Using IP Video Conferencing for Distance Mentoring of 5-12 Grade Writers

In this interactive session, participants will learn about the Writing, Art, and Music Nexus (WAM Nexus) in Northwestern University’s Collaboratory. In January 2003, the WAM Nexus became a reality when students, teachers, facilitators, and mentors started working together to create, share and review their work using IP Video conferencing, and interactive services and tools in an interactive, web-based environment called Nexus.

A demonstration either live or in digital video format, participants will use a PolyCom ViewStation or ViaVideo to connect with Northwestern University’s MCU to be part of a mentoring session between writer John Ost and students from an elementary school. In the WAM NEXUS, students, mentors, teachers, and facilitators create, share, and discuss works containing text, images, sound, slideshows, documents, and video.

WAM NEXUS participants share their experiences in an online mentoring community designed to encourage and support conversation and creative collaborations through sophisticated Internet-based media and communication tools. Students, teachers, mentors, and facilitators discuss examples of student work and discussions from the WAM NEXUS that made an impact on their learning. They will describe how working in the NEXUS was important to them. They discuss the next steps for participation in the NEXUS, answer questions, and take suggestions from the audience.

The goal of the WAM NEXUS community is to demonstrate how network technologies can be used to foster collaboration and mentoring. To meet this goal, 7-12 grade student participants use the NEXUS Resource in the Northwestern University Collaboratory to interact with peers, teachers, and mentors. Students use a variety of media to communicate information and ideas effectively. By participating in the WAM NEXUS, teachers meet the National Educational Technology Standards for building learning environments. Internet-based collaboration tools used include messaging, text-based conferencing, discussion forums, and IP video conferencing.

The Collaboratory Project is a Northwestern University initiative funded by the Illinois State Board of Education. The Project provides consulting, training, technical advice to K-12 teachers and their students who are interested in using Collaboratory resources to advance education. The Collaboratory is an easy-to-use, web-based collaborative environment that teachers use to develop standards-aligned project-based activities. (http://collaboratory.nunet.net)

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To visit the Collaboratory Project and the Collaboratory, go to http://collaboratory.nunet.net/