to show you this:

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/teachtech.htm>

NancyHe: ah, good point. "elementary" varies a LOT from K-5

MaryGuest1: This is a page that helps teachers with technology integration.

NancyHe: er... it's divided K-2 and 3-5 sorry

MaryGuest1: ... offers links to our online courses/professional development around technology integration (in the TeacherLine area in the middle of the page)

MaryGuest1: We also offer an annotated index of recent research on ed tech issues.

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/teachtech/research.shtm>

MaryGuest1: ... tutorials on common technology applications (free ones)

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/teachtech/tutorials.shtm>

MaryGuest1: ... and a favorite of mine, a quiz on media literacy--you should try it out!

[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/media\\_lit/quiz.shtm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/media_lit/quiz.shtm)

MaryGuest1: The Media Literacy section also offers annotations about recent studies (available online) that evaluate the effects of media on children. We consider this mission- critical stuff at PBS, are very interested in it.

MaryGuest1: ... so, that's the nutshell view of what's here on TeacherSource. Hope you'll come back and go exploring, and hope that you'll send me any feedback about the redesign--still very much a work in progress.

MaryGuest1: ...one unrelated question: we are beginning our planning for 2004 elections. Any special requests about content or interactive features we should be developing?

MichaelH: Mary, that's a good question!

MaryGuest1: ... in 2000, we built a special site for grades 3-5 with 3 interactive games for students, and a bank of about 12 lesson plans for teachers

<http://www.pbs.org/democracy/kids/index.html>

MichaelH: wondered about more content regarding following the candidates.... lessons on campaign positions, "spin", what the candidates are doing, etc.?

KathrynV: Thank you so much, Mary. Have to run. And thank you Michael. So impressed and inspired!

MaryGuest1: ... we also sponsored a contest for high school students (they won a trip to DC) where they planned a presidential campaign for a fictional candidate:

<http://www.pbs.org/democracy/buildyourowncampaign/index.html>

MaryGuest1: Michael, I'll note these campaign topics--thanks! Anyone else?

MichaelH: Mary, thank you so much for joining us tonight!

MichaelH: The site really looks cool....

MaryGuest1: My pleasure. Thank you guys for joining me!

MaryGuest1: Hope you have a terrific "wind down" to the school year and a good summer.

MichaelH: We'll be certainly doing a lot of surfing on the site :)

MaryGuest1: Good night!