Title of Session: TIElab - RIBIT: Tools for and Approaches to Inquiry-Based Learning
Moderator: John Raymond
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BJ: Let's make it official, John...
BJ: Welcome to tonight's discussion on Ribit.
BJ: Our host is John Raymond.
BJ: We usually start all the discussions here with introductions
BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In
CarolWH: I'm a fifth grade teacher in Georgia
JohnRa: My name is John Raymond. I am the director of Technology-in-Education Laboratory (or TIELab).
RiannH: I am a student teacher in Humble ISD in Texas
JohnRM: I am a high school math and science teacher in Escondido. This is my first try at one of these discussions
JohnRa: are we good to go, BJ?
BJ: Jeff?
BJ nods to John..yeppers!
JohnRa: great.
JohnRa: Glad you all could make it.
JohnRa: we'll be "talking" about inquiry-based learning & RIBIT today.
JohnRa: let me tell you briefly about TIELab
JohnRa: In a nutshell, TIELab conceives & creates online learning tools that facilitate learning through inquiry.
JohnRa: there are three such tools so far and RIBIT is the free one
JohnRa: btw, RIBIT stands for: (the Reusable Internet-Based Inquiry Template)
JohnRa: so off we go...
JohnRa: But first I have a question for you. I would like to ask each of you to answer the following question and post it to the discussion. After a pause where we can read each other's postings I will direct us to the next segment.
JohnRa: Here's the question: What does the phrase inquiry-based learning mean to you? Please try to limit your answer to one sentence.
RiannH: The student learns through exploring and questioning.
JohnRM: It is new to me, so I think that it is learning via investigation or answering questions
JohnRa: great.
CarolWH: Students gain knowledge by researching questions and discovering the answers.
JohnRa: discovery, investigation, questions...
JohnRa: all right at the heart of it
JohnRa: TIELab has created RIBIT to facilitate this type of learning through Internet-Based Inquiries or IBIs. Since we're all online, let's go to the RIBIT site and take a look at the philosophy behind it.

JohnRa: Go to http://ribit.tielab.org/use.php and take a moment to read the philosophy statement.
JohnRa: What are your thoughts? Are there any questions?
CarolWH: Is this a tool that is applicable across grade levels?
RiannH: I RIBIT similar to a WebQuest?
JohnRa: yes, it is. we'll look at some examples for primary & middle school.
JohnRa: yes, Riann.
JohnRa: Bernie Dodge said a WebQuest is just "good teaching using the Web."
CarolWH: Sounds great.
JohnRa: I'd like to think that this is too, but may be easier to manage than a webquest in a class period
JohnRa: IBIs can be 10 minute activities or longer.
JohnRM: Are these usually individual activities or groups?
JohnRa: could be either, John. it's up to the teacher.
JohnRa: why don't we look at some example and you can pipe in with question & comments as we go along.
JohnRa: check back to the chat window so you don't miss the discussion.
JohnRa: Here's one on the Water Cycle:
JohnRa: http://ribit.tielab.org/ribit_show.php?id=1
JohnRa: It is designed to help students see that wind, mountains, the sun's heat, lakes, rivers, oceans and precipitation are all tied together in a system through which water circulates in its three forms. But you won't see the word cycle anywhere. The idea is for children to draw connections themselves, with the help of hints if they need them.
JohnRa: let's go take a look & regroup here in a minute or two for chat.
CarolWH: Looks great and easy for children to use.
RiannH: I like it better than the WebQuests I've seen.
JohnRa: What do you like about it, Riann?
JohnRM: It seems like it would be engaging for the students
RiannH: It is a little more straight forward - I guess.
JohnRa: Carol mentions ease. that's critical when you're trying to run a class.
JohnRa: yes, Riann.
JohnRa: any questions?
CarolWH: Like you said, it also can be a lesson component. Not a huge amount of time required. That is very useful.
JohnRa: you'll see that you can make them in a only few minutes too.
JohnRa: would you like to see another?
JohnRM: definitely
CarolWH: yes
JohnRa: Here's another IBI. This one was created by an art teacher who was doing a cross-curricular lesson with a math teacher. It is designed to get children to see that mathematical principles (geometry in this case) influence the design of common objects (quilts in this case).
JohnRa: http://ribit.tielab.org/ribit_show.php?id=54
RiannH: yes, please
JohnRa: let's reconvene in a minute or two.
CarolWH: I love the hints option.

JohnRa: it helps, for sure.

CarolWH: Even the verbiage is good. Students sometimes don't want to click on a help section, but a hint sounds much more appealing if they are stuck.

JohnRa: good point!

JohnRa: and it's designed to just give them enough info to keep them going.

JohnRa: you don't want to give the answer away.

JeffC is making his own... and as usual... multitasking.

JohnRa: Jeff, you're far ahead, but that's the idea.

JohnRa: RIBIT is available for any teacher to use.

JohnRa: To set up your account go to the following link and follow the instructions.

JohnRa: http://ribit.tielab.org/signup.php

JohnRa: before you do this, are there any comments or questions?

JohnRa: After you create your account you will need to check your email for the confirmation message and follow those instructions.

JeffC: OK... I created my own... it's: http://tinyurl.com/ulvu

JohnRa: great, Jeff.

JeffC: Dang John... I just looked at your profile... you're just a kid. Are you sure you're old enough to be teaching?

JohnRa: as people start filtering back to the chat I want to explain something about RIBIT.

JohnRa: Jeff, I taught for six years before going into edtech.

JohnRa: HS history.

JeffC: Just kidding you... impressive

JohnRa: thanks

JohnRa: re: RIBIT, there are templates out there for just matching instructions with links.

JohnRa: I think web wizard is the best.

JohnRa: RIBIT is really just for inquiry-based activities.

JohnRa: I ask that you keep that in mind as you create your IBIs.

JohnRa: is anyone here?

JeffC: me

RiannH: yes

JeffC: They're probably all working on their IBIs.

CarolWH: I'm back

FionaS: yes, just exploring

JohnRa: good.

CarolWH: I'm here

JeffC: I have a question for you John. There are a number of tools out there: Trackstar, Filamentality, Tourmaker to name a few... why use Ribit?

JohnRa: good question.

JohnRa: I type slowly so hold on...

JohnRa: RIBIT is expressly for internet based inquiries.

JohnRa: these others have multiple uses.

JeffC: So are the others... well... they're all pretty much internet based

JeffC: You have links to sites (from what I can tell) and a nice hint tool...

JohnRa: yes, but there won't be any "hotlists" on RIBIT because that's not it's purpose, unlike filamentality.

JohnRa: RIBIT isn't flashy technology, just focused and purposeful and easy to use.

JohnRa: did you guys have a chance to try out the user interface?

CarolWH: The simplicity is what makes this so great and user friendly.

JohnRa: was everyone able to create an account?

CarolWH: yes

RiannH: yes

JohnRa: good.

JohnRa: Fiona, I saw you made a test IBI.

JohnRa: if you create an IBI that is a test or is incomplete, you can keep it from showing up in the search results by clicking the "incomplete" button on the IBI creation page.

CarolWH: Is there a shortcut way to locate the raw material URLs?

JohnRa: not yet, Carol.

JohnRa: for images I use google image search or altavista.

CarolWH: great tip. Thanks.

JohnRa: google image search works well.

JohnRa: I taught history, so for me primary sources are the "raw materials"

JohnRa: the key is to get students working directly with raw materials that are "unexplained"

JohnRa: you want them to discover on their own.

JohnRa: it's that flash of insight you're trying to spark

JohnRa: when the child says "I get it!"

JohnRa: that's what RIBIT is about.

JohnRa: just a reminder...if you do create a test IBI, please check "incomplete" on the IBI Creation page. I'd prefer that those didn't show on the search results page.

JohnRM: I think I made one. I haven't tried it yet. So don't laugh http://ribit.tielab.org/ribit_add.php

JohnRa: you can find incomplete IBIs or test IBIs by going to the "Use RIBIT" page

JohnRa: http://ribit.tielab.org/use.php

JohnRa: just go to "View or Edit My IBIs::", enter your user name and you can find these IBIs.

JohnRM: nevermind...I think I erased it

JohnRa: John, make sure you save it.

JohnRa: I was too late.

JohnRM: oh well..it was pretty easy though

JohnRa: make sure to click the "Save My IBI" button at the bottom

JohnRM: I definitely will now

JohnRa: we're running out of time I'm afraid. are there any final questions?

CarolWH: This is very encouraging. Teacher and student friendly

JohnRa: please use it to your hearts content

JohnRM: Is this going to stay a free site?

JohnRa: yep.

JohnRa: I hope this session was useful for you and I wish you all the best. If you should have any questions about RIBIT or other TIELab learning tools, please go to the TIELab home page (www.tielab.org) and use the contact form to reach me.

JeffC: Well... I have a few... but would like to talk to you more about everything
JohnRa: thanks everyone.
FionaS: Good to know about, thanks.
CarolWH: Thanks for the great information.