

Middle School / High School Library Media Center Fall, 2009

The role of school libraries continues to change. In addition to providing library services to students and teachers, teacher librarians also collaborate with classroom teachers to provide high-quality instruction to students while promoting literacy within the school. Below are two specific examples of how we are promoting literacy and how we are working with teachers on classroom instruction at Dryden Middle and High Schools.

Promoting Literacy and Cultural Awareness: The Value of Special Guests Working With Students

Reading aloud, storytelling, and other forms of oral communication are important vehicles to promote reading and literacy (Krashen, 2004; Trelease, 2006). In addition to authors introducing students to literature, speakers can also work with students to promote a greater sense of cultural awareness.

For the past several years I have brought local published poets into the library for our Middle and High School students. These poets worked with students on poetry writing and they also did poetry readings.

Past visitors have included:

- Cory Brown (Ithaca College)- MS Visiting Poet
- Herm Card (Driver Middle School, retired)- MS Visiting Poet
- Paul Hamill (Ithaca College), Tompkins County Poet Laurete (2007-08)- HS Visiting Poet
- Jay Leeming, Tompkins County Poet Laurete (2009-10)- HS Visiting Poet
- Katharyn Howd Machan (Ithaca College), Tompkins County Poet Laurete (2003-04)- HS Visiting Poet
- Mira McEwan- MS Visiting Poet

Grants and other support for these programs were received from the Dryden Youth Opportunity Fund, the Dryden Teachers Center, and BOCES Arts in Education Grants.

Using Computer Technologies with Teachers and Students to Promote Instruction and Learning

Teacher librarians are trained in the educational uses of information technologies. Working with classroom teachers, we explore, demonstrate, and use Web 2.0 technologies and how these can be used to provide classroom instruction, to increase student literacy, and to promote school programs in the Middle and High Schools.

Web 2.0 technologies are computer technologies that let users easily create, share, and interact with information. Web 2.0 technologies include: podcasts, blogs, wiki, and social networking.

These activities are collaborative classroom ventures between other teachers and myself. Although these technologies are exciting, they do present challenges for teachers, school administrators, and information technologies staff (Solomon & Schrum, 2007, pp. 152-157). Through exploration, collaboration, and communication with others, we are ensuring that these technologies are used safely in the Middle and High Schools.

Here's how some teachers are using various Web 2.0 Technologies in their classrooms or to promote their programs:

Teacher	School	Department	Scope of Activity
E. Savoie J. Caputo	MS	ELA	Students wrote and record radio plays using old-time sound effects.
J. Vorstadt A. Allen	MS	FC&S	Students researched vegetables and used this information to record public service announcements.
R. Tice	MS	LOTE	Students wrote and recorded narratives for autobiographical Power Point presentations. Teacher used audio recording technologies to record content for listening circles. Teacher used recorded information to deliver content to a student with special needs.
T. Ciccoricco D. Nassar	MS	Media	Students wrote and recorded original stories.
R. McMahon	MS	Music	Teachers record interviews with visiting musicians for podcast.
E. Rehtin	HS	Art	Students used digital audio equipment to record film narrations.
L. Bruno	HS	Business	Students learned about etiquette, copyright, and interviewing techniques. Teachers used a blog as a vehicle for students to share classroom content outside the classroom
M. Grace	HS	ELA	Students recorded original poems.
R. Huyge	HS	Music	Teachers record interviews with visiting musicians for podcast. Recording equipment used as part of AP Music Exam.
T. Crocker K. Taylor	HS	Science	Teachers record interviews with visiting scientists for podcast.
M. Mangini	HS	Science	Students used audio recording equipment to study sound waves.

I am also working with Athletic Director Ralph Boettger to explore the use of Twitter as a vehicle to provide real-time information about athletic contests to other interested individuals who may not be able to attend these events.

Earlier this Spring I was also invited to present a workshop about how we are using podcasting in the Middle and High Schools at the annual SLMS conference. (SLMS is the School Library Media Section of the New York State Library Association.) This workshop was well received and I have submitted a proposal to do a hands-on workshop at the 2010 conference.

References

Krashen, S. D. (2004). *The power of reading* (2nd ed.). Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Solomon, G., & Schrum, L. (2007). *Web 2.0: New tools, new schools*. Eugene, OR: International Society for Technology in Education.

Trelease, J. (2006). *The read-aloud handbook* (6th ed.). New York: Penguin.