

Title of Session: Teaching K-12 Students in Tapped In

Moderator: Marielle Palumbo

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Room: K-12 Students in TI Group

MarielleP: David, do you use TI with K12 students?

HeatherBu: Hi, all

MarielleP: Hi, Heather.

DavidWe: I've been using TI with TEACHERS since 1997 - I'm not a classroom teacher

MarielleP: So what brings you here?

DavidWe: I've been helping teachers learn about things like Tapped In for a number of years

DavidWe: I'm interested in your discussion

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe: What do you do?

MarielleP: Yeah, well...

DavidWe . o O (uh-oh, Chris Dede, huh?)

MarielleP: I'm not sure what sort of discussion we'll be able to have without any practicing K12 teachers.

SusanR joined the room.

DavidWe can fake it

MarielleP: Hi, Susan.

HeatherBu waves to sue

DavidWe: Susan's a teacher (and a TI Help Desk volunteer)

HeatherBu holds up her hand as a classroom teacher

MarielleP: Yes, I know Susan, and Jeff, and BJ.

MarielleP: Heather, what brings you here?

DavidWe smiles

HeatherBu: I'm a Tech teacher in middle school, and I have a classroom for my Adv. tech kids, here at TI

MarielleP: Great!

MarielleP: What do you do with it?

HeatherBu: Mostly we use it for discussion, and for

SusanR: Hi Marielle

MarielleP waves.

HeatherBu: collecting articles that go along with what we are studying.

HeatherBu: Plus, I've been known to teach from a distance, when I've had to be away from school

HeatherBu: The kids also swap info on their various projects.

MarielleP: Cool!

MarielleP: Would you mind saying a bit more about their projects?

MarielleP: What sorts of things do you study?

HeatherBu: It's really a conglomerate course...

HeatherBu: we've done some dtp, some graphics, some writing,

MarielleP: Is it an elective?

HeatherBu: and then we've been working on an invention project this last grading period.

HeatherBu: Yes, and because of scheduling I've only got 5 kids in the class...

MarielleP: Wow.

HeatherBu: all boys!

HeatherBu: It's been good for all of us, because it's the first year for the course, and we've been able to experiment a lot.

MarielleP: So what learning advantages do you think your TI classroom offers?

HeatherBu: They've gotten exposure to a world that most of them had never experienced.

MarielleP: How so?

HeatherBu: 4 of the five have computers at home, but didn't know how much of the world was available to them

HeatherBu: Using TI, they have gotten comfortable with using the computer as a new kind of tool, and the environment as a way to both teach and learn

MarielleP: They teach each other?

HeatherBu: Yes, and me

MarielleP: Nice!

MarielleP: Well...

MarielleP: let's go around and do more introductions.

MarielleP: I'll go next.

MarielleP: I'm working on a doctorate in teaching and learning...

DavidWe smiles

MarielleP: and my research focuses on the potential for electronic communication in shared online environments to support the teaching and learning of writing at the middle school level.

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler. I'm a HelpDesk volunteer and lead a math education and technology discussion in TappedIn. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

SusanR wonders if the nature of teaching and learning has been affected by Tapped In and Web 2.0

HeatherBu settles in to learn from Marielle!

MarielleP: What do you do outside Tapped In, David?

HeatherBu: Sue, I think it definitely has changed.

MarielleP: It's a two-way street, Heather! That's why I was asking you all those questions.

HeatherBu smiles

MarielleP: What do you think, Sue?

SusanR: I'm Sue Roseman. I am a helpdesk volunteer and facilitate the K to 3+ Great Resources twice monthly sessions here at TI. I continue to teach K to 8 on an occasional basis..tomorrow I will be in Kindergarten

MarielleP: Fun!

MarielleP: How low do you go with TI in the classroom?

MarielleP: I was hoping DaveM would attend - he uses it with his 3rd graders.

SusanR . o O (should be changing; but I don't see technology being used in innovative ways)

MarielleP: I had a great chat with one of them a while back.

SusanR: Bridget Molnar is using TI with her Grade 3 students

MarielleP: Anyone in your school(s) using TI in the classroom, Sue?

SusanR: nope

MarielleP: I must say, I don't think the interface is super kid-friendly.

MarielleP: Have you tried to sell it?

SusanR: yes

MarielleP: What do you think the resistance is?

DavidWe thinks TI is easier for kids than for adults

HeatherBu . o O (I just got one of my math teachers hooked over the weekend)

HeatherBu agrees with David, based on what she's seen in her classroom vs reception

MarielleP: Clearly kids take to technology more easily than many adults, but I still would like to see a cyberworld like this designed for kids rather than retrofitted for them.

HeatherBu: How does your vision differ from Ti, Marielle

SusanR: interesting point, Marielle

HeatherBu . o O (this is my first experience in this type of environment)

MarielleP: Similar functionality - more streamlined, intuitive, funkier design.

MarielleP: Have you ever been in Whyville?

HeatherBu: No, never even heard of it.

MarielleP: Check it out later...www.whyville.net.

HeatherBu: will do

BJB2 . o O (it's pretty cool)

MarielleP: Unfortunately, it's gotten more commercial than it used to be.

MarielleP: But still some interesting educational components. Very different sort of world than this.

MarielleP: Not really interchangeable.

HeatherBu: One of the things that has let my principal approve my using Ti with the kids is the "protection" of me being able to see what they say and do on TI. Does Whyville offer something similar?

DavidWe wonders if Marielle has used or observed an online environment while K-12 students use it

MarielleP: Does not have the groupware functionality that this has - it's more play-oriented.

HeatherBu nods

MarielleP: Yes. I did some research with middle school kids here.

DavidWe: How did it go?

DavidWe . o O (with Middle School students)

MarielleP: They liked it, but they did not always find the interface intuitive.

MarielleP: If they had used it more regularly, it would have been fine.

HeatherBu: My kids use it almost daily, even when we are in class.

SusanR: How would you modify the TI environment for students?

DavidWe: What was the subject matter being taught IN the environment?

MarielleP: But with intermittent use, they would forget how to navigate a little.

MarielleP: What I called interactive portfolios.

MarielleP: They shared project work with students from another school...

MarielleP: writing and artwork...and the other kids asked questions and discussed where they saw evidence of understanding.

HeatherBu . o O (I'm working on developing something like that with a Tech teacher in South Dakota, for next year)

HeatherBu: Marielle, what do you think of blogging as a writing tool for the students?

MarielleP: To be honest, while I understand it's attractive to many people, I don't always see the point.

MarielleP: It depends on the task, of course.

MarielleP: I think you can use any tool well with the right task.

DavidWe agrees STRONGLY

MarielleP: But generally speaking, I think you get more bang for your buck engaging kids in conversation with each other.

SusanR . o O (blogging should complement the task)

HeatherBu: Do you find it improves the flow of their writing, if not their spelling skills?

MarielleP: It all depends on the task and how it's implemented.

MarielleP: I don't think any tool improves writing by itself.

HeatherBu: I would love to be able to give our English teachers some suggestions.

MarielleP: But any digital writing tool in combination with a good teacher can really change the way kids write dramatically - even the word processor.

HeatherBu nods

SusanR agrees

MarielleP: Yes, Heather, generally speaking, the more kids write, the better, I'd say.

BJB2: <http://www.writingproject.org>

BJB2: I recommend you join the writetalk group also

MarielleP: But what they write about, the feedback they get, and all that can distinguish between more of the same and something really different.

MarielleP: Yeah, the Writing Project is good work.

HeatherBu: Marielle, do you have any suggestions for how to help teachers who are trapped by "The TEST," and don't think they can afford to teach real writing?

MarielleP: That is such a real and terrible problem, Heather.

HeatherBu . o O (I'm so tired of formula writing.)

MarielleP: It's my view that we can teach conventions 'til we're blue in the face, but kids' writing won't improve unless they are writing about stuff that matters to them.

HeatherBu cheers

SusanR: do you think tools like this enhance writing
http://www.readwritethink.org/student_mat/index.asp

SusanR: or do they hinder the creative process

MarielleP: I think they can help, Sue.

MarielleP: They can offer scaffolding...

MarielleP: but the key is to remove the scaffolding gradually so they fly on their own eventually.

MarielleP: I think some of those tools are more stifling than others.

MarielleP: In some cases, a little structure can actually be generative.

SusanR: and your impressions of this one <http://ettcweb.lrk12.nj.us/forms/newpoem.htm>

MarielleP: My 6th graders wrote the most amazing "I am" poems that were highly personal and creative.

HeatherBu . o O (Sue, shall I add the Instant poetry to our page?)

SusanR: by all means Heather

MarielleP: Have you ever seen the book "Love That Dog" by Sharon Creech?

HeatherBu shakes her head

MarielleP: It's all in the teaching, I think.

BJB2 is familiar with Sharon Creech's books but not that one

MarielleP: GREAT little book.

MarielleP: Brilliant example of how modeling can lead to meaningful, creative work with the right supports.

SusanR Googles it

HeatherBu is searching amazon

SusanR: <http://www.kidsreads.com/reviews/0060292873.asp>

HeatherBu . o O (darned dial up)

SusanR: <http://www.sharoncreech.com/novels/01.asp>

MarielleP: It's all in the supports. If you ask a kid to write an "I am" poem without discussing word choice and voice and the power of specificity and all that, you won't get the same result as you would if you did.

MarielleP: It is a tiny treasure indeed.

MarielleP: First saw it in someone's classroom. Bought it for several teacher friends.

MarielleP: I'm hoping that you quiet guys will jump on in if you feel so inclined.

MarielleP: Seems like a small enough group just to go with the flow of the conversation, if that's okay with everyone.

HeatherBu: I'm just now getting the amazon page

HeatherBu: Looks neat!

MarielleP: And here's an article for your English teachers by George Hillocks.

CourtneyW joined the room.

HeatherBu waves to Courtney

CourtneyW: hi!!

MarielleP: Hillocks, G. (2005). The Focus on Form Vs. Content in Teaching Writing. Research in the Teaching of English, 40(2).

CourtneyW: I am now a member... no longer a guest

MarielleP: Hi, Courtney.

DavidWe smiles

SusanR listens

CourtneyW: Hi Heather and Jeff.... remember me?

CourtneyW: and hi everyone else

HeatherBu: Hi, Courtney, yes, and I'm glad you're back as a member!

CourtneyW: Now I have to find out what this thing is all about

HeatherBu: well, right now you are in a discussion about using Tapped In with students in the K=12 grades.

MarielleP: Heather, that article has nothing to do with technology - it's just about the continued obsession with form to the exclusion of substance.

HeatherBu: ah.

HeatherBu: ok

MarielleP: Feel free to listen and/or join in, Courtney.

CourtneyW: thank you

CourtneyW smiles

MarielleP: What do you teach?

CourtneyW: Well.... right now I am a substitute, but I will be teaching 4th grade in the fall

MarielleP: Okay - so here's a question for anyone who's used TI with K12 kids...

MarielleP: Good for you!

SusanR: welcome to my world, Courtney

SusanR: I am a sub

CourtneyW: where are you from?

SusanR: Ottawa, Ontario Canada

HeatherBu listens to Marielle

CourtneyW: I am in Niagara Falls, NY..... but I will be moving to Virginia for the job

SusanR: good luck with your new venture

MarielleP: I'm interested in the fact that electronic communication (whether chats/IM or discussion forums or even e-mail) is somewhere between speaking and writing.

CourtneyW: dumb question.... what is TI?

BJB2: TI = Tapped In

MarielleP: So I'm curious about whether it might potentially serve as a bridge between the two.

MarielleP: For kids learning to write.

HeatherBu: I think there's a good possibility.

MarielleP: So my question is this - Have any of you used TI transcripts as text with kids?

HeatherBu: No, I hadn't thought of that. They know I get a transcript, of course, but I haven't shown it to them

HeatherBu: How would you suggest I use it as a tool?

MarielleP: They are talking in writing.

HeatherBu . o O (teachable moment)

MarielleP: I think that it's a good tool for working through ideas with others...

MarielleP: attending to the substance of writing that so often gets overlooked.

HeatherBu: Yes, and they nag each other about spelling, and being polite when we have a guest speaker.

HeatherBu: Good points, Marielle.

MarielleP: So we are actually generating text here...

MarielleP: and maybe I will find when I look at the transcript...

MarielleP: that someone asked me a question that helped me to articulate my ideas in a particularly clear way...

MarielleP: and then I can just copy and paste that piece of text and develop it further in a word processor.

MarielleP: Does that make sense?

HeatherBu: Yes! Reflection!

HeatherBu: and from the reflection, growth and writing

SusanR: so it can be used for informal brainstorming

HeatherBu: I think I'll pull up some of their transcripts from when we first started using TI, and let them see how they have grown as writers,

MarielleP: I think a lot of kids (and people in general) talk more easily about their ideas than they write about them.

HeatherBu wonders if the kids can pull up their own transcripts

MarielleP: But when "talking" is text, then you're halfway there.

HeatherBu: Yes, Marielle, I agree.

MarielleP: It's my understanding that they don't get their transcripts unless you send them along.

MarielleP: unless things have changed.

SusanR: how do you feel about podcasting with students..could it enhance the writing process

HeatherBu: I've often had kids who were poor writers, who could tell me what they wanted to say.

MarielleP: Again, it all depends on the task.

HeatherBu: and then I've helped them put that into written form

MarielleP: Yes...?

MarielleP nods and listens to Heather.

MarielleP: So how do you see podcasting as a help?

HeatherBu: Sorry, I was still thinking out loud about the written/verbal connection.

SusanR . o O (publishing)

SusanR: communication

MarielleP: No apology necessary - just wanting to understand what you were thinking.

HeatherBu . o O (sometimes, I want the same thing)

SusanR: use podcasting as part of a clip within their writing

MarielleP chuckles.

MarielleP: Because it's motivating?

MarielleP: Can you say more, Susan?

SusanR: blended learning

HeatherBu: And I think they might get hooked on it...first the novelty,

HeatherBu: and then the pleasure of creativity.

SusanR: they do some writing and then insert a podcast

SusanR: I am thinking out loud

MarielleP: But can you give me an example of what you mean by "part of a clip within their writing"?

MarielleP: Ah.

SusanR: not only the printed word

MarielleP: What program are you envisioning using?

MarielleP: Yeah - multimedia authoring - I'm all for it!

SusanR: garage band for the podcast.. I would have to give it more thought

HeatherBu: Marielle, I've really enjoyed this discussion! Is this a regular session that you hold?

SusanR: part of a poetry unit

MarielleP: I used to have my kids do multimedia haiku in PPT.

MarielleP: Heather, it's not monthly, but occasionally.

BJB2 wishes Marielle would hold these discussions more frequently!

MarielleP: I have enjoyed it, too.

BJB2 knows how busy Marielle is

MarielleP sticks out her tongue at BJ!

HeatherBu agrees with BJ!

MarielleP: It has been a pleasure indeed!

HeatherBu: I'm afraid I've got another discussion to go to, Marielle, but I look forward to your next session...I would love to make better use of TI.

MarielleP: We can chat anytime, Heather.

HeatherBu: Thanks!

CourtneyW: bye everyone

HeatherBu waves bye

MarielleP: Thanks so much for your participation.

SusanR: Thanks Marielle..lots of food for thought

BJB2 heads for the festival meeting

MarielleP: Bye, all!

HeatherBu: thanks, Marielle

BJB2: thanks, Marielle

MarielleP: Thanks so much for coming!