

Title of Session: Social Studies Forum

Moderator: Michael Hutchison

Title of File: 20051012ssf

Date: October 12, 2005

Room: Social Studies Forum Group

MichaelH: Welcome to tonight's Social Studies forum....

MichaelH: We have a great topic tonight that should be of interest to anyone teaching US History... but first...

MichaelH: let's start with introductions...

MichaelH: would everyone like to tell us who you are... where you're from... what your favorite biome is

MichaelH is a social studies teacher in southwestern Indiana

BJB2: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

SusanR: A K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Ottawa, Ontario Canada

MichaelH listens for anyone else who would like to say "hey"

RebeccaGK: I'm a science teacher in the OC- no really I am!

MichaelH: David, Glenn?

SusanR: OC??

MichaelH . o O (maybe Orange County?)

DavidWe: I'm in New Jersey. I help teachers learn more about math and science and how to use educational technology

SusanR: aha

RebeccaGK: Orange County- there is a tv show about it apparently nobody watches

MichaelH: David, you and Rebecca ought to get along great

DavidWe: Some people MAY watch it

DavidWe: I was a chemistry major, Rebecca

SusanR: tv show about Orange County??

MichaelH: yeah, Sue, it's been on for a couple of years... maybe more

MichaelH doesn't watch it, but he's seen the commercials during NFL football games

RebeccaGK: sure

MichaelH: anyway, I decided to pop in my copy of "Words and Music" while we do the session tonight

MichaelH: anyway, let's talk about US History tonight...

MichaelH: specifically immigration

MichaelH: David, I bet you have probably been to Ellis Island....?

MichaelH wonders if Rebecca has ever been to Angel Island?

RebeccaGK: no but I have been to Ellis Island

MichaelH: hey, that's good too

DavidWe has been to Ellis Island, too

MichaelH: I've never been to either

MichaelH: never been to NYC... I know David, it's a flaw I have

DavidWe: One side of our family has a name plate on Ellis Island

MichaelH: oh yeah, I think you mentioned that in another session

MichaelH: anyway, how about I show you guys a new teaching resource about immigration?

DavidWe: Sounds good

MichaelH: Rebecca, I don't think there's much science in this, but I'd appreciate it... if you find it interesting... maybe you could mention this to the social studies teachers in your building?

RebeccaGK: I was a political science major so that is close

MichaelH is also a government teacher, so we have a kinship!

RebeccaGK: nice!

MichaelH: PBS is airing a four part series on immigration starting around October 19

MichaelH: it's called "Destination America", and will focus on various reasons/aspects of why people immigrated to the US, or why they they are still coming here

MichaelH: let me show you the web site, and I'll show you the related lessons...

MichaelH: by the way, a couple quick things...

MichaelH: first, does everyone know how to detach the chat window?

RebeccaGK: no

MichaelH: ok, do you see a little menu toward the right top of the chat window that says "Actions"

RebeccaGK: yes

MichaelH: see the little arrow by it?

RebeccaGK: got it

MichaelH: click it and a scroll down menu shows up. Select "DETACH"

RebeccaGK: ok

MichaelH: that makes the chat window a lot bigger, and you can follow the discussion easier

MichaelH: did it work?

RebeccaGK: yes- thank you

MichaelH: great

MichaelH: thing #2

MichaelH: I am going to show you a web address for the site

MichaelH: however, if you are using a pop-up blocker, you may have to disable it when you click on the link to load the web page

MichaelH: look at the page for a minute or two, but come back here quick for the discussion

MichaelH: all the links I'm showing will be in the transcript you'll get after the session if you are a TAPPED IN member

MichaelH: BJ, did I forget anything?

DavidWe . o O (If you are using Windows and a new window doesn't open when you click on an URL, hold down the Control key)

BJB2: you can also holdwhat David said

MichaelH: Thanks, David

DavidWe: Welcome

MichaelH: ok, here's the main page for the site

MichaelH: <http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica>

MichaelH: checks to see if everyone can access the page...

BJB2 nods

DavidWe: I've got it

MichaelH: Glenn, Sue, David you all ok?

MichaelH: anyway, there's a plethora of good stuff here, including video clips, a way for immigrant families to share their stories, all sorts of resources, and of course, lessons

DavidWe: looks great, Michael

MichaelH: let me know when you are ready to look at the lessons

MichaelH: thanks David... it was a company in NYC called Candide that did the web page development

DavidWe: Neat

MichaelH: if you look at the site credits, you can link to their page as well as some of the stuff they've done

MichaelH: let me know when you are ready to look at the teacher's guide

MichaelH: the series is supposed to air on October 19, but each local PBS station sets its own schedule, so you'll need to check your local listing

MichaelH: want to look at the teachers' guide?

RebeccaGK: sure

SusanR: yep

MichaelH: ok... there are five lessons... Rebecca, I misspoke a minute ago... I do have a sort of science based lesson in this set

MichaelH: let me show it to you...

MichaelH: first, what the producers wanted was a set of five lessons based on the idea of "Freedom"... for example, "Freedom from Want", "Freedom from Fear", "from Oppression", "to Create", and "to Worship"

MichaelH: and the individual segments of the series sort of follow that.

MichaelH: here's the teacher's guide, and then I'll show Rebecca the "Freedom to Create" lesson

MichaelH: <http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/teachersguide.html>

DavidWe: There's a wonderful Calvin Trillin line about the Puritans coming to the New World for religious freedom AND the "freedom to nag"

MichaelH: that's cool, David... the Puritans aren't featured as much in the show as the Anabaptists are... it's an interesting episode

DavidWe smiles

MichaelH: another group that is featured in the Freedom to Worship segment is the Tibetan Buddhists

MichaelH: can everyone see the teachers' guide?

RebeccaGK: yes

MichaelH: I'll show you the "Freedom to Create" lesson... and then I'll explain how you can use it in a science classroom, Rebecca

MichaelH: here's the lesson:

MichaelH: http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/tguide_05.html

RebeccaGK: got it- I have been looking at it.

MichaelH: there's a really cool companion book which goes with this series; and it includes a lot of scientists that fled here from Nazi oppression, or came after World War II

MichaelH: such as Werner vonBraun

MichaelH: when this lesson was written, vonBraun was included, but PBS felt the lesson was too long, so vonBraun was, well, "Lost In Space"

MichaelH: but, you could include him, Enrico Fermi, and many other scientists who came to the US...

MichaelH: I guess John J. Audubon fits a science lesson, too

RebeccaGK: sounds good.

MichaelH: and, all you need to do this lesson is presentation software, like Microsoft Power Point, or even just posterboard, scissors, pictures, etc.

MichaelH: want to see a lesson which deals with a really unbelievable story?

RebeccaGK: always

MichaelH: this is the "Freedom from Fear" lesson... although it actually goes with the "Freedom from Oppression" theme

MichaelH: it's about a woman by the name of Rodi Alvarado, who fled to the US from Guatemala

DavidWe likes "Lost in Space" line

MichaelH: because she was afraid her husband would murder her

MichaelH: apparently, there's not much of a penalty for spousal-cide in Guatemala

DavidWe: Geez!

MichaelH: so she is asking for asylum status in the US

MichaelH: but, there's a problem

MichaelH: according to asylum law in the US, asylum can only be granted for a "well founded fear" of political, religious, or social oppression... not because of the fear of domestic violence

MichaelH: so... Rodi is actually asking the courts to reinterpret what "asylum" means

MichaelH: and that's what the lesson asks students to do

MichaelH: have a mock trial to determine whether her claim of possible spousal abuse is sufficient for her to come to America and seek refugee protection.

MichaelH: the cool thing is that this is a real case that is still before the courts, and kids get a chance to actually deal with the issue

MichaelH: I had never heard of this case until I saw the episode

DavidWe: Wow

DavidWe . o O (Legal definitions)

RebeccaGK: how long has the case been going on? Where is Rodi in the mean time?

MichaelH: it's easy to see both sides of the issue... I mean, you feel for this poor woman, but on the other hand, can you imagine the flood of immigration that might happen if we let people in because of domestic violence

MichaelH: the earliest I saw any information on this case was 2001, Rebecca. As of early 2005, the government agreed to hear the case in immigration court, but there's been no determination about her status yet

MichaelH . o O (yet)

RebeccaGK: so students would come to a conclusion before the courts do

MichaelH: Former Attorney General Ashcroft noted that he supports the case going to immigration court, but there's no decision

MichaelH: that's right, Rebecca, it would be interesting to see how the class would decide the issue compared to how the courts do

MichaelH: and, well, I don't want to show my own political views, but the way the judiciary is shaping up right now in the "Bush Court", I wouldn't even want to speculate on how the Supreme Court might rule in this case, if it ever gets that far

MichaelH: does everyone have time for one more lesson?

RebeccaGK: yes

MichaelH: sometimes the problems with these lessons is the time...

MichaelH: for example, the lesson I just showed you might take days, or even weeks

MichaelH: and it's tough for teachers to spend that much time

MichaelH: here's one that can be done in a day or so, and all it takes is a copy of "Destination America"

MichaelH: http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/tguide_01.html

MichaelH: this one simply has kids research religious groups who came to the new world, and write "letters home" to family members in the "old country" so they can tell about their new life... the good and the bad... in America

MichaelH: I was thinking here of groups who came to the US because of religious oppression

MichaelH: the story of the Tibetan Buddhists is especially compelling... apparently the Chinese government doesn't tolerate religion too much

DavidWe . o O ("streets paved with gold")

MichaelH: you know, David, it is interesting in the film how many people even now look back on that and see it as true

DavidWe: My grandfather's family - Jews in Russia

RebeccaGK: are these stories the links under online resources

MichaelH: there are some... there are also some video clips as well as related resources on other parts of the site.

MichaelH: David, there's some interesting stories about Hasidic (spelling) Jews in the film...

DavidWe . o O (good spelling, I think)

MichaelH: check your TV listings... I think Freedom to Worship is the third episode.

MichaelH: the story of the Anabaptists is also unbelievable... the types of oppression they went through in the "old country"

DavidWe: My family were more interested in Socialism than Judaism, I think. Freedom to protest?

MichaelH: well, that might fit in the "freedom to create", or "freedom from fear" episodes... the idea to have your own political thought

MichaelH: and in the "Freedom to Create" episode, there are some interesting things about Toscanini, who rebuked Mussolini and Fascism

MichaelH: that's not socialism, but it sure is protest against what he saw as an oppressive régime

MichaelH: the other thing about PBS lessons, is that they can usually be adapted... and you don't always have to have the film to do the lessons...

MichaelH: even though there's a link to buy the series in each lesson

MichaelH: I don't mean to sound like a broken record here, because David, Sue, and BJ have heard this before... but Rebecca, have you heard of PBS TeacherSource?

RebeccaGK: no

MichaelH: you should check it out... there are a lot of great lessons... close to 4000 now...

MichaelH: on every subject area, for every grade level. AND...

MichaelH: you can link them to state and national standards

MichaelH: check out <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource>

MichaelH: you didn't mention what kind of science you teach, but you should be able to search for a lesson that fits your subject area, grade level, even a specific topic

RebeccaGK: that sounds great I am always finding fun and interesting activities on there

RebeccaGK: I mean pbs.org

MichaelH: yeah, it's a great site.

MichaelH: TeacherSource is a wonderful resource for K-12 teachers, and I think you'll find it especially helpful

MichaelH checks to see if anyone has any questions or comments before we call it a night

RebeccaGK: I am definitely going to check it out

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe: Thanks, Michael

MichaelH: thanks, David...

RebeccaGK: Thank you for letting my join your chat. I have some great resources and I can't wait to share this info with ss department

MichaelH: glad you could join us, Rebecca, it was a pleasure to have you, and I hope you'll come back