

Title of Session: SS Forum and K-12 Lang. Arts - PBS Jane Austen

Moderator: Michael Hutchison

Guest Speakers: Cyrisse Jaffee and Jenny Bradbury

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MichaelH: Welcome to tonight's special SSF/ Language Arts Forum

MichaelH: tonight's topic is a superb one, and we have two special guests who are going to give us a lot of great resources and information about an upcoming PBS series on Jane Austen

MichaelH: but...

MichaelH: before we do that, a couple of things...

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

ShannonH: no

JacquelinA: no

MichaelH: ok, Shannon, do you see a small menu that says ACTIONS, towards your right?

ShannonH: yes

MichaelH: click that menu, and then select DETACH. It makes the chat window a lot larger and easier to manage

ShannonH: Great! Thanks!

MichaelH: did that work?

JacquelinA: Thanks

MichaelH: now that we've got the mechanics out of the way...

MichaelH: let's introduce ourselves... would everyone tell us who you are, where and what you teach?

MichaelH is a social studies teacher in southwestern Indiana, and tonight a language arts teacher wannabe

ShannonH: Hi there, I'm Shannon I teach English in Vancouver, BC.

TapioH: Tapio from Finnish Lapland, teacher of computing science

JacquelinA: I am Jackie Albis and I teach AP English at East haven High School in CT. We read Pride & Prejudice in that class.

CyrisseJ: Hi, I work on educational materials here at WGBH--public television in Boston.

SusanR: Sue from Ottawa, Ontario

MichaelH checks to see if anyone else would like to say hello

BJB2: I teach communication in Pennsylvania

CyrisseJ: Shall I start?

MichaelH: I think everyone's had a chance to say "hi",..... so let's move on to our topic tonight. Go ahead, Cyrisse

JennySB: Hi, I'm Jenny. I'm the Middle/High Content Manager at PBS teachers, which means I work with producers and stations to create and promote educational materials created by the producers of PBS' primetime programs.

JennySB: Oops, sorry, Cyrisse.

CyrisseJ: It's a pleasure to talk to you about Jane! Masterpiece Theatre is airing all 6 Austen novels (4 new films, 2 older ones) as The Complete Jane Austen. It coincides with a new "rebranding" of Masterpiece and a new Web site!

CyrisseJ: We are also airing a biopic called Miss Austen regrets.

JacquelinA: Sounds great!

CyrisseJ: We have created lots of educational resources to help teachers use the films in the classroom.

CyrisseJ: Specifically for teachers, there is a teacher's guide online with activities, discussion questions, resources, etc.

JennySB: WGBH has created a terrific teacher's guide that includes a brief Austen bio, an essay about Austen's relevance to today's students and classroom activities focusing on adapting novels to film and themes and devices in Austen's writing.

CyrisseJ: There is also a new Masterpiece Theatre Film and Book Club which teachers can use. It's designed for teachers, libraries, and individuals who'd like to expand their book clubs.

JennySB: Shannon, this could be exactly what you're looking for.

CyrisseJ: Yes -- there are not only discussion questions but also some fun activities, like playing a Regency-era card game, making the perfect cup of tea, and so on.

JacquelinA: How does the film & book club work?

ShannonH: Yes, absolutely - are the WGBH materials on the same website as the Masterpiece theatre materials?

CyrisseJ: Yes, everything I'm talking about is on the Masterpiece Web site. It will relaunch on FRIDAY, so for now you can go to pbs.org/masterpiece.

CyrisseJ: I'll describe the features and they will be very easy to find on the main site.

MichaelH . o O (<http://pbs.org/masterpiece>)

JennySB: The teacher's guide and book and film club info. are there now.

JacquelinA: great

CyrisseJ: Right. The Teacher's Guide is in the "Learning Resources" section and is downloadable as a PDF. The book club materials are also all PDFs.

CyrisseJ: We have an interview with Andrew Davis, who adapted 4 of the 6 works, in the Teacher's Guide and also on the General Site. The one on the general site it called "Longing, Betrayal, and Redemption."

CyrisseJ: He talks specifically about the challenges of adapting a novel to screen and also Austen in particular.

ShannonH: That is fabulous. I have to say, I found PBS teaching materials when student teaching and they are the best around. Bravo!

CyrisseJ: Glad you liked them!

JennySB: Thanks! Here's he URL for the Jane Austen section of the Masterpiece site: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/austen/index.html>

CyrisseJ: There will also be (on the general site) a behind-the-scenes feature on Sense & Sensibility and an interview with Sally Hawkins, who stars in Persuasion (the first in the series)

CyrisseJ: If you like Masterpiece Theatre in general, you can sign up for an e-newsletter on the site and you'll get info on what's coming up.

CyrisseJ: Does anyone teach anything other than Pride and Prejudice?

ShannonH: I am looking at starting a Jane Austen club

CyrisseJ: Do you think any boys would join?

JennySB: Cyrisse, can you explain how the club works?

ShannonH: Yes, I think they would

JennySB: That's cool!

JacquelinA: I don't, only because there just isn't enough time --though I'd love to teach Emma

JennySB: Emma paired with the Masterpiece film, Clueless, and/or clips from the films would be so much fun to teach!

CyrisseJ: That's great! The club online is mainly made up of resources -- individual PDFs to download and use. We also have general guidelines about creating a club and things to consider about literature-to-film.

JacquelinA: I agree

CyrisseJ: Some of the general features of the book club are up now on the site.

ShannonH: I'm definitely in the right place!

JennySB: Cyrisse, do you want to talk about the JASNA essay contest?

CyrisseJ: Sure. We paired up with the Jane Austen Society of North America (JASNA) and one of the results is that they offer a writing contest every year. This year it's on the Masterpiece films! The contest is open to high school kids.

CyrisseJ: You can go online for the rules: <http://www.jasna.org/essaycontest/index.html>

CyrisseJ: Jackie, do you only teach Austen in AP classes?

ShannonH: Have you produced any posters or colourful materials we can obtain for our classrooms to promote the series and learning?

JacquelinA: That's the only senior class I have, though another teacher in my building

teaches it to honors seniors

JanS joined the room.

CyrisseJ: I believe there is a bookmark you can download as part of the Film & Book Club, but it's black-and-white.

JennySB: One beauty of these film adaptations is that they make Austen's work accessible to younger and less advanced students.

JennySB: Hi Jan

JanS: thanks

CyrisseJ: Yes, Jane Austen is really, really popular right now.

CyrisseJ: You could use some of the materials to encourage kids to read another Austen independently.

ShannonH: As she should be!

CyrisseJ: There are lots of YouTube, MySpace, and Facebook pages about her.

JacquelinA: One thing I sometimes have trouble with when teaching the novel is that the students don't HEAR the tone; the film adaptations should really help with that

JennySB: I invite you all to visit the Media Infusion blog on PBS Teachers to get some ideas about teaching Austen using 21st century technology and share how you teach Austen.

JennySB: The URL is <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/mediainfusion/>

JennySB: Not now, of course! :)

MichaelH reminds all that the links will be included in the transcript, and they'll all be live

CyrisseJ: We have a lot of activities designed to help kids understand the morals and rules of Regency society and compare it with ours.

CyrisseJ: Also some suggestions to pair viewing a film with a young adult novel.

JennySB: Which is a nice link to Social Studies

MichaelH: Jenny, the cross-curricular idea is a good one

MichaelH: I could easily see using some of the Austen materials in a class studying Victorian English history

JennySB: On that note, one suggestion in the teacher's guide is exploring the history of the Napoleonic wars that sets up Persuasion.

CyrisseJ: There is also a lot of discussion about class and money -- of course those topics permeate her novels.

JennySB: Absolutely!

ShannonH: I think that's so important - context for the students - painting the picture, setting the stage

JacquelinA: always

MichaelH: Jenny, Cyrisse... how long will the Austen educational materials be available online?

JennySB: For the foreseeable future, right?

CyrisseJ: In one activity students are asked to create a "Survival Guide" to living in Jane's world. This is another cross-curriculum idea. You could even contrast her world in England to ours in America at the same time.

CyrisseJ: Sorry, I was lagging behind. The educational materials generally stay up forever!

JennySB: That would be fun. Cyrisse, can you provide the dates of the films and talk about taping rights?

CyrisseJ: Sure:

JennySB: And about how teacher's can buy copies...

ShannonH: yes to that one!

CyrisseJ: Persuasion airs Jan 13, Northanger Abbey airs Jan 20, Mansfield Park airs Jan 27, Miss Austen Regrets airs Feb 3, Pride and Prejudice airs Feb 10-Feb 24, Emma airs March 23, and Sense and Sensibility airs March 30-April 6.

MichaelH: and of course, Jenny, they can also subscribe to Teacher Previews and personalize that as well

ShannonH: Where is Teacher Previews?

MichaelH: Cyrisse, I would love to see Masterpiece Theater do someone like Steinbeck... that would be cool

JennySB: It's our weekly e-newsletter. If you click the Customize button under the feature well on our homepage, you can sign up to get the newsletter.

CyrisseJ: Penguin is publishing the "companion book" (the novels) to the series.

CyrisseJ: I should have said companion books.

ShannonH: Dickens would be awesome too

CyrisseJ: We did an "American Collection" a while back featuring American authors but we're only doing the Brits right now.

ShannonGst4: I'm sure I've missed all the good info this late in the game, but if there are any highlights, I'd love to hear about them. Especially the essay contest that I read about?

CyrisseJ: Yes, we were thinking of doing Dickens. Masterpiece has many adaptations.

JennySB: The Americans include Langston Hughes, Willa Cather, Henry James...

CyrisseJ: And Our Town

CyrisseJ: with Paul Newman!

JennySB: You can find out about the JASNA essay contest on the Masterpiece site starting on Friday. Is that right, Cyrisse?

JacquelinA: Thanks for all the great info. I'll pass the sites along to the other senior teachers in my school. It was great talking to you all about Austen. Have to run.

JennySB: Bye! Thanks for joining us.

CyrisseJ: The essay contest is up on the JASNA site.

ShannonGst4: Great...thank you!

JennySB: <http://www.jasna.org>

ShannonGst4: Perfect I'll go there when I leave here :).

CyrisseJ: Check out the Masterpiece Web site for the educational materials:
<http://www.pbs.org/masterpiece>

TapioH: 6 hours past bed time here :) thank you for the links. bye all

ShannonH: Bye!

JennySB: Sleep well!

MichaelH: Jenny and Cyrisse, any final thoughts or suggestions about using the series before we call it a night?

TapioH left the room.

MichaelH: Jenny, you might also want to mention about the other PBS session we are doing in late January

ShannonGst4: Can I review the conversation after the session ends?

JennySB: I recommend that folks check out the Web site on Friday and download the teacher's guide.

CyrisseJ: After "Becoming Jane" and all the other recent Hollywood adaptations, I think the Masterpiece series is a great way to get kids excited about Austen.

JennySB: That's the Masterpiece Web site.

CyrisseJ: After all, it's all about love and relationships!

CyrisseJ: Thanks, everyone. This was fun!

MichaelH: Thanks, Jenny and Cyrisse, for sharing this great resource with us tonight

BJB2 cheers for the PBS team! Thanks!

JennySB: It was our pleasure. Thanks for helping out.

MichaelH: Cyrisse, you are certainly welcome to come back and chat about other programming you're doing or associated with

ShannonH: Thanks everyone - I really enjoyed the discussion and thank you for the materials

MichaelH: You are now officially a TAPPED IN expert

CyrisseJ: Thanks, Michael. I'll talk with folks here and let you know. Thanks, Jenny, for inviting me!

MichaelH: thanks, Cyrisse

BJB2 waves goodnight and heads for the storytelling discussion

MichaelH: Jenny, thanks for suggesting that we have this session... it was interesting, and fun.

JennySB: If folks are interested in the other session, I'll be here the first week of February talking about African American Lives 2, a Henry Louis Gates Jr.-hosted production.

MichaelH . o O (January 30?)

JennySB: Oh yeah, the last week of January. :)

BJB2 . o O (whew!)

MichaelH was frantically thumbing through his calendar :)