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Creative Content Lessons Inspire Behavior Change



BACKGROUND

Marjorie Anders of Bartlett High School in Bartlett, TX, noticed that her students were becoming accustomed to copying and pasting sentences, whole paragraphs, and photos from the Internet without citing the sources. The students were having trouble understanding the guidelines and reasons for citing sources and they thought that if it was on the Internet, it was free for anyone to use. Even when they were told this wasn't the case, their response might be, "Well, how would anyone know I used their creative content, and of all the people on the Internet, why would they come after me?"

To help her students understand the purpose of copyright, the consequences of plagiarism, and the benefits of doing the right thing, she began searching for ideas on the Internet that could help her explain the concepts and approach these topics from a fresh and unique perspective. Whether they were the creators or the users, she wanted her students to understand the importance of respecting creative rights.

A NEW APPROACH

The Digital Citizenship and Creative Content curriculum fit what she was looking for. When she introduced the curriculum in her classroom, the students were excited because it was something different. Ms. Anders remembers the class liking the teen-on-the-street videos at MyBytes.com and the stories about people their own age doing some of the same things and facing the same questions that they do every day. For the students, this learning approach was something different than the traditional textbook approach they were used to. The stories were real, current, and



Teacher Profile:

Name: Marjorie Anders

Hometown: Bartlett, TX

School: Bartlett High School

Grades Taught: 7-12

Subjects Taught: Business, Career Connections, Computer Technology

Years Experience:

3 years (high school);

3 semesters (college)



Thoughts on Teaching:

"The best part of being a technology teacher is seeing the students take the knowledge from their time in class and apply it to their life. In that context, each skill [downloading music, digital publishing, instant messaging, researching for the science fair, or making choices to be the best digital citizen they can be] is a victory that builds their confidence, fuels their thirst to learn, and encourages a culture of continued learning. I can provide them with tools to learn, but they need to provide the desire."

hands on. Ms. Anders reports that the students didn't even realize they were learning while taking part in the lessons and activities.

Since engaging with the curriculum, Ms Anders says her students have changed their habits. When working on a research project, they are taking the initiative to ask about citing sources and are including reference pages in assignments and projects. Often they print out the researched information from the Internet and highlight the parts where they found their information. She's even seeing the copyright symbol show up on the brochures and other projects the students create in her business elective class, in an effort to claim the rights to their own work.

CROSS-CURRICULAR VALUE

The lessons went over so well in her class that she has spread the word among her colleagues. Next year, in partnership with a high school English teacher, she will teach the creative rights aspects of research papers to supplement the core English class.

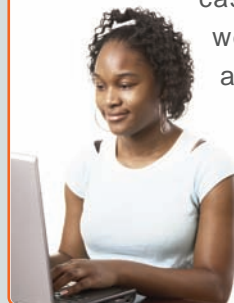
Ms. Anders explains that previously, her students were just trying to follow guidelines, but this curriculum has opened their eyes and helped them understand the importance behind rights associated with creative content.



A Captive Audience:

Ms. Anders states that the curriculum's case stories attract an attentive audience, since they zero in on today's topics of interest and make it very relevant for youth. The

case stories were such a hit in her classroom that her students kept asking for more!



About the Program

The Digital Citizenship and Creative Content Curriculum program creates awareness around creative content and helps foster a better understanding of the rights connected with it. Targeting youth in grades 8-10, its goals are to instill in students an appreciation of the value that creative content has for the creator, and to establish a personal respect for creative rights in a way that changes their behaviors and perceptions about digitally delivered content.

The program consists of both student and educator resources. For students, an interactive website (www.MyBytes.com) provides multiple opportunities to explore the topic of creative rights and interact with creative content. For educators, a set of cross-curricular classroom activities provides a variety of ways to engage students in this learning experience. These activities received the Seal of Alignment from the International Society for Technology in Education and align with the American Association of School Librarians' Standards for the 21st Century Learner. For more information, visit www.DigitalCitizenshipEd.com.

