How to Keep the Ball in Your Court

Jennifer Gray - SMA 2024

Museums are Magic

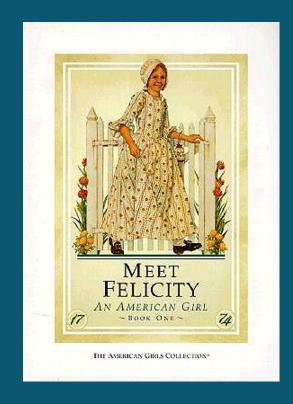
Born 1988 (why am I mentioning my age?)

The Only C

Arcadia University

BA, History (2010)

M.Ed, Early Childhood Education (2021)



Eastern State Penitentiary (2013)

Historic Philadelphia Inc. (2011-2021)

Dickens' Village (2012-2019)

Betsy Ross (2015-2021)

Liberty Hall Museum & Gardens (2020-2022)

Arch Street Meeting House (2021-present)

Teach (2021-present)





Teaching in Museums vs. Teaching in the Classroom

Time and content

History is:

Fun for All

The Good and the Bad

In having difficult discussions, you contend with:

Bias

Violence

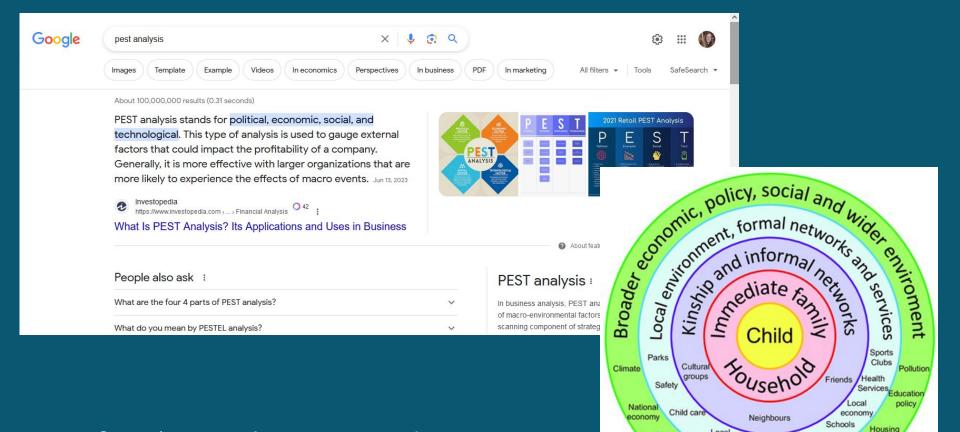
Cruelty

Anger

Ignorance

The Board

The Public



PEST Analysis

Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. Diagram by Joel Gibbs based on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model

Employment

Playgroups

Social norms and Technology

policy

Local

government Transport

change

Global

economy

PEST

Political

Economic

Socio-Cultural

Technological



Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Museum: Reading an Old Building

Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural, Technological

Are they accessible to those with physical limitations/mobility issues?

PEST

Are they environmentally friendly?

PEST

Are they accessible to those who are non-binary?

PES

Are they newly renovated?

ET



Small Group Activity

- 1. 8-10 groups
- 2. Each group will receive a potentially contentious topic
- 3. How can you use the PEST Analysis to dissect your topic?
- 4. Try to get 1 comment per PEST
- 5. Select 1 person to share out

Betsy Ross

Betsy, do you own slaves?

P - While slavery is legal here...

E - I am not a wealthy woman...

S - Having been raised a Quaker...

T - I perform skilled labor...

Let's talk about 21st century politics!

Betsy Ross House 2016

De-escalation

Historic Richmondtown 2023

Politics through time

Arch Street

Yes, Quakers owned slaves

The Black Bench

Christian Slavery

P - Bronfenbrenner

E - Status symbol

S - The elders

T - North vs. South

Hurdles to Overcome



"Easier" sites, people, locations, etc.

Supervision & training

Staff/docent/volunteer age

Antagonistic visitors

Blocking Blame

- **Direct Blocking:** Signaling that the purpose of the interaction is not to blame (We're not here to...)
- **Reframing:** Providing an alternate point of view about a set of facts, which gives the facts a more positive, productive meaning (It sounds as if...)
- **Probing:** Eliciting additional information to clarify the context leading to the blaming (Why do you think that?)
- Refocusing: A statement that redirects the discussion from a nonproductive or nonessential area to a relevant area that is helpful.
- Illustrating: Giving concrete examples.
- Validating: Recognizing the validity of another's perceptions or efforts.
- **Agreeing:** Confirming someone's perception of a situation.

Blocking Blame as Betsy Ross

- **Direct Blocking:** "I do hope you remember that there are young ones who visit me."
- Reframing: "I do not have the space nor the time to make the fabric. I conducted an apprenticeship for 6 years to learn the upholstery trade..."
- **Probing:** "Why do you think that?"
- Refocusing: "Fabric is incredibly expensive." "How good are your sewing skills?" "Philadelphia is the largest city within these colonies."
- Illustrating: Upholsterers make flags; May 1777 receipt.
- Validating: "I can see where you would think that because there is no record on paper, the story is false."
- Agreeing: "Yes I do have my own business. As Philadelphia is a bustling epicenter, things may be different if you are from a less-populous area."

Blocking Blame at the Mütter Museum

Are human remains an object in a collection?

Should there be warnings or waivers?

Should certain things not be on display?

Is there a difference between current and past (remember Bronfenbrenner)?

Does the method of acquisition matter?

Do you get grandfathered in?

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