

Title of Session: Targeting Librarians! Blogging

Moderator: Lesley Farmer

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LesleyF: So today's topic is blogs, including digital images.

LesleyF: What are you hoping to get out of the session?

LesleyF: BTW, I coordinate the school librarianship program at California St. University Long Beach. What about you?

MaryFT: I'm currently using blogs for the first time with my graduate students and I was hoping for some suggestions, activity ideas, etc

BjB joined the room.

LesleyF: What are you having your students do?

LesleyF: and what's the course?

MaryFT: I teach teacher technology classes at the University of Houston

KimberlyJ joined the room.

BjB: Lesley, I was just telling Mary about the discussion Lynne Wolters is having in the ASO...<http://www.nwcl.org/>

LesleyF: Hi, Kim.

LesleyF: Here to talk about blogs/etc/

KimberlyJ: Hello Lesley

MaryFT: right now, my students are using their personal blogs as online journals.

TeresaMT joined the room.

LesleyF: What is your interest, Kim and Teresa, in today's topic?

BjB: I found an interesting article about 7 year olds using blogs

MaryFT: I've asked them to use their blog entries to track their progress in the course objectives

DanMu joined the room.

TeresaMT: I'm not really sure what blogs are. The title caught my eye on the Calendar. Is this only for librarians?

KimberlyJ: I am taking classes this summer and am exploring new ideas through tapped in. Trying to expand my knowledge base.

BjB: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/3804773.stm

LesleyF: the topic is open to teachers and librarians -- and wannabes.

BjB puts on her wannabe hat

LesleyF: Blogs are basically web logs. But can be more...

LesleyF: Let's introduce ourselves just to get a perspective. OK?

LesleyF: I teach school librarianship in California.

BjB: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and always learn much from Lesley's discussions!

KimberlyJ: Kim: 7 & 8th grade reading teacher in Oklahoma 13th year and a grad student

MaryFT: I teach preservice teacher technology courses at the University of Houston

TeresaMT: Hello. I am a first grade teacher in San Antonio Texas and a grad student learning about telecommunication options like these ASO sessions.

DanMu: I only have cursory knowledge of blogs. Any info would help . . .

LesleyF: Kim, have you used blogs yet for yourself or for your students?

DanMu: Credential candidate at Cal Lutheran Univ.

TeresaMT: This is the first time that I have even heard of the term blogs. The link that Bj provided was interesting.

LesleyF: Just up the road from my univ: CSU Long Beach.

DanMu: No - but will soon

LesleyF: As BJ noted, blogs have been around for years, but they're becoming more acceptable in education these days.

DanMu: Yes - just up the road from CSULB

KimberlyJ: No, I am not familiar with this process. Explaining how they function and then I will know if we have the tools to use them.

AndrewMc joined the room.

BjB: welcome, Andrew.

LesleyF: You see blogs a lot on the Internet from all kinds of people talking about themselves and issues that they're interested in. We're going to look at blogs from a more educational perspective, OK>?

LesleyF: And welcome, Andrew!

AndrewMc: Hi BJ

DanMu: Can you see me Andrew?

AndrewMc: Yes, Dan, Lesley, Kimberly, Teresa, Mary

KimberlyJ: So all the students would need internet access to use this method?

KimberlyJ: Hello Andrew

LesleyF: First thing: I'd strongly suggest that you use blogs in an intranet manner, if possible, to provide more security/safety with your students.

LesleyF: Additionally, some students may be reluctant to let the whole world see their words.

KimberlyJ: So would they e-mail them to me or would we use a posting service?

LesleyF: So if your school has an intranet system NOT linked to the Internet, you could still keep the "spirit" of blogging.

LesleyF: If your school has a LAN, then they would send it within the class structure.

KimberlyJ: Ok-I can check into that.

BjB wonders if the discussion boards in the K-12 student campus could also be used as a kind of blog

LesleyF: An easy way to start that uses the net but isn't real open, is to have an address book with all the students, and have them email to the group. That way everyone sees each other's work -- but no one outside does.

LesleyF: Yes, BJ, the K-12 bulletin board system would work fine.

BjB: cool...and it's a safe and secure environment for the students

KimberlyJ: YEAH!

LesleyF: If some topics are really personal, the student should think twice about blogging about it ==-- or they could send their blog JUST to the teacher.

LesleyF: SO, blogging for blogging's sake isn't really very productive.

LesleyF: The semi-public aspect of blogging is key -- sharing your perspective with others.

LesleyF: SO, the question then becomes what are good reasons to blog.

KimberlyJ: They could blog their literature reflection and personal opinions of the book and keep the free journals private.

DanMu: Thanks for the input. More on blogs later. adios . . .

LesleyF: Right, Kim. Other ideas, folks?

BjB: plan a vacation?

LesleyF: yes, if you want to get input from other people.

BjB . o O (or take a cross country trip)

MaryFT: plan lessons

LesleyF: You could use them as think-alouds for problem-solving.

KimberlyJ: Inter-group literature discussions. This would be great when I have students from different classes reading the same texts.

AndrewMc: Document an experience

LesleyF: yes, blogs can make good virtual literature circles.

AndrewMc: Are blogs really good for discussion?

MaryFT: great idea!

DanMu left the room (signed off).

LesleyF: It's also a tech way to diary how in-class experiences flow over to the REAL world -- how, for instance, what you learn in a government class is seen in the news, newspapers, school operations, work, etc.

KimberlyJ: BJ if we used the K12 would that enable them to chat like we are at the moment?

TeresaMT: Do the students come up with their own purposes, usually, or does the teacher assign it?

KimberlyJ: This could become an on-line portfolio?

LesleyF: Blogs CAN be OK for discussion, but they tend to be better for tracing an individual's thinking...

BjB: yes, Kimberly

LesleyF: Blogs are usually more informal than portfolios, Kim.

AndrewMc: That was my impression, to, Lesley.

LesleyF: I think to start with, the teacher should probably structure it.

BjB . o O (my yes was to using the chat feature in the K-12 student campus group rooms)

LesleyF: For instance, students could use blogs as they read a novel -- and share perspectives -- as well as look over what they said at the end to reveal their own changing perceptions.

LesleyF: The teacher can use blogs to see students' perceptions, values, etc.

LesleyF: I find that teachers can analyze blogs over time, especially in college/grad school to see how students progress in their understanding of a topic/issue.

LesleyF: Let me show you a good intro to blogs, OK?

TeresaMT: With what ages would you begin using blogs with children?

LesleyF: when they can start typing/writing/reading independently.

LesleyF: When they start doing diaries is a good marker.

LesleyF: I would guess 4th grade.

AndrewMc: Ready for the intro

LesleyF: <http://lt.msu.edu/vol7num2/emerging/default.html>

LesleyF: just click on the URL

AndrewMc: Lot of stuff there

MaryFT: some really good resources

LesleyF: How do you think you could use that information?

AndrewMc: Still too early to tell. I want to see examples of students using blogs

LesleyF: just the right cue, Andrew!

TeresaMT: That was neat. I just created a blog. I

KimberlyJ: I think I would start with the journaling and let the students get use to the concept and then start asking there where we could go with this and see their reactions. My students like to make decisions.

LesleyF: want to see some examples now??

MaryFT: sorry...I'm checking out Bloglines...apparently can be used to track changes in blogs...this would be helpful for teachers

AndrewMc: (where's my \$5)

LesleyF: hmm, missed the \$\$ connotation...

AndrewMc: for leading into the next bit

LesleyF: Yes, tracking is really important. After I show you one other site, let's talk about that, OK?

MaryFT: ok

LesleyF: got it, Andrew... I'll let you be the first to see the site: <http://awd.cl.uh.edu/blog/>

TeresaMT: I thought that I could use it as a Daily Journal, where my students dictate things we've done during the day and the parents can access it or we could share with other classes or our principal. Link it to our class web site.

AndrewMc: I like that idea, Teresa

MaryFT: I'm using blogs like that in my class Teresa

TeresaMT: I am very excited about this. I can't wait to start it with my students.

LesleyF: remember that if the parents are to see it, then you need to tell the students ahead of time. That MIGHT make a difference in what they write...

TeresaMT: I send home an invitation at the beginning of the year inviting parents to visit our Web Site often. I'll add info about this on it.

LesleyF: I think you need 3 tiers: private journaling (on paper, private word processing), in-class sharing, and public viewing.

LesleyF: public being parents.

LesleyF: Some parents have a bad way of looking at other students' work and comparing it with their own kids -- or gossiping about it in the neighborhood, sad to say. I've seen that happen.

TeresaMT: I agree. My students write in their journals every day. This would be a way to pull together the day -- red flag the important things we learned and did and summarize to put on the blog. They would dictate and I would type it in. I've got first graders so that's probably the best way to handle it for now.

LesleyF: Also, kids need to be very clear about sharing their ideas/perspectives with each other. It has to be a safe environment...

LesleyF: the neat thing about journaling privately is that spelling doesn't count... invented words work fine as long as the child can read his/her own notes...

LesleyF: You can also give "prompts" for blogging, such as the start of sentences for students to complete. That's a way to start the juices and provide structure that some students need, even in high school...

TeresaMT: I always tell my students that I went to school to learn to read "first grade writing" so they won't have to worry about the spelling and just concentrate on their ideas. Spelling and mechanics come later.

LesleyF: You can also have students look at what other people have to say about different topics. That takes blogging into the research realm, which is good for MS and HS and up.

AndrewMc: how about using images as a writing prompt (digital storytelling), and how would that work in a blog?

LesleyF: Yes, indeed, another \$5!

LesleyF: You can provide the image to start the blog process -- or you can have students find images, or create them, that complement their writing.

AndrewMc: post the "image of the day" and have them write

LesleyF: In last month's online session here, we saw an example of a student's blg about his family background. He inserted pictures as "evidence" of his stance.

AndrewMc: or bring in their own

KimberlyJ: Great idea Andrew.

LesleyF: Or take their own photos...

LesleyF: or draw them.

AndrewMc: this is a technical ?. Is it easy to include images in a blog?

LesleyF: Students can find/make their own picture and be the image prompter for the day -- that enables them to have more responsibility/control in their own and the class's learning.

AndrewMc: I'm thinking of what skills teachers/students need to make this work

LesleyF: Technically, pictures can be easy to input. the trick is to make sure that the pictures AND the text both get uploaded.

KimberlyJ: In Blackboard we use the attachment process Andrew.

AndrewMc: I suppose it does depend upon the specific software

LesleyF: Easy ways are attachments as Kim says and other web hosts/blog hosts that do that kind of uploading/linking "automatically."

TeresaMT: Can you add an image on the blogger site? Does anyone know?

KimberlyJ: The reply has a place for text and then an att. too! It works well for personal reflection and then the reply to a question, powerpoint, or link.

LesleyF: Glad you asked, Teresa. Here's a site: <http://weblogs.about.com/>

LesleyF: This web site has quite a lot of links.

LesleyF: take a look...

TeresaMT: Like I said, I had never heard of the term before tonight. It is amazing how much information and free blog space is out there.

AndrewMc: and how much Blogging has progressed

TeresaMT: This is something I will definitely share with my colleagues. I don't know of any teachers on my campus that are doing this, yet.

AndrewMc: I just saw something about how to aggregate blogs, for the reader with too many favorite blogs

LesleyF: YEs, it's RSS. that's also a service that lets you know when blogs are coming in so you can scan them.

LesleyF: blogging has become such a big societal endeavor that marketers and politicians are using them to get the pulse of the nation. Want to see?

AndrewMc: I'm game

MaryFT: sure

KimberlyJ: Good Plan

LesleyF: it's <http://www.blogpulse.com>

LesleyF: What it does is see what topics are becoming hot and what are going out of style.

LesleyF: Apparently, bloggers are about 6 months ahead of the general populace when it comes to fads/issues. I think it was Subway fast foods that checked out blog trends early on and started offering low-carb entrees before the other fast food companies, and they really made lots of money, more than \$5....

KimberlyJ: The french fry one is really funny.

AndrewMc: hahaha

LesleyF: So you can imagine how Kerry and Bush are using that info -- as well as Bill Gates.

AndrewMc: Alas, I must leave. T

AndrewMc: thanks for the info, Lesley.

LesleyF: This site would be a good one for students in social issues classes to use; if you focus on tech issues, it would be interesting for the teacher tech course-- if nothing else but to see where teens are going tech-wise with fads.

LesleyF: Thanks, Andrew.

LesleyF: Next month's topic is already set: booktalking and storytelling using technology.

AndrewMc: cool, when?

BjB: Lesley's session will be on July 21...the TI Festival!!!!

LesleyF: Before you leave, Andrew, one more site:

LesleyF: http://www.blogsearchengine.com/education_blogs_2.html

AndrewMc: thanks, bye

AndrewMc left the room (signed off).

LesleyF: do the rest of you want to look at that site too, now?

LesleyF: I love the idea of having students blog if they're going on a trip, especially if they miss school days...

KimberlyJ: That is a really great site to allow students to communicate on multiple topics with multiple people.

LesleyF: blogs can also be used as extended penpal/epal ventures -- but more public/widespread of an audience.

LesleyF: Besides the idea of promoting a community of learners, and optimizing the sharing of ideas, and giving each child a voice, I like blogs because they seem authentic - - a real audience, so students try harder to communicate meaningfully and clearly.

LesleyF: AND the conversation is archived!!

KimberlyJ: Yes, and then know right away when a miscommunication has taken place;-)

LesleyF: Asynchronous blogging, as opposed to instant messaging, also allows a student to think before he/she communicates.

LesleyF: It levels the playing field for English language learners because they can look up words and refine their writing before they share.

KimberlyJ: Can't you add spell check to some of the sources?

LesleyF: yes you can.

TeresaMT: One of the links I went to was about klogs (knowledge blogs). That would be an interesting way to have the students summarize as we are learning in specific Units.

LesleyF: and to see what gaps there are in understanding.

LesleyF: Let's think more about the teacher's side.

LesleyF: You can examine a set of blogs and see what patterns/trends emerge.

KimberlyJ: To post research topics

LesleyF: You can see where misunderstandings might originate, and then you can provide timely feedback/corrections to get students back on track

LesleyF: Yes, you can see where their interests lie, too, and build on those interests by linking them to your course objectives.

LesleyF: As an alternative approach, you can start a running class blog where one student starts a story and another continues it and so forth.

LesleyF: Likewise, for content material, one student can state a fact and a question, and the next can answer the first question and pose another question, and so forth.

KimberlyJ: Thank you Lesley for your knowledge and direction. This will be a method that I plan to explore. Good Night to one and all.

KimberlyJ left the room (signed off).

LesleyF: Mary and Teresa, what are your thoughts at this point?

TeresaMT: I have learned a lot and I appreciate the new information. I will be trying this out when school starts. Thanks again and good night.

LesleyF: I think folks are filled with enough ideas to get them going -- and to reflect a bit before learning more. Am I reading this right?

TeresaMT left the room (signed off).

MaryFT: I've learned some great new ideas that I will share with my students

LesleyF: BJ?

MaryFT: Thanks Lesley

BjB: thanks, Lesley. That was a tough group...newbies

LesleyF: they were quite good at getting into the spirit of the topic, I think

BjB: you did great in engaging them

LesleyF: Glad we could enlighten them in a new area...