

73 - Collaborations with Librarians

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Purpose: The purpose of the transcripts is to provide readers and listeners with a written version of each episode of the UAGC Center for Early Childhood Education's Early Childhood Chatter Podcast so they can follow along with the audio content. www.uagc.edu/ece-center/chatter-podcast

Audience: Current Active & Enrolled Students

Episode Transcript

Host Dr. Shipley: Hello everyone and welcome to Early Childhood Chatter with Dr. Shipley and Dr. Heald. We will upload a new episode every other week on Wednesdays.

Host Dr. Heald: Twice a month, we come to you with a 10-minute professional development that you can quickly listen to for new ideas to use today. Don't forget to subscribe to this podcast to get notifications about future episodes.

Today we are so excited to have with us Dr. Jessica Thompson. Dr. Thompson is a wife and mother of two adult children and lives in central Virginia.

She's worked in education for over 20 years, in various roles starting out working in a nursery school as an assistant and then teacher and most recently she was an elementary school librarian. She's a full-time lecturer at the University of West Georgia, and is an adjunct for Old Dominion University, and an associate instructor for the University of Arizona Global Campus. She also writes books reviews, excuse me, book reviews for School Library Connection as and is involved in the American Association of School Librarians.

Wow, what a just plethora of experience to bring with us today. Dr. Thompson, welcome.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Thank you, thank you.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Hi Jessica, I'm super excited that you're here to talk to us today with about collaborations with librarians because I think sometimes teachers forget about this, right?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: You're exactly right. And we all get forgotten a lot.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Yes, and I think back to when I was teaching and I'm like did I use my librarian enough because she was so cool and had so many activities and I don't think I did.

So, my first question is why should teachers ask for your help?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Because there are so many different things a librarian can do for you and for your students. They can collaborate to plan lessons and teach lessons. First of all, it makes your lesson planning less work and a little less stressful.

But the biggest thing is that librarians, when students come to the library, and when teachers collaborate with librarians, there are studies that show that student success is higher. When those collaborations and when those library visits occur. Librarians are trained in how to do collaborations.

They're experts in multiple literacies. We can tie information literacy into a lesson. I know everybody has heard of STEM, which is science, technology, engineering, and math.

I like the term, it was kind of popular for a little while, but it's kind of fallen by the wayside. But it's STREAM, which adds in reading and arts as well. And I think all of those things are important.

School librarians have lots of resources. And if we don't know something or have something, we usually know where to get it.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Well, that is so cool because I actually, I've done a lot of STEAM.

But STREAM, I love that. So, you answered my first question. And then you kind of answered my second question.

But how do you want teachers to come up to you? How can they use you? What can they ask you for?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Really, the best thing is just to go to your librarian and ask them, what can you do to help me in my class? You might be teaching a lesson on, say, the seasons or weather or have a theme like things that go. Take that to your librarian and say, "hey next week, we're going to be teaching our students about things that go. Can you help me with this? I'd love your thoughts and your ideas and your support".

And the school librarian, or if you don't have a school librarian, your public librarian can help you plan those lessons, to have more hands-on activities, to incorporate different books you might not think about, to help actually physically teach that lesson. I used to collaborate and teach lessons with my teachers. I might do some with them at the same time, or I might take pieces and do it in the library while the teacher did other parts in the classroom.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: I love how you brought up the fact that you are truly creating a collaborative partnership. And you're creating this to work towards the alignment with standards and the lesson objectives. And I just think that that truly is the perfect partnership, because you are filled with those resources and knowledge.

And teachers need that outside supplemental resources. So that's perfect. My question actually aligns with more of the tactile and material things.

Libraries, you know, when I grew up were very different than they are today. And I actually think you're dealing with way more resources than I even know about. So, can you tell us if we were to come to you, you know, the books are there, but what other resources are at our fingertips that you could utilize in these collaborative partnerships?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Well, of course we have technical things, technology like different websites you might not realize that you can use, or videos that you can use.

But most school libraries and even public libraries have lots of physical things like Legos, blocks. I had robots in my library that we could use. A lot of them have 3D printers now.

We have Play-Doh, games, puppets. I mean, there's no end. I had so much stuff in my library.

Everybody knew if you need something, go ask Mrs. Thompson or Dr. Thompson because I would more than likely have it. And if I didn't, I know who in the school did.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: I love that.

And you probably have almost a different mindset too about how to bring that in.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Yeah. You know, a lot of times teachers will just let the kids go and play with the blocks.

Just go play with the Play-Doh. But one thing I would do, and this brings in that STEM, STEAM, and STREAM, I would read a story, or a book and then build on that and have the kids. There was this one that I used to love, and it was a story about, it was a folktale called "Roy Makes a Car".

And in the story, Roy builds all these outrageous cars that were still to this day, are not popular, but they certainly weren't when this folktale was collected. And at the end, it's like, if you walk by Roy's garage, you'll hear that he's building something else. What could it be? Well, then I would have students go and build what they thought he was building.

That brings in that extra creativity in that STEM, STEAM or STREAM, because they get to actually create and design that next car. And they could have different things to build it with. Some kids would choose to just draw it out with pencil or crayon.

Others would wanna build it with K'nex or Legos. Some would want to write about it, depending on the age of the students. But having them not just read the book, but then interact with it in a different way.

And that's something a lot of librarians are more familiar with, how to build on those stories that we do house in our library, along with all that other cool stuff.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: So, Dr. Thompson, I love listening to this. I am a huge advocate for children's literature.

I cooked in my classroom. I want to know just for my own personal benefit, and maybe one of our listeners or several want to know this also, did you do any themes with your books? What kind of activities did you partner with the teacher? I know there's cool things that you can do with Junie B. Jones, but what are some of your favorites that maybe teachers are trying to find for children?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Well, like the one with Roy Makes a Car, we would do skits. I would have the kids act out books.

I used to do things with like the Three Little Pigs. And then there's the book by John Siska, where it's the true story of the Three Little Pigs. And it's a different perspective.

It's the wolf's perspective. So, school librarians are so familiar with so many different books and the different fiction and nonfiction, and how to tie them together and how to do these different activities. So, I mean, you can have me talking all day.

You don't have time for me.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Yes, yes, that's me too.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: You don't have time for me to get into all my favorite things.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Right,: okay, thank you. I just have one last question, Steph, if you don't mind. I hope this is very few and far between, but what if there isn't a library at a school? What can a teacher do?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: They can contact their public library.

Public librarians are often just as excited to help in a school. Public libraries want that school collaboration because then that makes the people in the community realize that that public library is there for them. And it helps get those kids to know that they can go to the public library too.

So oftentimes a public librarian would be more than willing to collaborate and work with a school, you know, a class that doesn't happen to have a school library.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: I love that idea. The hometown where I'm from, their elementary school is actually across the street from the library, which is super cool.

So, they actually do walk over there once a week and have the librarian there do some fun stuff. Yes, it's a great partnership. So, I love that.

That's a great idea because hopefully every town has a public library.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Hopefully, yes.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: So, I would imagine, this is my last question.

I would imagine there is a new, you know, time in our lives that we are embracing, like you said, storytelling and just these online versions of these great stories, and literature that we want to bring forward to students. Do you have any

suggestions how our educators can start doing that in maybe their circle time or with our youngest learners just go through the act of storytelling themselves?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Yeah, there are so many different ways. You can use technology.

They can, you could have students help you create a story. That's so much fun. You could read them a book, a traditional book.

You could even use an ebook that has pictures, you know, and then have the kids retell it and recreate the story, building it online, using something like Google Slides or Prezi or something. You could have the kids draw pictures and then use those pictures as a part of the book. There are unlimited uses for technology.

One thing I used to read around Halloween time, **Room on the Broo*m*, and there was actually a little movie short of that book. So we would read it and then I would have, I would show the kids the movie short and compare the differences, compare and contrast because there are a few little differences, you know, as always in a movie and a book. So that's another great way to tie in reading and then using technology to look at a story in a different way.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: I'm sitting here smiling because for Halloween, which we are almost in October, it's probably not gonna be on there when we upload your recording, but I had so many fun book things that I did for Halloween and it makes me wanna go out and do them with children. You know, we've carved jack-o'-lanterns, and it was so much fun. Children's literature just brings life to your classroom.

It was one of my very favorite things to do.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Oh yes, I actually just saw that particular book the other day, my mom and I were at a book fair. It's kind of like a store near where I live, and that book was in there and I said, oh, I loved reading this book because I would wear the hat, and I had a witch's broom, and I would use the props, and drop them as she dropped them in the book.

And there are so many fun things that you can do with children's literature, and it just brings it to life for them.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Yes, I agree, I agree. Do you have any special places that you have teachers go try to find activities? I mean, I know there's Pinterest out there, but for teachers who aren't, you know, not everyone is just totally creative, and can go think of all these things.

Do you have a place where you send people?

Dr. Jessica Thompson: I really don't have one particular place. Oftentimes, you can find things on like the author's website or the publisher's website. People forget to look at that, but a lot of times authors will have, especially if they're like author illustrator, they will have like little coloring pages or little activities that go along with books.

That's probably the first place I look. I try to find that particular author or publisher for their paired activities.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Very cool.

And I have to throw this in, Steph. Steph and I have had R.L. Stine on our podcast before.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: No way, oh, how cool.

We totally have. And he's always coming up with activities too. But as we wrap up, I would like you to leave our listeners with three takeaways.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Mm-hmm, okay. So, I would like to remind them that libraries are for more than just checking out books and hearing a story time. Remember that you can collaborate and that those collaborations are fun.

And then the last thing is to reach out to your school or public library and to get started.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: I'm so inspired to just see these partnerships and hear from our audience about how they are taking these into their environments. That's so great.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: How about a last challenge as we wind down? I'm going to challenge them to collaborate or reach out, at least reach out to a librarian at least once in the next few months. And then once you do that, reflect on the experience. How wonderful was it? What did your students get out of that collaboration? And then what did you as a teacher get out of that collaboration? Because you know you're gonna get something out of it.

You're gonna learn from them or you're gonna, it's gonna be a little less stressful. It's gonna be fun.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: I think that's so incredibly important.

We have the resources, and we want to use them because we can do some really great things with what is truly at our fingertips and in our libraries. Dr. Thompson, thank you so much for taking the time today to chat with us. And we hope to see you again.

Dr. Jessica Thompson: Thank you for having me. This has been a lot of fun. I appreciate it.