

Teacher Checklist for Blogging Projects

Blogging is one of the most accessible digital projects to tackle. Because it mirrors work that most teachers are already having students do in class—producing written content—blogging projects are a natural first-step for digital novices. These checklists will help you to structure successful blogging experiences for your students.

| Technical and Procedural Preparations | | |
|---|---|---|
| Question to Consider: <i>(The following questions will help you to determine whether or not you are prepared to facilitate blogging projects in your classroom.)</i> | Your Answer: | Actions to Take: <i>(Consider including the names and contact information of anyone that can help you with completing this action step. Also, include the date for when this action will be completed.)</i> |
| 1. Does your school or district's technology services department have a preferred blogging service? Have they made arrangements for students or teachers to have blogs using a particular service? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 2. Have you checked with your school or district's technology services specialists to learn more about any restrictions that they have placed on the creation of digital work by students? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 3. Are you aware of any Internet safety policies or procedures in place at the school or district level that may influence your blogging project? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 4. Have you introduced your students to basic Internet safety practices—using pseudonyms, refusing to give away locations, never posting pictures of individuals? Are you convinced that they are prepared to write online responsibly? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 5. Have you informed parents that their children will be maintaining an online forum for reflection? Are you planning on asking parents to sign a permission slip before students can participate in your blogging project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 6. Have you created a Blogger user account? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 7. Have you made a decision about whether to create one classroom blog or individual blogs for each of the students in your class or on your team? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 8. If you are creating one classroom blog, have you worked with students to decide on a name and checked to see if it is available? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 9. If you are allowing the students in your class or on your team to have their own blog, have you introduced the steps for creating individual accounts at the blog service you intend to use? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 10. Are you planning on using a feed reader (content aggregator) to organize a collection of blogs for your students to read and respond to? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 11. Have you developed a comfort level with the basic steps involved in crafting and posting entries in Blogger? Do you know how to add images and links? Can you embed content? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 12. Have you created a plan for tracking visitors to your website? Are you planning on using visitor map and stat tracker services like Cluster Maps (http://www.clustrmaps.com)? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

Pedagogical Preparations

| Question to Consider: <i>(The following questions will help you to determine whether or not you are prepared to facilitate blogging projects in your classroom.)</i> | Your Answer: | Actions to Take: <i>(Consider including the names and contact information of anyone that can help you with completing this action step. Also, include the date for when this action will be completed.)</i> |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Have you thought through the kinds of entries that you would like to see students making on your classroom blog? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 2. Have you introduced students to the characteristics of each category of entry? Are you planning on developing samples and templates for each category of entry? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 3. Do your students understand the important role that links play in blog entries? Are they capable of identifying reliable sites to include as sources in their blog posts? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 4. Do your students have a collection of other blogs to follow? Are they reading blogs written by other students on a regular basis? Have you created regular opportunities to talk about the characteristics of quality blog entries in class? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 5. Do your students understand the important role that commenting can play in student blogging projects? Have you introduced the characteristics of good blog comments to your classes? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 6. Have you modeled the steps involved in starting posts, adding links, inserting pictures and posting final copies in the blog service that you've chosen to use with students? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 7. Have you created handouts that detail the basic digital steps involved in posting entries on your classroom blog? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 8. Have you considered training a small cadre of student technology leaders to serve as student editors? Do these editors have a clear sense of their responsibilities? Will there be any rewards for filling this role? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 9. Are you planning on advertizing student blog entries with the parents of your students and your professional colleagues in order to drive traffic to your site? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 10. Do your students understand that their thinking may be challenged by the readers of their entries? Are they comfortable with—and open to—being challenged? Have you taught them how to challenge the thinking of other online writers? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 11. Have you encouraged parents to leave comments on your students' blog entries? Are they comfortable with challenging the thinking of their children? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| 12. Have you worked with your students to set realistic and measurable goals—number of posts, number of comments, number of page views, visitors from foreign countries—for your classroom blogging project? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |