Title

Children's Authors on the Web: Online Sites that Motivate Students to Write

Target Audience

This course is designed for current and preservice teachers of grades K-6.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Description

Connecting with authors motivates students to read and write. In this course, learners will explore author studies and learn how to use technology to introduce the idea of "authorship" to their students. Learners will explore author Web sites and other Internet sources in order to build a collection of resources that introduce students to a variety of genres, as well as encourage students to experiment with communicating in different forms with others.

Facilitator

TBA

Credit

To be determined by college or university

Standards

This course will help the teacher to meet National Education Technology Standards (NETS) 1, 2, 3, and 5.
This course will help your students to meet NETS foundation Standards 1 and 4.

Learning Outcomes

After completion of this course, learners will:
- Explain an author study and describe how it can support/enhance student reading and writing.
- Locate Internet resources for an author study.
- Design an author study that is meaningful for their students and their curriculum.
- Develop steps and strategies for activities in an author study.
- Develop a plan to implement their author study in the classroom.

Process

In each activity the learner will have access to numerous online resources from high quality sources. Throughout the course, learners will also have access to video vignettes showing "best practice" examples for technology integration.

Activity 1: Examine and evaluate author and literature Web sites

Assignment
Explore the following Web resources

- Children's and Young Adults' Authors & Illustrators
  This site is an index of authors and illustrators. It also has many useful links to help you find more about your favorite authors.
- Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site
  Hurst's page is an excellent resource for the discussion of children's literature. This page contains links to pages of many children's book authors. Make sure to explore the rest of the site-this is an outstanding Web resource.
- Authors on Yahooligans
  This is a Yahooligans site that lists over 650 author sites in alphabetical order by Author's last name.
- Author Spotlight
  The author spotlight site features visits with authors including book summaries, biographies, classroom connections, and Internet links.
- Horn Book Virtual History Exhibit
  This is a unique site featuring correspondence between authors and editors through the years. It is a great look into an author's life.
- Online Writing Resources for Kids
- Authors and Illustrators on the Web
  Lists authors' personal websites and websites maintained by fans, scholars, and readers

Product
    Submit a list of 3-5 authors to potentially study with your students. For each author, note the resources you discovered while exploring Web sites.

Idea Sharing
    Write about an author that has been particularly motivating for your students. Briefly explain how or why the experience has been particularly successful. Respond to at least one other person's post.

Activity 2: Choose an author to examine for your author study

Assignment
    In this activity you will consider the authors identified in Activity 1 in relationship to your curriculum and your students' interests and needs. Choose the author for your study that you determine to be best for your students and your curriculum.

Product
    Submit the name of the author you will build your study around. Give a brief explanation of why you chose this author and how the author study will fit into your curriculum.

Idea Sharing
    Share a challenge you encountered in selecting an author for your study (i.e. plenty of resources were available but the topic didn't match your curriculum; the topic aligned with your curriculum but there was little student interest). Respond to at least one other learner's post.

Activity 3: Identify potential activities and ways to build an immersive classroom environment for your author study

Assignment
    In this activity, you will begin planning the classroom environment and selecting activities to peak student interest, motivate them to learn about the author, and encourage them to do their own writing.

    View and reflect upon three videos

Explore the following Web resources:
- Themes and Subject Area Connections by Author Carol Hurst
  Information on related books, activities, and sites on the Internet listed according to themes and subject areas.
- Johnson County Libraries Kid's Page: Edge of Adventure
  Provides book lists, Web links, activities, songs, and clip art.
- Meet the Authors and Illustrators
  A WebQuest about authors and illustrators. Includes an interview sheet for directing student questions about/to authors.
- Scholastic Authors and Books
  Discussion guides and teaching ideas for using literature in the classroom
- Children's Book Authors Who Visit Schools
  Links to the Web sites of children's book authors who visit schools

Product
Submit a list of four or five potential activities for your author study. Also submit a description of what you will do to build the classroom environment. The description should be detailed enough for the reader to 'picture' the display in his or her mind.

Idea Sharing
Share something you've done in the past to introduce a unit and/or create a classroom environment. Explain what worked particularly well OR ask for suggestions on an aspect you'd like to improve. Respond to at least one other person's post.

Activity 4: Develop specific steps and strategies for at least three author activities

Assignment
Explore the following Web resources:
- Lesson Plans and Lesson Planning
  Resources, guidelines, and tips on lesson planning.
- 10 Steps to Developing a Quality Lesson Plan
  This brief article provides descriptions of what should be included in an outstanding lesson plan.
- The Educator's Reference Desk Lesson Planning Guide
- Integrating Technology: Ultimate Lesson Plan Page
  Provides lesson plans that can be used for specific subject content and technology integration

Product
Submit the specific steps and strategies for at least three activities in your author study. Include descriptions of the technology and other materials needed.

Idea Sharing
If you have any questions about some aspect of an activity, ask for suggestions OR elaborate on an aspect of an activity that you think will go particularly well. Respond to at least one other person's post.

Activity 5: Plan for implementation of your author study

Assignment
Explore the following classroom management resources on the Web:
- Strategies for Classroom Management
  Strategies from the Florida Department of Education.

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- Classroom Management
  An interactive Web site on classroom management from the Department of Education and Professional Studies (EPS) at the University of Limerick.
- Tip Sheet: Classroom Management
  Strategies for managing one-computer and limited-computer classrooms

Product

Submit a plan for implementing your author study. You should include a timeline, a plan for gathering resources, requirements for technology use, and provisions for classroom management. Your plan should include enough detail for an outside reader to clearly understand what you are going to do.

Idea Sharing

Discuss the component of your implementation plan that you feel will be most critical to successful implementation OR discuss what you think your biggest obstacle will be. Respond to at least one other person's post.

Final Project

Before you submit your final project, you should review your submissions. This will allow you to review the work you have done in order to complete your final project. You should make sure you are meeting each of the final project criteria. Review each section to ensure that all are complete and have been edited for content and grammar. You may want to submit your project draft to a peer or colleague to assist with editing. When you are ready to submit your final project, compile the following sections:

- Author's name and short biography (paragraph)
- List of books written by the author
- List of websites to be used with the author study; for each site list the specific pages or subsections to be used
- Diagram and/or explanation of a display or bulletin board about the author that will be used to create an immersive environment
- Description of at least three activities in the author study - including the materials and technology needed
- Plan for implementation

Schedule

This course is scheduled to take approximately 30 hours to complete readings, activities, video, assignments, reflections and a final project.

Requirements

Learners are expected to:
- Complete all assignments
- Maintain and online journal
- Participate regularly in discussion boards

Evaluation

Pass/fail upon satisfactory completion of assignments and discussion board participation

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Materials (hardware, software, plug-ins)

Technical Requirements
- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- Email

Academic Dishonesty Policy

To be inserted by university institution only