Reflections on the BioEYES Institute

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I. BioEYES activities

This is a community of learners dream.

An easy to like project, hands on study for teachers and students alike. Its ability to engage the learner into an active pursuit is obvious. It is fun, engaging, hands-on science that will be like candy in the classroom. I was struck by my desire to observe the dish every day. No doubt the exercise engages a strong sense of wonder with ease. This alone will leave a positive impact on teacher and students and will make it an invaluable part of our high school biology course.

The collegial effort and opportunity was also a exciting component of the entire institute. I found myself thinking about my curriculum, where I need to go as a teacher, and what else needs to be brought into the classroom.

Side affect: The institute has motivated me to finally find a way to actually get a digital projector into my class room. Because I move classes, each hour, I have always been resistant to going through the hassle of loaning out the school projectors. I intend to find a way to get a projector as a permanent fixture into my biology classroom.

The Mendelian/ genetic components of the bioEYES will be fairly straight forward. I expect that it will be the spin off from this that will be the key to driving the learning and inquiry deeper. BioEYES will produce the immediate sense of wonder. The avenues of instigation will be wide open because of it. I foresee a strong link here to a study on embryology, variation, organogenesis, vertebral development, the scientific process, and evolution. I plan on using BioEYES as our hooks for these topics.

It’s a wonderful opportunity for teachers and students. I am excited to use it in class. The wow factor is huge. It will be fun to build onto of it into some deeper investigations.

II. Modern Biology Lab

This was very new to me and quite overwhelming. It took me some time to get my mind around what was actually happening with the “biology” and “chemistry” of the lab. I felt like I really needed some more pre=lab work, but it was still pretty cool.

Here I was using the very techniques and tools that allow us to study DNA and proteins today. These techniques were unimaginable not that long ago, Now, they are basic techniques for manipulating the chemistry of life. It felt great to be a part.

It felt like baptism by fire. I had to really work to unpack the theoretical knowledge to get the procedure to make any sense, but it was a heck of an exercise. Love the fact that I was doing “real science” in such a premier facility.

III. Pedagogy

This was the proof. The diversity of application comes to fruition. This made me appreciate the ability of these very creative teachers. Also thankful that they teacher in the grade schools, not me! Creativity explosion with these ladies

IV. Facility/ Lab Tours

Really loved the Radiation Lab. Would love to spend more time at that place. I had never really been exposed to this real time of research. Nice to see a real time lab in action. Totally foreign to me, but I really appreciated the facilities. Thought the zebra fish facilities tanks were phenomenal. Nice tour guides as well. I really appreciate what is going on here my back yard more now.