



Wish for WASH x Atlanta Girls' School

Period Problems Design Jam + Training

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INTRODUCTION

Wish for WASH (W4W) is an organization dedicated to educating and innovating in the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector. The 2021 [Design Thinking](#) and Community Outreach team within Wish for WASH hosted a Design Jam for the [Atlanta Girls' School \(AGS\) Unconscious Bias Summer Institute](#). The focus of the event “Period Problems” which covered [Menstrual Health and Hygiene \(MHH\)](#) and various stigma that exist related to MHH around the world.

This **three hour design thinking workshop** was broken up into two segments:

- **Part 1: Design Jam** - a 2 hour rapid sprint through the entire design thinking process with a WASH related design challenge.
- **Part 2: Facilitation Training** - a 1 hour interactive professional development session focused on understanding the planning process necessary to develop and operate a Design Jam.

The workshop, which occurred in June 2021, sought to educate K-12 teachers on the Design Thinking process and to empower them to use STEM to help solve WASH-related challenges. Through brainstorming and prototyping, the Design Jam participants were able to ideate creative solutions to help reduce period-related stigma. The participating educators explored two “how might we” (HMW) questions during the respective segments of the workshop:

‘HMW de-stigmatize menstrual health and hygiene for young girls?’ and ‘HMW use design thinking in our classrooms?’

There were three “sub-groups” of people who were involved in the Design Thinking Jam:

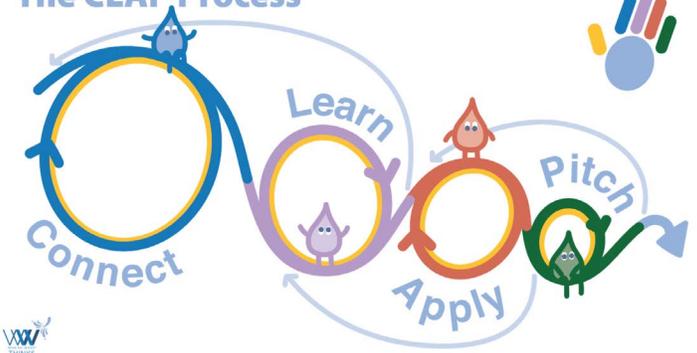
- the **W4W facilitation sub-team**, who created the overview of the process and problem as well as coordinating the general logistical flow of the event (*Anya and Jasmine*)
- the **W4W coaches sub-team**, who assisted with planning elements and breakout room discussions during the event (*Abigail, Eliza and Jasmine*)
- the **38 educators and participants from around the US** (*including 2 members of the AGS Summer Institute Planning Staff*)

After the workshop, an extensive runthrough and workshop reflection was held where Wish for WASH participants could discuss what went right/wrong, etc. and how design thinking workshops could be improved in the future.

EVENT PROCESS

This Design Jam was a part of the W4W pilot of their original design thinking process / toolkit - **CLAP (Connect, Learn, Apply, Pitch)**. It was also the first pilot of the W4W Facilitator Training workshop session.

The CLAP Process



This is the W4W CLAP Design Thinking Method Model

The workshop began as they all do with a **Spark activity** - a short game to help teammates meet and learn more about each other while also honing in on one or more skills necessary for completing a design challenge. Because this workshop contained the largest number of participants W4W has ever facilitated on one virtual Design Jam, the Spark took place in breakout rooms instead of as a full room. Everyone then re-grouped to discuss what design thinking means, the CLAP process, and norms for the workshop.

After completing a preliminary **Know / Need to Know activity**, participants returned to the main room to hear from W4W's Founder, Jasmine, about the beginnings of W4W, the connection with menstrual health, and the connection to stigma.



Menstruation is a normal and healthy part of life for most women. According to the United Nations, **roughly half of the female population -- around 26 per cent of the global population -- are of reproductive age.**

Most women menstruate each month for about two to seven days. **Yet, as normal as it is, menstruation is stigmatized around the world.**

This is one of the slides that Jasmine presented on MHH

Jasmine's presentation opened with a brief explanation of the 17 [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) and the statistics for those who lack clean water and sanitation around the world. **Jasmine then segued into the connection between sanitation and menstrual health, discussing menstruation sanitation statistics, the menstrual stigma that exists, and where there is need for menstrual hygiene products and education globally.**

Additionally, participants learned about how W4W began as a senior design project and then led to so much more, and how design thinking can be used to address world problems. This continued into the

breakout rooms where we split off again to discuss and problem solve for menstrual health and hygiene more in depth through design thinking.

The W4W coaches then facilitated empathy conversations within breakout rooms focused on the persona of **Katie Shelly**. **This persona was created by the W4W Design Thinking Research team who spent the last year ideating relevant user groups for the different topics of W4W's Design Jam offerings, then interacting with 30+ users, and finally analyzing interview and survey data in order to create composite user profiles.** These composite user profiles were visualized by Grace, W4W's Design Researcher and Graphics Lead, to then be turned into persona template tools that allow participants to go through a design jam while working off of real user information.



This is a sample of an research-based persona used

Using this user info and interactive empathy maps, participants created team problem statements. **An example of one of the problem statements is: "Katie is an ambitious and hopeful health teacher in Atlanta who needs to educate her students about menstrual health because everyone is connected to menstruation whether they experience it directly or not."**

Based on these problem statements participants brainstormed ideas for destigmatizing menstrual health within Katie's context.

Ideas included:

- **an unboxing of different period products** for people to open in class and learn about/brainstorm how different products could be used
- **a period pop up** - community fund to offset cost of period product

Each participant then chose their favorite idea to quickly prototype, either with materials in their current space or through the use of a story board, and presented an elevator pitch back to a new breakout room of the Zoom session. In the end, each participant pitched their prototyped products or experiences in breakout rooms.

Following the Design Jam portion of the workshop, the facilitation team briefly discussed why and how design thinking should be used in k-12 education.

Eliza, W4W's newest coach, then gave a brief presentation reflecting on how DT impacted her own high school education which allowed the teacher participants

to hear directly from a student user why DT elements are worth incorporating into curriculum.

The remainder of the Facilitation Training portion of the workshop consisted of two sessions of breakout rooms where participants had the option to self-select which of three rooms was best for them to join.

During session 1 - participants had the option to join rooms focused on: *DT Curriculum Development, Examples of DT in the Classroom: Short & Long Term, or More on Wish for WASH / Social Entrepreneurship.*

During session 2 - participants had the option to join rooms focused on: *Finding Your User, Prototyping – Tools & Levels of Craftsmanship, or How to Teach Storytelling.*

Finally, the workshop concluded with a round of feedback on the session and suggested action steps for participants to continue their work after the conclusion of the conference.



Several of the participants in the W4W AGS Design Jam

CONCLUSION

Overall, this W4W Atlanta Girl School Summer Institute workshop was a great success! It was the largest virtual workshop Wish for WASH has facilitated to date which required some pivoting and iteration, but in the end the event ran smoothly and participants were engaged and excited by the work and outcomes!

As this was our 12th virtual design jam, the facilitation team has grown more confident with each new workshop, and it was evident in this workshop, even with large numbers, how the team is getting more consistent with the flow of the Design Jams. **This is helpful because it makes the Design Jam feel even more efficient and impactful.**

This Design Jam was also only the second W4W event to utilize the Persona Tools for helping to inspire deeper user empathy. Participants seemed to enjoy the tools and understand how they were a helpful medium between having a live user throughout the workshop or entirely making up a user. **There were multiple people who gave feedback about how they felt a bit weird designing for a person that couldn't actually hear or respond to their ideas and this will be a focus of ours for future iterations of the Persona Tools.**

A key takeaway for future Facilitation Training sessions was that everyone wanted more time in the breakout rooms in order to have more discussion and **brainstorming around ways to implement design thinking and WASH education into their school environments.** We also had expressed interest from the teacher participants about how to gain access to our CLAP toolkit which is exciting to hear as we continue to develop our materials and offerings!



Design Jam participants including AGS staff and W4W members

Ultimately, the Wish for WASH team is grateful for another successful virtual webinar, and is keen on continuing to improve and implement more virtual webinars in the months to come because

#everybodypoops

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