

**Title of Session:** WriteTalk  
**Moderator:** Sandra Shattuck  
**Title of File:** 20040212aamuwt  
**Date:** February 12, 2004

Room: After School Online

**BJ:** Hi, Sandy!

**SandraS:** Hey!

**BJ:** I'm wondering if you should add to your monthly blurb more about writing across the curriculum...and combine that with writetalk

**BJ . o O (** give more people a reason to participate )

**SandraS:** excellent idea

**SandraS:** I've been pondering your last message

**SandraS:** about how the words are the pictures

**SandraS:** and I'm fascinated by the way writing changes when images come into play

**SandraS:** I kept thinking of your storyboard and what you wanted to say and what images, music you'd use

**BJ:** that's why reading the book and seeing the movie are so different

**SandraS:** The Momnotmom story I saw offered so many possibilities for each image

**BJ . o O (** and usually disappointing )

**SandraS** nods

**SandraS:** The way the words and the images inter/counteract adds another level to the narrative.

**BJ** agrees...takes the story to the fourth dimension

**SandraS:** exactly

**SandraS:** also, seems as if whole project is almost a kind of therapy

**SandraS:** or at least taps into some of that kind of energy/stuff

**BJ:** have you seen The Box Project...Empty and Meaningless?

**SandraS:** no

**SandraS:** sounds intriguing

**BJ:** Let me get you a url. Adrienne Fritze was a guest for me during one of my arts and literacy discussions...

**BJ:** there's a transcript in the archives

**SandraS:** great

**SandraS:** I'll look at it later

**SandraS:** I was thinking about the digital storytelling precisely in that way

**SandraS:** that is, does digital storytelling offer writers who have less education

**SandraS:** less writing training

**SandraS:** to develop their writing more fully?

**BJ:** I would think so

**SandraS:** seems that relying on the visual and the aural

**BJ . o O (** still looking for that url )

**SandraS:** which might be more developed

**SandraS:** might allow undereducated writers the chance to grow a story in a different way

**SandraS:** and then become more confident about storytelling and writing abilities  
**SandraS:** dunno  
**BJ:** did you see the PBS POV program What I want my words to do to you?  
**SandraS:** No. I missed it!  
**SandraS:** I really wanted to see it.  
**SandraS:** How was it?  
**BJ:** it is incredible  
**SandraS:** I thought it might be  
**SandraS:** sounds like Eve Ensler has found a whole new area  
**BJ:** here's the box project url <http://www.urbanesque.com/empty/>  
**SandraS** visits url  
**BJ:** here's the url for Words <http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2003/whatiwant/>  
**SandraS:** wow!  
**SandraS:** definitely want to check that out some more  
**SandraS:** Empty Box and What I Want.... both those sites look excellent  
**BJ** nods. There's a script in the archives on Words too  
**SandraS:** excellent  
**SandraS:** all these riches!  
**BJ:** Eliza Licht was a guest for me during an Alt/Correctional Ed discussion  
**SandraS:** ok, your sessions sound really intriguing  
**BJ:** some are pretty cool. Some are so-so  
**BJ:** but there are sure a lot of resources out there  
**SandraS:** and this is the kind of teaching you do, also, right?  
**BJ:** yes, I teach art in a correctional facility  
**BJ** . o O ( juveniles )  
**BJ:** many have poor reading skills  
**SandraS** listens  
**BJ:** I haven't developed my teaching skills enough to totally integrate Digital Storytelling....  
**BJ:** but I do try to help the boys learn to communicate, and understand that there are many ways to do that  
**SandraS:** are there tech resources there?  
**BJ:** have you seen my Hats off to Peace Project?  
**SandraS:** no  
**BJ:** I have access to pretty much anything I want. (I'm spoiled rotten)  
**SandraS:** excellent  
**SandraS:** I believe in being spoiled rotten as a teacher!  
**BJ:** <http://ti2data.sri.com/info/teachers/hatsoff/>  
**BJ:** My principal has always been very good to me.  
**SandraS:** that's a lovely project  
**SandraS:** I like the Family and the Warrior for Peace hats  
**BJ** nods. Some of the kids really get into it...and learn to look a little more closely at what identifies them as a person  
**SandraS:** yes  
**SandraS:** do you do journaling along with creating the hat?

**BJ:** a little. They all have a journal and I assign a weekly topic. When we do the hats, they start with listing three cultural identifiers

**BJ:** this week they had to write five ways in which we communicate

**SandraS:** cool

**SandraS:** I was wondering about journaling about the hats

**SandraS:** that is

**SandraS:** writing about the process of making it

**SandraS:** revising it

**SandraS:** so just as a writer might document his/her revisions

**SandraS:** the artist could document the ideas/revisions for hat

**SandraS:** and comment on choices one makes

**SandraS:** changes one makes

**BJ:** they have to draw the three symbols for the identifiers, but not too much other writing...

**BJ:** the periods are only 30 minutes long

**SandraS:** ack!

**SandraS:** that's not much time

**BJ:** nope

**SandraS:** ok, I'm completely ignorant about juvenile correctional facilities

**SandraS:** do they get other subjects taught?

**BJ:** I try to do as much as I can...get them computer literate, improve writing skills, and provide art therapy...not much time

**SandraS:** wow...that's a whole lot to accomplish

**BJ:** yes, it's a regular school...English, science, social studies, life skills, math, library and many have two reading classes

**SandraS:** are the students incarcerated?

**BJ:** the average stay is only 6 to 9 months. Yes, it's a residential facility

**BJ:** students are constantly coming and going.

**SandraS:** ok, now I've got a better idea

**SandraS:** so that's another teaching challenge

**BJ:** so all the lessons have to be individualized

**SandraS:** in other words, not much building on lessons?

**BJ:** unfortunately, no. By the time you get all the kids into one lesson topic...

**BJ:** three have been released and four have entered

**SandraS:** wow. that's gotta be hard

**BJ** nods.

**SandraS:** so what drives you to get up in the morning and go to work?

**SandraS:** (aside from paying bills....)

**BJ:** The kids love school...and they love art class

**SandraS:** they love school??????

**BJ:** for many this is their first successful learning experience

**SandraS:** wow

**BJ:** and they do learn a lot...most improve at least two reading levels and one math level while they're there

**SandraS:** excellent

**BJ:** and some take the GED. We've even had a few graduate from high school while they're with us

**SandraS:** do they have their first successful learning experience there because the pedagogy is tailored towards a type of learner....or because most have had lousy school experiences?

**BJ:** first reason. Many have emotional and social issues

**BJ:** and many have learning disabilities

**SandraS:** do all the teachers there have to undergo a certain kind of training

**SandraS:** or come in with certain qualifications?

**BJ:** the teachers have to be certified, but the school is considered experimental. There isn't really much training...

**SandraS:** ah... the key term....experimental

**SandraS:** I told you I went to an experimental college?

**BJ:** o O ( same as 'middle schools' )

**BJ:** how was the college experimental?

**SandraS:** no grades

**SandraS:** no tenure for professors

**SandraS:** community meetings every Wednesday for entire community

**SandraS:** college ran on committees composed of students/faculty/staff

**BJ:** we have teacher meetings every day

**SandraS:** that's rare, eh?

**BJ:** is the college still in existence?

**SandraS:** yup

**SandraS:** hang on

**BJ:** cool

**BJ** wonders how assessment was done

**SandraS** projects

[http://redlandsapps.redlands.edu/academics/cas\\_academics/undergrad/jnst/description.cfm?program=jnst](http://redlandsapps.redlands.edu/academics/cas_academics/undergrad/jnst/description.cfm?program=jnst)

**SandraS** is happy she got to use the project command...

**BJ:** very cool.

**SandraS:** assessment was done by instructor and student

**SandraS:** student writes self-evaluation

**SandraS:** instructor writes evaluation

**SandraS:** instructor evaluation makes us transcript

**SandraS:** but when I went in the 70s, that education was called experimental and alternative

**SandraS:** I was shocked when I was researching "alternative pedagogy" in the 90s and found out

**BJ** nods. Now it's called project based learning

**SandraS:** that alternative referred to correctional...

**SandraS:** ah...

**SandraS:** it's unfortunate that we even need alternative education

**SandraS:** that is, that traditional education doesn't work in many instances

**BJ:** yep. My guys are the ones who have fallen through the cracks of public education

**SandraS:** exactly

**SandraS:** I have many students now who have also fallen through, but they're in college

**SandraS:** do you want to talk about Magic Wands?

**BJ:** I haven't had time to work on it any more

**BJ:** I'll try to get to it this weekend

**SandraS:** do you already have the images you want?

**BJ:** I haven't even started to look for the images. The ideal would be family photos, but I don't have any

**SandraS:** oh.

**SandraS:** no access to family photos?

**BJ:** I'll have to ask my mom if she has anything

**SandraS:** that's a great idea

**BJ . o O ( and can find it! It was a looong time ago )**

**SandraS** understands that kind of relationship to past...

**BJ:** Haven't seen you in a while, Mike. How are you?

**BJ:** Thanks for the conversation, Sandy. I'll work on the images...

**SandraS:** My pleasure. I love the project you're doing.

**SandraS:** Thanks so much for thinking of me with the Art of Storytelling group.

**BJ:** can you send me a new blurb for Writetalk?

**SandraS:** I'm learning lots of yummy stuff.

**SandraS:** Sure.

**SandraS:** You want me to include something on writing across the curriculum?

**BJ . o O ( nature of TI, Sandy...where do you think I learned everything? )**

**BJ** nods. Yes, please

**SandraS** smiles