

I'm a PBS Teacher!

by Debra Girgus & Donna Mayberry

As teachers we have attended numerous workshops and training sessions, and thus we found ourselves sitting at a KLRN Connect session after school last week. Walking in, we agreed, of course we use videos in the classroom and we use online resources, but how often do we think about the process? We began the training session intending to listen, but also expecting to enjoy the cookies and sodas and visit as teachers do. When the visiting began, the sharing and discovering also commenced.

Teachers of the 21st century have unlimited resources at their finger tips, but limited time to research, navigate and simply “cruise” the web and gather that information. So we steer toward what is successful and then in the most natural way, we gladly share with others. To keep up with the increasing demands and expectations of our students, we as educators must seek out prolific resources which will provide us with current, innovative, and global information that will satisfy the increasing curiosity of our students--curiosity which we want to cultivate and grow. This curiosity excites us as educators and motivates our planning; keeping the cycle moving forward--for every action there is a reaction.

One resource that has moved up our planning list is KLRN.org. It has become the “one-stop shop” for ideas, lessons, local projects and more. As teachers, we are always searching for new ideas to engage our students, and for the most part, engage us, too. The information provided is organized for family, communities and teachers and we look in all areas, leaving no stone unturned. Depending on what lessons we are planning, the site has become the jumping off location over and over again.

This summer we had the wonderful opportunity to offer a class on engineering, called Engineering Odyssey. What were we thinking? We did not want the “Odyssey” to become a long, wandering quest but an inquisitive quest. What could hold young students’ interest for five days, five hours each day? Merely Legos and building blocks were not going to cut it, and there is just so much you can do with toilet paper rolls. So, where do we turn? KLRN! Through [Teachers’ Domain](#) we stumbled upon [Building Big](#). For a week we were “Building Big!” We incorporated the series as a foundation, and then pulled in resources from the Teacher’s Toolkit and KLRN Connect. Did you know that 10-year-olds still enjoy [Curious George Exploring Engineering](#)? You would be amazed; we were. The ideas for the summer camp continued to build until we ran out of time, and space, in some instances. What a wonderful week of discovery for the students--and also the teachers. Instead of a heavy sigh and we are done, it was “Wow, what’s next?”

We found KLRN Connect to be easy to use when wanting to supplement and enhance a science lesson, or any lesson, for that matter. Showing a video clip on the construction of a bridge or the destructive path of a tornado becomes very real to the student. Seeing is believing, and in many cases, understanding.

There are new additions to KLRN Connect, and Discovery Science is one that allows the student to manipulate the information and work with interactive videos and labs. Where else can you find

streaming videos that can be used to introduce, support and extend any lesson--especially if you are teaching science or social studies? You can use an entire video or just a segment depending on what you need or how much time you have. Curriculum standards, a teacher's guide, and many times reinforcement worksheets and activities are provided. Because students are so visually stimulated, these videos really keep their attention, and they can actually see what concept they have been studying. For example, teaching physical and chemical changes to third graders just isn't easy. So we thought, let's see what Discovery Science has to offer. WOW! What a wealth of information and science experiences we found. Students could sort and classify matter, watch matter change states, and compare mass using a balance with gram weights. Concepts that are difficult for students to grasp come to life with the click of a mouse. As educators, we must provide various opportunities for students and their many learning styles.

One of the best things about KLRN's website is that anything you need to create or enhance a lesson can be found in one place. There are so many fantastic pieces to this website that it is hard to pick a few favorites. We find ourselves consistently using the Teacher's Toolkit, where a variety of links are available that provide lessons searchable by grade level and/or subject matter. The materials here are endless!

As we finished up our training session and grabbed the last of the cookies, we paused for a moment...

Can you remember everything we just shared and re-discovered?

Nope!

No worries, it's on our Favorites!

Please note that Discovery Science is an additional tool in which schools can subscribe to.