Title of Session: Preservice Teachers - Learning about the Technology to Learning with the Technology
Moderator: Jan Naher-Snowden
Title of File: 20031211ps
Date: December 11, 2003

Room: On Tap Cafe

Jan_NS joined the room.
BJ: Jan is leading a discussion for preservice teachers
JenniferNi: Make the move from "Learning about the Technology" to "Learning with the Technology". Before we can expect our future students to develop the ability to develop a deeper understanding of how technology can assist them in gaining content knowledge, we must make that leap ourselves. Our discussion will focus on the real life applications of technology skills for our personal life-long learning goals. This group meets in the Cafe on December 11.
Jan_NS: And you are all welcome to join us.
BJ: thanks, Jennifer
JenniferNi: heh, the joy of copy and paste
Jan_NS: Wow, Jennifer. That about covers it all.
BJ: a suggestion if you're going to stay for the discussion...
BJ: click on the actions drop down menu in the top right of your chat window
BJ: and scroll down to DETACH
JenniferNi thanks BJ
BJ: Everett is going to join us. Then we can get started, Jan
Jan_NS: everyone get comfortable, we will have a relaxed session tonight.
MichelleTjoined the room.
JackT joined the room.
BJ: Hi, Michelle and Jack. Welcome
MichelleT: Hi
JackT: hi
EverettGst10 joined the room.
BJ: good job, Everett!
EverettGst10: Thank you!
BJ: Welcome, everyone, to the Preservice Teachers group
BJ: Jan Naher-Snowden is the discussion leader.
BJ: We usually start all the discussions with introductions
BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In
JenniferNi: I'm a K-8 substitute teacher in San Diego, California and a graduate student at San Diego State University.
EverettGst10: I'm social studies teacher in Massachusetts and I'm just a guest as you can see.
MichelleT: I am a teacher and a literacy coach in Wisconsin
Jan_NS: Hi, All! I'm a part-time faculty person at U. of Akron, Oh, working with preservice teachers, specializing in science methods and tech. integration
JackT: I am a teacher in Taiwan.

BJ: a nice diverse group, Jan!

Jan_NS . o O (what time is it in Taiwan??)

SusanR joined the room.

BJ waves hi to Sue. We've just done intros, Sue.

Jan_NS: Hi, Sue.

JackT: 9:19 on the morning of Friday.

EverettGst10: Hey there! I got in, Sue!

Jan_NS: top o' the morning to you, then, Jack.

JackT: first time to use this chat, good to be here.

SusanR: I am k to 8 Occasional teacher from Ottawa, Ontario

SusanR: Great Everett.

Jan_NS: welcome everyone!

Jan_NS: As Jennifer noted earlier, we are going to explore the area of moving from learning about technology to learning with technology.

Jan_NS: This was also the discussion topic last month so if you were here you will get a bit of a different slant tonight.

MichelleT: sounds good

EverettGst10: Intriguing

Jan_NS: Jennifer - give me your opinion on what this means to you.

Jan_NS . o O (she was eager to copy/paste the session description earlier!)

Jan_NS: or anyone else for that matter

JenniferNi: Instead of continuing to learn about what technology such as teaching students email, typing, etc... we can teach students how to use the computer as a resource to enhance their learning.

AndrewA joined the room.

EverettGst10: With the computer

Jan_NS: hi, Andrew, welcome.

EverettGst10: Hi there!

AndrewA: hi. as part of class requirement I am in this room. I have technology background

Jan_NS: Yes, but we will take one more step - actually moving from skills to using the tech. as a vehicle to accomplish much more

SusanR: We as teachers need to understand how technology can make a significant difference in how our students learn

Jan_NS: bear with me, I am fetching a URL - sue please continue with your comments while I get the URL

AndrewA: ok **SusanR**. tell me more

SusanR . o O (I am thinking)

EverettGst10: I agree, many of my students are clueless about the functions the computer offers and other technological applications.

SusanR: What are your experiences with integrating technology in the classroom..

EverettGst10: Me?

JenniferNi: Don't you mean such as using the internet to research information, keypals is also a great way to use the computer to learn

Jan_NS: Very true, Everett - It is essential to provide a foundation of comfortable interaction with using the computer as a tool.

AndrewA: I have the belief that graphing calculators will be replaced with monitors because display is so much better. Anybody buy into that

MichelleT: I worked at a school that every 2 students were assigned a computer to work on projects

Jan_NS: Michelle - did those students have the necessary skill to accomplish their projects?...

AndrewA: every 2 because?

Jan_NS: or were they spending much of their time figuring out the technology

SusanR: Within a few years I expect to see a computer on every student's desk...no notebooks??

JenniferNi: I disagree Susan

MichelleT: a technology teacher and students also helped students at whatever level they were at

JenniferNi: it would be ideal, but not a reality

AndrewA: I agree with Susan, if for no other reason than some company will want to gain mass market.

JenniferNi: I still disagree

EverettGst10: The school I work at has a computer for each student, not to brag or anything, but even still the students couldn't either concentrate, or comprehend the idea of using Word or the internet!

Jan_NS: Part of the power of having small groups of students using one computer per group is the multiplicative power of several heads being better than one.

EverettGst10: Yes that is true too, Jan.

AndrewA: OK. Do you think point-and-click is really an academic skill?

Jan_NS: So where should the skill in using the various tools of computers begin.

JenniferNi: For me it was Kindergarten

Jan_NS: No, personally Andrew, I do not.

EverettGst10: Me too.

AndrewA: It should begin with point-and-click for sure.

EverettGst10: Strike what I just said

EverettGst10: For me it began in K also

JenniferNi: Actually, computer skills are easily able to begin with PreKinder software helping children learn the motor skills necessary to use a computer.

BeverlyPB joined the room.

AndrewA: I don't disparage point-and-click. I just want more symbolic logic in HS curriculum. I don't think most kinds realize Boolean logic big part of computer programming.

MichelleT: my son is in K grade and he has computer class once a week

BeverlyPB left the room.

Jan_NS: Maybe we need to consider teachers seamlessly using computers without getting frustrated and angry with the computers. We need to role model the use of computers just as we role model using a telephone or a car.

EverettGst10: Absolutely and with the economy being more and more dependant upon the technology, we need that "point-and-click method" to be taught to children at a young age and through out their entire school career.

Jan_NS: Michelle - just once a week. I take it the computers must be in a lab instead of a learning station

MichelleT: yes

JenniferNi: There in lies the problem of teachers using the technology seamlessly when there are many teachers who are afraid of it themselves, or use it simply as an advanced typewriter

Jan_NS: Exactly! You have nailed part of the problem

EverettGst10: I totally agree.

AndrewA: I want HS curriculum to include some formal programming, beyond necessary point-and-click skills.

EverettGst10: That I agree with too,

Jan_NS: So how can we, (I assume we are comfortable with the technology to a degree) assist other teachers in becoming more comfortable?

JenniferNi: Programming is completely unnecessary and just time consuming, let's get the basics first such as using the tool before creating it

JenniferNi: Teachers need to be explained technology in English

MichelleT: I have taken a programming class it did me no good

AndrewA: I am thinking about **JenniferNi** comment

Jan_NS: Good point, Jennifer. Programming is useful for some students. But I feel absolutely no need to be programming at a certain level.

EverettGst10: I believe that programming is extremely necessary for those who want to learn about and have interests in it.

Jan_NS: For me personally.

JeffC joined the room.

Jan_NS: Hi, Jeff.

AndrewA: Does anybody think Matlab or Mathematics should be used in HS curriculum/

JeffC waves

EverettGst10: I do

BJ: Hi, Jeff

EverettGst10: Hello.

Jan_NS: Andrew, I think it would depend on the curriculum and the objectives that the teacher is reaching toward.

SusanR waves to Jeff.

AndrewA: Matlab and Mathematidc are used in college classes a lot.

Jan_NS: For most of us, probably not.

Jan_NS: But for advanced students in Mathematics, definitely yes

AndrewA: why the waving. am I missing some form of communication

Jan_NS: Notice that we are still focusing on the technology/computers, instead of considering the curriculum and the standards/objectives that we are trying to reach. Perhaps we need to start there and see what the technology could add to attaining those standards and enhance the learning process.

EverettGst10: Absolutely.

SusanR agrees

Jan_NS: It is very easy to get stuck with thinking about the software or a neat tool, instead of thinking about enhancing problem solving or critical thinking in our students.

EverettGst10: What do you think about this Jeff?

EverettGst10: or anyone else

AndrewA: I see BCIS in HS curriculum. I see TI-83 calculator use in math classes. I just wonder what is the next logical step.

MichelleT: At the school I work at we have an intranet system where teachers can save to a share file to work on projects as a group I've been asking the tech. coordinator to create the same system for the students

Jan_NS: Perhaps, Andrew, we would have to say, it depends - on the students and the objectives

AndrewA: I can't type fast, new at this.

EverettGst10: I'm going to ask about that Intranet for the teachers and students at my school.

Jan_NS: Michelle, many schools do have that system for their students but generally these schools are highly innovative and extremely fortunate to have a large technology budget.

Jan_NS: Most schools are not in that boat!

AndrewA: OK **Jan_NS** but I go back to learning programming vs. learning point-and-click first. I say HS is all point-and-click

EverettGst10: but with additions as they get older

Jan_NS: Is that a problem?

AndrewA: not a problem

Jan_NS: Maybe that is appropriate for most students.

EverettGst10: it most certainly is,

EverettGst10: students are not so fortunate at my school...

EverettGst10: they don't have computers at their houses

Jan_NS: tell us more, Everett

MichelleT: Riverside University High School has a tech. person who teaches computer classes where key students help problem solve tech concerns for the school

EverettGst10: most of them don't any way

Jan_NS: that is true for many schools

Jan_NS: but that is another discussion session topic.

Jan_NS: so I think we agree that learning computer skills needs to start very slowly and gradually in the earliest grades.

EverettGst10: Well, if you really want some computer education...

EverettGst10: you need to spend time at home with them or after school

EverettGst10: like some of my students do

AndrewA: speaking from the heart, I just want a HS kid to experience the marvel at writing say a 25 line program to solve a problem, using logic and program flow control

Jan_NS: very true, Everett.

Jan_NS: Seems that is essential in your view, Andrew.

AndrewA: yes

Jan_NS: But maybe for those students who are interested in that direction.

EverettGst10: As MANY of mine aren't

Jan_NS: I feel pretty good when I can write some more complicated html and have it work.

MichelleT: are you calling for independent tech lessons for various students

Jan_NS: But maybe we are missing the point here.... Is that question for Andrew, Michelle?

AndrewA: I want **MichelleT**and Susan R to write 5 statement Matlab program to produce 3-dimensional multi-colored spinning top which can be viewed for many direction

EverettGst10: And if they can't?

MichelleT: I'm not clear on the conversation I don't think every student wants to learn programming

Jan_NS: If we build the computer use into a lesson or content experience where it makes good instructional sense, then there is a reason to learn the new skills.

JenniferNi: It seems like the discussion is caught up on advanced technology when we need to work with technology to expand learning. For example, writing standards: students could have a pen pal via the internet with another student in order to improve their writing skills

EverettGst10: Precisely,

AndrewA: ok

EverettGst10: I have encouraged that through a program that we run

Jan_NS: Not just for the sake of learning the skill, Andrew.

EverettGst10: at my school.

Jan_NS: I think that is where we are in a bit of a difference of opinion.

EverettGst10: My students have a pen pal some where in USA and communicate with them on a regular basis. I made this optional for my students.

Jan_NS: I did have a url to share with you that might clarify our discussion. It is part of a module and a great website that deals with innovation in technology in schools. this is one that you might bookmark and come back to at another time.

AndrewA: I just don't see how writing skills can be improved, other than practice. because of internet

EverettGst10: over the internet you interact with others, that's how

JenniferNi: they are practicing and they have a real individual that they are practicing with -- not just random stuff the teacher is having them write

MichelleT: on-line editing

Jan_NS: http://glef.org/TI/Why.html

EverettGst10: and with the others, they can help you

Jan_NS: Excellent example for the learning goals driving the technology instead of the other way around.

AndrewA: Ok. I'll buy that

JenniferNi: the URL says it is not valid

Jan_NS: check the website for an overview. there are many other links within this site that explore some of the neat things that schools are doing in relationship to technology. Make sure you check the videos and interview.

AndrewA: I'm big on writing well so tell me another way to use technology to improve writing

EverettGst10: spell check...

EverettGst10: grammar check

JenniferNi: modeling is a great way to learn writing, what if students wrote to college students, say English majors -- they would have a model.

Jan_NS: let me see if I typed it incorrectly.

AndrewA: Too easy. Tell me one more

EverettGst10: thesaurus

EverettGst10: is that spelled right?

AndrewA: Ok. Ho about just one more.

EverettGst10: dictionary

Jan_NS: http://glef.org/TI/index.html and then click on "Why"

JenniferNi: hmm, writing -- students put together a project that required different things -- Okay, lets say they are learning about rocks, they would have to write a five paragraph essay about the things they discovered on the internet. Incorporating a skill with knowledge learned through the computer

MichelleT: a hosted a poetry writers workshop with local poets at my school if I had thought about it it could have been on-line with poets sharing their poems and students writing poems on-line and the poets commenting

Jan_NS: any other comments or questions since we are almost out of time.

JenniferNi: you are kidding --

Jan_NS: Video conferencing would have been great for that Michelle

AndrewA: That's very good. You reminded me that when I am writing a university paper I often switch to dictionary to check word definition variations. I'm happy now.

MichelleT: we have video conferencing at my school

BJ: the next preservice teachers discussion will be on January 8

JenniferNi: we spent time talking about programming -- I wanted to learn more ways to learn with technology then the ones I already knew

MichelleT: thank you Jan and everyone