
BLOGS TEACHING INNOVATIVE CLASSROOM

Article Particulars

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Abstract

The earliest blogs started in the late 1990s as online diaries. Individuals posted information on a daily basis about their lives and opinions. The daily posts were listed in reverse date order .so reader viewed the most recent post first and scrolled through previous posts. The format provided an ongoing inner monologue from the writer. As blogs evolved, interactive features were added to create a two-way conversation. Readers took advantage of features that allowed them to leave comments on blog posts or link to posts on other blogs a websites to further the dialogue.

Blogs

Blogs a contraction of `web based logs' or `weblogs' – are essentially online journals where an author(or authors) publishes a series of chronological, updateable entries or posts on various topics, typically of personal interest to the author(s) and often expressed in a strongly subjective voice, on which readers are invited to

comment. Blogs typically make central use of the hyper textual facilities of online communication, linking internally between posts, providing links to other web content, and/or linking to other users' blogs. Collectively, blogs and their multiple links are referred to as the 'blogosphere', a term coined by analogy with the concept of the 'public sphere', a space for the exercise of public communication and individual free speech (Tremayne, 2006; Barlow, 2007). Drawing on the social constructivist educational theories of Vygotski, Ferdig and Trammel (2004) usefully explicate the four central pedagogic benefits of blogging for students.

1. Assisting student to become subject matter experts through a process of regular scouring, filtering and posting.
2. Increasing student interest and ownership in learning.
3. Giving students legitimate chances to participate and enculturation them into a community of practice.
4. Providing opportunities for diverse perspectives.

Blog postings are text entries similar to a diary or journal, which include comments by other than the author, photos, links, or other digital media. Postings are often short and frequently updated. They appear in reverse chronological order and can include archived entries. Blogs are surprisingly to use. They require minimum technical knowledge and are quickly and easily created and maintained.

Blogs in Education

Blogs are well suited to serve to on line personal journal for students, particularly since they normally enable uploading and linking of files. Language learners could use a personal blog, linked to a course, as an electronic portfolio, showing development over time. By publishing the blogs on the internet, the student has the possibility of writing for readers beyond classmates, not usually possible in discussion forums. Readers in turn can comment on what they have read, although blogs can be placed in secured environments as well. Self publishing encourages ownership and responsibility on the part of students, who may be more thoughtful in content and structure if they know they are writing for a real audience. This same degree of personal responsibility is lacking in discussion forums.

1. Blogging enhances literacy skills. Literacy skills are clearly being exercised as students are writing reports and diary entries, planning, recording interviews and evaluating their work. Students are able to exhibit a keen awareness of audience, by putting messages on their pages for visitors to their blogs.
2. Blogging supports learning in many areas: blogging improves their ICT skills. Students get to grip with a range of peripherals in taking responsibility for generating the multi media content for their blog entries. Blogging creates interest and makes them to develop design skills on their pages.

3. Blogging is appropriate across the primary phase: blogging is enjoyed by the students in using a range of multimedia to personalise their pages. It makes them interested in recording their voices and adding them to their blog entries.
4. Sharing and evaluating blog entries is valuable: reading and evaluating work done by their classmates becomes a key element of the project in every school. This makes them extend their learning about different topics by reading each other's work. Students also enjoy in adding 'stickers' to their friends pages.
5. Blogging enhances home school links: blog enhances the home school relations, as the teachers encourage the students to visit their blogs with parents, so that the parents will be included in the part of the child's learning. Feedbacks from parents naturally become extremely positive.
6. The teacher needs to feel in control of the activity: a teacher can decide at what level, students can publish, access and comment on work, through the honeycomb feature that supports e-safety. This gives teachers the reassurance of being in control which is essential if blogging is to be successfully adopted.

Teaching and Learning Opportunities Provided by Blogs

1. Blogs serves as informational provided by blogs
2. Blogs serves as a tool for learners to establish their own journals, portfolios and personal reflection for presentation to their teacher and peers..
3. It is a course/subject journal compiled over the period of delivery with course reflections
4. Blogs are used to showcase personal works and achievements (e.g. an arts portfolio)
5. It contributes to a wider body of knowledge(e.g. people from beyond your provider can benefit from reading your blog)
6. Blog acts as a class portal where learners can access supplemental materials, curriculum , links, videos, podcasts, homework, assessment task and other peer/trainer feedback
7. It is an ongoing content where materials and resources can be archived online for easy locating in the future.
8. Blogs help in establishing curriculum vitae.
9. It serves as the basis of an assessment.

Types

There are main types of blogs used in education, such as class blog, learner, tutor blog, video blog, micro blog etc.

To start on a new Blog in Blogger, go to one of the available free blogging websites Blogger.com or Wordpress.com. There are five simple steps to follow:

- Create an account (user name, password)

- Created a name for your blog
- Choose a template and accept the terms
- Click on the arrow 'Create your blog now'
- Publish your first message

Benefits

Blogging into your classroom environment can open up a whole new world of opportunities for the students. The following benefits getting the students

Improved Literacy Skills

Students were read and wrote to publish subject matter using blogs to purposely communicate and converse with others. To improvement student 'literacy skills in the post once the blog is up and running students can't wait to get writing and the more they improve All of a sudden, reading becomes much more than just a passive exercise, with students needing to constantly use and improve their reading skills to become good content editors of the blog. They will also be itching to find and read other class blogs.

For Greater Audience

In the traditional classroom the only audience of student work was the teacher and sometimes classmates and parents. Blogs provide a much larger audience for student work and an avenue for feedback and self-improvement through commenting. With a blog the audience is practically limitless, with other classes in your school, other local schools, schools across the country and across the world able to view students work. They can post comments, take misprision, and link back to their own blog,

ICT Skills

Blogs assists students to become more ICT literate, which is an important 21st century skill. Through blogging, students are able to incidentally discuss many ICT skills such as keyboard shortcuts, researching online and troubleshooting, digital camera and videos atc.

Students become Independent Learners

The classroom blog fosters real curiosity on students. It encouraging them to become independent learners. By giving students the ability to create and purplish their own posts (a great extension activity for more able students), they take ownership of their work decide what to write about lead their own research and create their own posts. Their personal research skills will greatly improve, as they learn to appreciate that research material must be accurate and of good quality.

Home-School Partnerships

Schools have receivd many comments from parents and families who love using the class blog as a "window into our classroom". Through commenting families can be

a part of what is happening in our classroom and have real time access to their child's education.

Sense of Classroom Community

Creating a class blog requires teamwork and collaboration. Students and teachers learn and share their learning together. A real sense of classroom community can be developed through blogging and establishing a class identity. A class blog opens the opportunity for students to discuss topics outside of the classroom. With a blog, every person has an equal opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions. Students can get self-confidence from being part of a class blog and demonstrating their achievements.

Everyone Learns and Teaches

Through the power of the comments system on a class blog, both students and teachers can reflect on work and advice and feedback. Everyone learns and teaches and teaches at the same time by helping students start to write useful and effective comments; they start to take on the role of critical friends. For the teacher, a blog can provide an extremely powerful alternative method of assessment. The archers and peers may conference with a student individually on a developing work, and expert or peer mentoring advice can be easily kept for future reference.

Conclusion

The blog can be a powerful technology tool for managing assignments, showcasing students work and helping students and teachers connect and communicate beyond classroom. Blogging contributes to a collaborative culture where ideas can be discussed and exchanged more freely. Through this free exchanged idea we can continue to make true progress in education and technology. Teachers have picked up on the creative use of this internet technology and put the blog to work in the classroom. The education blog can be a powerful and effective technology tool for students and teachers alike.

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