

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 assignment 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.

Assignment 1: Examine and evaluate author and literature Web sites

Assignment



Explore the following Web resources

- Independent Lens: The Political Dr. Seuss
This site from PBS offers resources and activities for advanced students that examine how the famed children's author was influenced by the political and social issues of the day, including racism, injustice and especially World War II.
- Author Focus: Jan Brett and Jane Yolen
This Author Focus from PBS Parents includes interviews with Jan Brett and Jane Yolen along with comprehensive lists of their books and links to their Web sites.
- Children's Literature Recommended Links
This page from PBS TeacherSource provides a list of recommended links to authors' Web sites and general sites regarding children's literature.
- Masterpiece Theatre: Pollyanna
This site provides students with information and links about Eleanor Hodgman Porter.
- Masterpiece Theatre: The Railway Children
This Web site provides a wonderful opportunity to explore the life and times of children's author Edith Nesbit and an introduction to the golden age of children's literature.
- American Masters: Maurice Sendak: Imagination and Art
This American Master's series lesson for teachers contains activities for both elementary and middle school students.
- 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 Yahoo!igans
This is a Yahoo!igans 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. *For a satisfactory grade*, submits at least one thoughtful post early in the session, and at least two responses to other learners at various times during the session. **For an exemplary grade**, submits two or more thoughtful posts early in the session, and more than two responses to other learners at various times during the session.

Online Journal

Reflect on your learning by answering the questions in the Online Journal.



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

Assignment

In this assignment you will consider the authors identified in Assignment 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.

Explore the following resources for motivating students:

- Arthur: About Marc Brown
This site provides a biography and links about the creator of Arthur: Marc Brown.
- Curious About George?
This site provides information about the authors of Curious George: H. A. and Margret Rey as well as answers to frequently asked questions about the curious monkey.
- Kids Reads: Norman Bridwell
This Web site provides a biography of the children's author Norman Bridwell.
- Kids Reads: Jan and Stan Berenstain
- This Web site provides a biography of the children's authors Jan and Stan Berenstain.

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).

For a satisfactory grade, submits at least one thoughtful post early in the session, and at least two responses to other learners at various times during the session. For an **exemplary grade**, submits two or more thoughtful posts early in the session, and more than two responses to other learners at various times during the session.

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

Assignment

In this assignment, 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:

- NOW with Bill Moyers: Maurice Sendak
This site includes an interview and video clips of Maurice Sendak.
- Sagwa: Amy Tan interview
This site provides a video and transcript of an interview with the Sagwa author: Amy Tan.
- NewsHour: Interview with Holes author Louis Sachar
This site provides a transcript of Louis Sachar, author of the National Book Award-winning novel Holes, discussing his work with Elizabeth Farnsworth.



- NewsHour: Interview with author Kate DiCamillo
This site provides a transcript of an interview with Kate DiCamillo (winner of the 2004 Newberry Medal for her novel "The Tale of Despereaux").
- Berenstain Bears - Let's Collaborate!
This lesson provides an opportunity for students to discuss the idea that we all have talents, skills and abilities. Students listen to stories, discuss the roles and interdependence of authors and illustrators and analyze a puppet story about valuing abilities.
- Arthur - Publishing and Sharing Stories
Design and create a book cover with front cover illustrations and back cover "about the author" blurbs. Explore several ideas for the final step in the writing process: publishing and sharing.
- Reading Rainbow: Make Your Own Book
This link provides different templates for students to write their own book.
- 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.

For a satisfactory grade, submits at least one thoughtful post early in the session, and at least two responses to other learners at various times during the session. For an **exemplary grade**, submits two or more thoughtful posts early in the session, and more than two responses to other learners at various times during the session.

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Assignment 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 assignment, ask for suggestions OR elaborate on an aspect of an assignment that you think will go particularly well.

For a satisfactory grade, submits at least one thoughtful post early in the session, and at least two responses to other learners at various times during the session. For an **exemplary grade**, submits two or more thoughtful posts early in the session, and more than two responses to other learners at various times during the session.

Online Journal

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Additional Resources

- The Merrow Report: Censorship and Children's Literature
Author Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, whose Alice books were the second most-banned books of 1999, discusses sex, censorship and children's literature.
- NOW with Bill Moyers: The Controversy over Children's Literatures
Read an article about how children's literature has been censored and the controversy over Maurice Sendak's stories.

Assignment 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.
- 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.

For a satisfactory grade, submits at least one thoughtful post early in the session, and at least two responses to other learners at various times during the session. For an **exemplary grade**, submits two or more thoughtful posts early in the session, and more than two responses to other learners at various times during the session.

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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 an online journal
- Participate regularly in discussion boards

Materials (hardware, software, plug-ins)

Technical Requirements

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- Email

Academic Dishonesty Policy

To be inserted by university institution only

Evaluation

This course is evaluated on a letter grade basis, and may be available for graduate credit. See graduate credit details pertaining to specific graduate credit institutions.

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