

Blogs



What Is a Blog

- A way to write on the web, without knowledge of HTML-so it's easy.
- The blogger (the person who writes the Blog) has an audience that can comment and interact with his/her posts (the actual text of the blog).
- Blogs have features automatically built in that speed up the process of creating a web page and allow others to collaborate.

Features of a Blog

- Automatically adds 'stamps' of identifying info such as name, date, number of comments, etc...
- All the blogger has to do is type in a 'title' then type the 'post'.
- A place for comments is automatically provided for the reader.
- The format of the blog is linear with the most recent blog at the top of the page.
- Uses RSS feed that allows readers to get automatic updates.

Difference Between a Blog and a Wiki:

Used correctly...

A Blog is a conversation

A Wiki is a place to store information on which people can collaborate.

- “Blogs engage readers with ideas and questions and links. They ask readers to think and to respond. They demand interaction.
- In a good blog the reader becomes a part of the writing and learning process”
—Will Richardson

Good Blogs include:

- Hyperlinks
- Graphics, video, photos and audio files
- Reflections
- Opinions
- Questions
- Answers

- A good blog demands interaction!
- <http://technosavvy.org>

Why Use Blogs in Education?

- Have an authentic audience—the walls of the classroom are gone—the world is their audience.
- Ability to archive student's work—document a history of learning that is searchable, organized and sharable.
- UDL-Provides shy students opportunities to share in writing the ideas they don't speak in class.
- Writing in a blog gives students opportunities to work on skills such as research, synthesis of ideas and organization.

- Instead of assigning students to go write, we should assign students to go read and then link to what interests them and write about why it does and what it means....

--Ken Smith

Writing instructor at Indiana University

Steps to start Blogging

- Students or teachers can find interesting websites or articles and write about what they found useful.
- Make sure to include links to the sites/articles so others can read what you read.
- Include VIP's into your blog so students can ask questions and reflect on the answers.
- VIP's can be parents, authors, politicians, etc...

- Teachers can post homework assignments and relevant links.
- Students can be required to add comments to posted homework question.
- Students can use newly learned vocabulary words to write about a topic.
- Show case students work

Blogs across the curriculum

- Students can work on math problems with peers from different classrooms
- Science experiments can occur simultaneously across the world with students comparing and reflecting on results.
- Students learning a foreign language can create conversations with native speakers.

Crucial Step:

- Structure ways to encourage people to comment on students blogs.
- Nothing kills a blog more than no interaction—if no one comments on your blog—then why write it?
- Examples: invite parents, other classrooms, colleagues and friends to visit your blog.
- Go out of your way to comment on a student's blog (even if you don't blog)

<http://teachingallstudents.edublogs.org/>

So many Blogs, so little time:

- <http://technorati.com> tracks blogs—type in the URL of a blog and find out how many other bloggers have linked to it
 - If 100 or more people subscribe to it—then it is a reputable blog. (there are good blogs with less...)
- <http://bloglines.com> —store all of the blogs you want to keep track of in one spot. Allows you to skim through them quickly to pick out the good stuff.