

**Title of Session:** Targeting Librarians! - Reading Comprehension

**Moderator:** Lesley Farmer

**Title of File:** 20030820tl

**Date:** August 20, 2003

Room: Hot Tub Conference Room

AlimbGst4: We are Raquel and Alim. We are in Peru

BJ smiles. Very cool!

LesleyF: Great! I teach school librarianship in southern California. I did a research project on school libraries in Peru about 20 years ago...

JoshBr: I am Josh, in Florida, USA

LesleyF: I stayed with American teachers in Lima, and went to Cuzco and a couple of other towns too.

AlimbGst4: Great!

LesleyF: So what are your positions in your sites?

JoshBr: Media Specialist

LesleyF: Note that the topics we will discuss can apply to lots of languages...

AlimbGst4: We work for a project called Center of Excellence in Teacher Training. we train teachers in improved reading and writing instruction strategies.

LesleyF: What are you hoping that you'll learn in this session?

LesleyF: Great -- you two will bring lots of expertise to the session!

AlimbGst4: I ('Alim) am the technology specialist for the project

AlimbGst4: Raquel is the teacher training specialist

JoshBr: Improving research strategies, critical thinking, comprehension strategies

LesleyF: We'll be looking at all of these, starting with identifying good readers. What do you see right now as characteristics of good readers?

AlimbGst4: well, I was showing TI2 to Raquel cause I've proposed that we create a similar site for teachers who go through our training. We saw the topic of the workshop and thought we better check this out cause this is just our thing

JoshBr: A true passion to read and discuss literature. Excitement! Enthusiasm!

BJ smiles....love the enthusiasm Josh!

LesleyF: Yes, the affective domain is important as well as the cognitive domain -- if you're not motivated, it'll be hard to learn how to read and to comprehend.

AlimbGst4: Fluid reading, and reading with comprehension.

AlimbGst4: that's a circular definition I suppose

LesleyF: Some folks forget that reading is a fairly recent human SKILL (think of prehistory). There are several skills involved: decoding, reading "process," reading and literature (passion, passion), identifying and overcoming reading obstacles, and overall reading competence (fluency)

LesleyF: There is an interdependence in terms of skills and attitudes.

LesleyF: The passion bit really applies to engagement with text and context.

LesleyF: Research says that mature readers are self-directed (they read because they WANT to), they are purposeful, then construct meaning -- which includes and transcends comprehension, use a repertoire of strategies to understand and apply text, and think about what they read.

SusanR joined the room.

LesleyF: In Peru, are there reading standards from that country -- or do you use international or US ones?

LesleyF: Hi, Susan! Join us in talking about reading comprehension and technology. We're just reviewing the context.

SusanR waves to all

SusanR: and wishes to listen

AlimbGst4: Raquel says that Peru uses international standards (for example PISA)

JoshBr: I think the true passion comes when literature inspires students to create . . .

AlimbGst4: The national curriculum also establishes standards

LesleyF: Do the above skills seem appropriate to what you've been doing/aiming for?

JoshBr: We finished a unit on fictitious dog stories. A first grader used Imovie to make a video.

JoshBr: <http://www.megahedz.com/videos/copper.htm>

LesleyF: Good point, Josh. Production is key: building on others' texts. Let's see your video, OK?

JoshBr: You need real player. It's a free download. Does everyone have it?

SusanR: That's impressive!

JoshBr: She is a talented student. Truly motivated by great literature!

SusanR: Great language skills!

LesleyF: I would love to know the process by which she created this book. It shows incredible skill in identifying and applying genre schema as well as writing techniques.

JoshBr: Good question. . . .

JoshBr: We read many books aloud with "dog" related characters.

LesleyF: Normally, the teacher would provide the structure/framework for this kind of effort, and have the students storyboard, perhaps dictate to older people (students, parents, aides) or tape record, and so forth.

JoshBr: Pilkey, etc.

JoshBr: Most were very funny and humorous.

JoshBr: One was even about a farting dog!

JoshBr: The students really got into that one!

LesleyF: The main concept is the melding of writing and reading / consuming and producing -- with technology being integrated.

JoshBr: This naturally let into students talking about their own dogs.

LesleyF: For some time reading and writing were separated activities/concepts.

JoshBr: I then modeled the process of creating "storyboards"

JoshBr: Students then tried making storyboards and we did peer reviews . . .

JoshBr: Compared their storyboards to rubrics, etc . . .

LesleyF: When students dictate their stories and see them archived into words in print or online, they see the power of writing and reading.

JoshBr: Then they went into production using Imovie.

JoshBr: Great point Lesley

LesleyF: Writing is actually first (chicken and egg) because it records one's words. Then the audience READS the captured/recorded/archived words.

LesleyF: Let's look at some other means of reading instruction.

LesleyF: Some thoughts, folks?

JoshBr: How about literature circles?

LesleyF: Good approach. And this can be done face-to-face or online; both synchronous and asynchronous.

JoshBr: How could lit circles be done online? Have you done this?

LesleyF: Literature circles can be done between two schools/sites via chat or email/epals.

LesleyF: The easiest way is to start by generating questions about the text -- after it's chosen and read. A teacher can "seed" the questions, and then kids really get into it.

LesleyF: An interesting activity is to produce concept maps (using Inspiration or Kidspiration) and then comparing them across sites. They're good conversation starters as kids describe and compare their maps.

JoshBr: I like that strategy Lesley.

LesleyF: Another easy activity is to have students predict what happens to the characters after the story ends. Did Cinderella live happily ever after?...

LesleyF: In terms of visuals, kids can draw their favorite characters or places in the books, and compare them.

JoshBr: Also . . . "would you have reacted the same way?" "What does that say about your personality?"

LesleyF: Would you be Harry Potter's friend or enemy -- or teacher? Are you a Muggle at heart, etc.

JoshBr: Dr. Judith Langer talks about envisionments. Great stuff.

<http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/conversations/>

LesleyF: Let's look at Josh's site (just click on the hyperlink).

LesleyF: Rich site, Josh. Annenberg does a lot of neat projects.

LesleyF: Want to look at another rich site?

JoshBr: Yes.

LesleyF: It's developed mainly by PacBell and San Diego State Univ. I'll give you the starter site. From there, click on SEARCH Filamentality, which is sort of like WebQuests. If you type in "Reading" in the search box, you'll come up with over a hundred lessons/activities across the curriculum that involve reading comprehension. So ready?

SusanR nods

SusanR: Ready

JoshBr: Ready

LesleyF: OK: <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/>

JoshBr: Great site Lesley. Thanks for sharing it. Lot's of "classroom ready" activities to use.

SusanR: A valuable resource!

SusanR: Thanks Lesley and Josh. Must go!

SusanR left the room.

LesleyF: So you can see that there are many activities that kids and teachers can do that incorporate technology into the reading.

LesleyF: multimedia presentations, games, video, quizzes, etc. Do you know school.discovery.com?

LesleyF: These are especially good for SHARING reading, which is a key component of comprehension -- it's hard to share what you don't know...

LesleyF: Josh, you shared an online video. Can you think of other ways to tell a story that

involves reading and technology?

JoshBr: Book Talks using Hyperstudio/PowerPoint, etc. Creating book "trailers".

LesleyF: You can also have students use audiotapes -- or the recording aspects of computers.

JoshBr: Low tech is also effective. We have student create audio tapes.

LesleyF: great minds think alike...

JoshBr: hahahaha

JoshBr: Thanks all. I'm going to read the next chapter of Lemony Snicket to my son.

Great session Lesley.

LesleyF: So there are lots of reasons to incorporate technology: novelty/glitz/affective domain, access to material, means to produce and broadcast same, visual help, mix of formats to help with different learning styles, quick feedback...

LesleyF: Did you know that's being made into a movie??

JoshBr: Of course . . . I'm playing Count Olaf!

LesleyF: [argh!@](#)

[JoshBr](#) left the room (signed off).

LesleyF: We didn't touch on technology programs to help with diagnosing reading issues -- or for matching student reading ability/interests with reading materials.

LesleyF: In addition, word processing programs help with reading because text can be read aloud by the computer -- in addition to the writing helps.

LesleyF: Nor did we look at how reading on screen is different from reading in print. Do you notice that?

AlimbGst4: Diagnosing reading issues is a subject I'm interested in. Are you going to talk about that?

LesleyF: Sure. What have you seen in technology that helps that process?

AlimbGst4: I don't really know any resources

LesleyF: At the very least, you can use technology to help scaffold reading -- remediation approach. As for diagnosis, there are book reading programs, such as Accelerated Reader, that can diagnose student reading level and choose materials that the person would be successful reading and comprehending.

LesleyF: In addition, there are specific reading diagnosis programs; here is a URL that lists some possible ones:

LesleyF: <http://www.child-reading-tips.com/diagnosis-for-reading-problems.htm>

AlimbGst4: I remember reading about a tool that was developed by Scardamalia & Bereiter in Canada to scaffold writing. Are you familiar with that tool?

LesleyF: No, but I'm not as familiar with Canadian products.

LesleyF: Some ways to scaffold reading include graphic organizers and visualizing. Do you know [www.graphic.org/](http://www.graphic.org/)?

[LesleyF](#): 'talking" word processing programs also act as scaffolding tools.

LesleyF: any last thoughts?

LesleyF: Ideas on what you'd like to discuss next month?

AlimbGst4: I wonder how useful you consider drilling software that teaches letter recognition and letter-sound association.

AlimbGst4: there are a lot of those drill games out there

LesleyF: They are OK if aligned with diagnostics -- and supplemented with other approaches to reading.

AlimbGst4: you mean diagnostics that show that a child needs them.

LesleyF: Early intervention is key too.

LesleyF: Yes.

LesleyF: Another key skill is listening, so it's good if those programs include sound.

AlimbGst4: are you familiar with the LeapPad product by LeapFrog.

LesleyF: Yes, they have pushed into the family market so parents can help their children more.

LesleyF: Indeed, we didn't talk about family ways to help with reading -- which can include family use of the Internet.

AlimbGst4: Do you consider that to be a well design effective educational tool? They claim their designs are based on research.

LesleyF: do you know about [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org) and its site for parents to help their children read?

LesleyF: I'd have to read the research, but they do include some of the basic elements of reading skills, which you mentioned yourself.

AlimbGst4: well in some ways it seems that their products are mainly drill & practice, but embedded in meaningful short texts and rhymes. do you think this is effective even what it is not in response to an identified reading issue?

LesleyF: Another key with using technology is making sure that it fosters learning rather than distracting from it -- and that it uses the benefits of technology features as we noted above. The emphasis should be on content rather than packaging.

LesleyF: I think the LeapFrog items are for individual use -- but not real deep or good for extended time...

AlimbGst4: hmm... do you think they could have a negative effect if used for long?

LesleyF: Kids need more human interaction -- acting out and using the body to capture and communicate language rhythm and rhyme, for instance.

LesleyF: well, if it gets boring for the students, then they turn off mentally...

LesleyF: the more passive the learning, the less it will probably "stick" or be internalized.

AlimbGst4: Some friends of mine have mentioned that they think that their kids are less interested in books because they've gotten so used to the sights and sounds of computer games and educational toys. IS this a trend that has been documented at all?

LesleyF: I'd rather that kids PRODUCE LeapFrog types of materials than consume them...

BJ: Sorry to interrupt, but our scheduled time is up. If you would like to continue the discussion, you are welcome to do that.

BJ: Lesley, do you have a topic for September?

LesleyF: we could talk for lengths,, but food calls.

LesleyF: Topic: technology and motivation -- does it help or hinder?

AlimbGst4 ) well... thanks for sharing your wisdom.

AlimbGst4: sounds cool!

LesleyF: thanks -- good luck with your teachers!

AlimbGst4: thanks.

AlimbGst4: cheers.

BJ: sounds good, Lesley, Thanks for the interesting discussion.

AlimbGst4 left the room.

BJ . o O ( as always! )

LesleyF: Thanks as always...  
BJ waves goodnight. Bon appetit