

Title of Session: Cyber 3 - Pros and Cons to Blogging: Ethics and Safety

Moderator: Davina Pruitt-Mentle

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Room: Cyber 3 Group

BjB: Welcome, everyone, to this month's Cyber 3 Discussion

BjB: the topic is pros and cons of blogs

BjB: Davina is the leader of the discussion so we'll wait for her to get us started...

BjB: but in the meantime, a reminder to go to Actions and detach your chat

BjB: then, to make it official, please tell Davina where you are located and what your interest is in this topic

KarenLN: Hi Davina. I'm in Distance Learning and want to know about it's usefulness as a tool in Univ.

RaylaS: I'm from Kingsville Texas.. and the only blogs that I read are from myspace....

HilarioP: I'm located in McAllen, TX and I'm interested in learning about security and privacy in blogging.

ElissaR: we are an interesting and eclectic group....must be brilliant as well :)

MichaelA: I'm originally from McAllen TX

ElissaR: I am from Long Island, NY

AdrianB: I am Adrian from Roma TX

BjB: I teach communication and am located in Pennsylvania

LourdesR: how cool we are from everywhere

DavinaP left the room (signed off).

BjB hopes Davina didn't melt from today's heat

DavidW . o O (oops)

BjB . o O (maybe she did!)

DavidW is one of the HelpDesk volunteers and is in New Jersey, near New York City

BjB : have any of you participated in a Cyber 3 discussion before?

LourdesR: not I

RaylaS: nope

KarenLN: I'm in a cool spot in WI. Never participated in a discussion here.

ElissaR: I am an elementary music teacher, I try to infuse Language arts into my classroom activities as much as possible, we've created podcasts, video podcasts, composed simple songs, etc. I would like to maybe add a "blogging" component...maybe treat it like a newsletter or something? Does this sound "doable"?

ElissaR: I did not participate in part 1, sorry

RaylaS: me too

HilarioP: never done Cyber3 before

ArturoM: me too

BjB : Cyber 3 is cyberethics, cybersafety, and cybersecurity...

BjB . o O (took me 6 months to finally remember that!)

ArturoM: ok

DavidW applauds Bj's memory

RaylaS: yayyy

AdrianB: claps

AidaM: wow

AidaM: good job

JoAnnaG: claps

HilarioP: so are we here to learn cyber ethics and stuff or just talk about it?

DavidW: Does anyone here blog? Read a particular blog?

BjB : Davina heads the C3 Institute at <http://www.edtechoutreach.umd.edu/C3Institute/index.html>

RaylaS: just on myspace

LuisCM: I have seen a few sites where people write something everyday

ElissaR: my students are very lucky, our district has chosen to limit the amount of filtering that they do, so our kids have pretty much free reign on the computers.....I try to teach them about being responsible, and kind, etc.

LuisCM: its like a diary or something

DavidW smiles

DavidW: essentially an online journal or diary, yes, Luis

BjB . o O (web log = blog)

DavidW: you can set them up so people can comment on what you write as well

LuisCM: feedback or advise

DavidW and Bj are stalling until Davina returns

BjB : depending on the blog you can also add photos and video

CarlosJ doesn't mind stalling :D

BjB . o O (and sound)

HilarioP: a friend of mine created a blog when she went on a tour of Europe

ElissaR: could I have my kids enter "blogs" as if it was a music newsletter, or is that pushing an "old-fashioned" concept onto a new "thing"

LourdesR: as a parent I think it is great to have security on computers

BjB : so, where would the safety and security stuff come in?

DavidW: The news just had an article on the impact of the "blogosphere" (the collection of all blogs out there) and its impact on politics

BjB . o O (they sound pretty harmless to me)

HilarioP: can anyone read anyone's blog?

BjB : ahhh....yes, Hilario

RaylaS: of course

CarlosJ: I've never blogged before :S

LourdesR: I think it is safer that way

ArturoM: me neither

KarenLN: How do you find if anyone has blogged you?

ElissaR: I worry that if the school created the security, then the kids aren't learning how to police themselves, they aren't learning how to be responsible for their OWN contributions

AidaM: me either

RaylaS: it only gets unsafe when you put personal stuff like name age b day where you live stuff like that

JoAnnaG: I have never put up a blog

KarenLN: or should I say if your name is mentioned.

BjB : good comment, Elissa

CarlosJ: try and google yourself Karen

ElissaR: I have never done so either

BjB : Rayla, you are correct

DavidW: Have any of you seen the Daily Kos - big, politically-oriented blog?

HilarioP: but if you put pictures that's personal

LuisCM: my girlfriend blogs when she has a personal problem

RaylaS: yea

BjB nods to Hilario

KarenLN: thanks, Carlos

ElissaR: yes, and I think THAT is what we need to teach the kids,,,,,,starting really early

LizaR: what do u mean google urself?

LizaR: what is the purpose of blog?

BjB: go to www.google.com and enter your name in the search

LizaR: to describe oneself? or

CarlosJ: exactly

RaylaS: to tell the world what you're thinking...

DavidW: kind of depends, Liza - the blogger may want to write, express her/his opinion...

LizaR: oh I see.

MichaelA: or describe something

DavidW: I think most of the presidential candidates understand enough about the popularity of blogs that each campaign has a blog

RaylaS: it can be anything

MichaelA: like an online journal

CarlosJ: I don't like the idea of blogging, I think my thoughts and feelings are personal

ArturoM: can some blogs be harmful rather than informative

HilarioP: oh I heard that

LuisCM: I'll blog when I am excited

LuisCM: and bored

RaylaS: haha

ElissaR: but I remember when I was learning how to answer the phone (MANY years ago) we practiced at home and in school, We were taught (by parents, and teachers) NEVER to answer "funky' questions.....is mommy home? Are you alone? Oh...this may be a wrong number, what number did I dial" The internet safety issues seem the same.....we need to teach teh kids how to be sensible, safe and responsible,

LuisCM: we never did that

DavidW agrees STRONGLY with Elissa

AdrianB: me too

RaylaS: I agree... it's about safety to our kids...

KarenLN: I know about that, Elissa :)

AidaM: True

LizaR: lol, I googled my name and I like the one that says **LizaRocks**

LourdesR: very true

RaylaS: and now that the internet plays a huge part of our life

LizaR: that's neat, I had never tried that

CarlosJ: lol, Liza

LizaR laughing

ElissaR: then, if we are supposed to teach them to be responsible, instead of practicing with a "dummy phone", maybe we need to set up a blog and let them practice in a safe controlled way.....like a classroom blog?

RaylaS: good idea

DavidW: Well, there are some teachers who are using blogs to encourage writing among students

CarlosJ: I think the internet IS our life now

AdrianB: agree

HilarioP: but some parents don't know much about computers to begin with, much less blogs

AdrianB: true

RaylaS: haha again true

ElissaR: how much time does it take to set up a blog, how much time to maintain it/ Where do you get a "blogging account?" (is there such a thing)?

JoAnnaG: true

RaylaS: but those parents need to get out there and learn.. bc their kids will learn sooner or later

LourdesR: that's why parents also need to be informed about the dangers and how to take care of the situation

CarlosJ: older parents don't, my father does and he's around 40 he's pretty proficient with a computer

KarenLN: if you have Gmail, it's easy to use their blogging tools

BjB winks at David

DavidW smiles

DavidW: This site is called Blogs for Teachers:

ElissaR: HEY.....watch it with that OLDER PARENTS stuff :) I AM OLDER>>>>>AND OLDER

DavidW: <http://blogs4teachers.com/>

CarlosJ smiles because he has no idea what's going on

ElissaR: what is gmail?

LizaR: ??

CarlosJ: google email

DavidW: Google Email == gmail

LizaR: oic

ElissaR: I've seen that, never understood it

ElissaR: oh, thanks

JoAnnaG: oh ok

RaylaS: it's sad to hear about these young teens that are putting their self in great danger bc of lack of internet knowledge

DavidW: free, very good email, Elissa

LizaR: what is that like? hotmail??

DavidW: . o O (huge amount of storage)

AidaM: Yeah, what is gmail

CarlosJ: like abcd@hotmail.com or abcd@gmail.com

LuisCM: my younger sisters

StephaniK1: does blogs4teachers have a feature where the teacher views the blog entry before it's posted?

DavidW: believes gmail is the best web-based email

LuisCM: it should have

DavidW: I'm not sure, Stephanie. Haven't used it

ElissaR: When the students blog, are they using "internet" language and spelling, or conventional,?

DavidW: I think there are a number of web sites providing blogs for teachers

KarenLN: Karen smiles at David :)

BjB: I have a blog that I use with my students <http://voicesfromloysville.blogspot.com/>

KarenLN: gmail is worth looking into

DavidW: It depends, Elissa. Teachers may need to set ground rules for postings, etc.

LourdesR: good to know

StephaniK1: I've set up edublogs and it allows the teacher to preview first... I like that - eliminate inappropriate stuff

DavidW: nods to Stephanie

BjB: Teachers definitely need to set ground rules for posting!

DavinaP: joined the room.

CarlosJ: I personally use gmail, and of all the webmail providers they provide a level of security that's awesome

RaylaS: yea but depending on the age group... if they will listen or not

DavidW: Welcome back, Davina

ElissaR: so, if my district enforces the NEED for writers workshop, does a blog count as a Published Work and therefore insists it be conventional spelling and grammar?

ElissaR: I think that sort of defeats the purpose of "stream of cons."

ElissaR: and immediacy

DavinaP: sorry group--somehow I lost internet connection

DavidW smiles

LizaR: thats k. ur back

DavinaP: had to unplug replug etc...

CarlosJ: its ok, it happens

RaylaS: it's ok

AdrianB: ok

BjB cheers for Davina...welcome back!

BjB: you have a great group here, Davina

LizaR claps

AdrianB: cheers

DavinaP: looks like a great group someone fill me in on what has taken place

ElissaR: welcome back

LourdesR: smiles

CarlosJ: was the security of your computer compromised?!

ElissaR smiles

DavinaP: I think so ---power went out but still no rain???

DavidW: We've mentioned a few blogs, the idea of blogging, blogging with students, etc...just started

ElissaR: So, if I want to start a blog, I need to get a google email account?

DavidW: not necessarily, Elissa

CarlosJ: that happened to me 2 days ago, power went out to the service router

ElissaR: ok, what would I do first

DavidW: . o O (but it's not a bad thing to have, in any event)

RaylaS:

DavidW wonders if Davina has some favorite sites for teachers to start blogs

ElissaR: When I taught second grade, I had a backpack with a stuffed animal and a journal in it. Each night, a different kid took our backpack buddy home and wrote an entry into the journal, maybe this could be the 21st century backpack idea!

DavidW: cool idea

HilarioP: that's neat

AdrianB: yes cool idea

LourdesR: that is a nice idea

DavidW: Elissa, here is the sign-up page for Gmail, if you are interested:

ElissaR: Maybe I could start one for each grade level, and then each week a different class from the grade could be responsible to add an entry about the activities they did during music

JoAnnaG: that is a cool idea

RaylaS: that is cool

HilarioP: so those who blog think it's safe?

DavidW: <http://www.gmail.com>

DavidW: look in the lower right corner

DavidW wonders if we've lost Davina, again

CarlosJ: maybe, sounds like she's having the problem I had

DavinaP: Live journal is one

DavinaP: trying to read the comments to catch up feel a little lost sorry

ElissaR: maybe a classroom teacher could post a "story starter" and the weekly or monthly blogs could revolve around that

DavidW: I think you have some excellent ideas, Elissa

DavidW: Some of you may know that K-12 teachers can bring students into Tapped In, safely

ArturoM: that sounds great Elissa

ElissaR: does anyone here remember playing a camp/party game where each person added on to a story? Maybe the blog could do that as well? sort of like a never ending thing

DavidW: You could collaborate with another classroom on a blog

ElissaR: ooohhh, like pen pals

DavidW smiles

DavidW: lots of possibilities

HilarioP: good idea

ElissaR: what would the students do at Tapped in, what rooms would be good for younger kids?

DavidW: the technology creates a certain hook - the writing may seem less of a chore, then

AidaM: wow, I didn't know all of this

BjB: MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE?

RaylaS: you will figure it out Elissa just don't give up

ElissaR: yes

HilarioP: but are they safe

CarlosJ: yes

AidaM: listening

RaylaS: sure

LourdesR: you got it

CarlosJ: attention is yours

BjB: we've been having a wonderful conversation...

AdrianB: listening

HilarioP: do we want everyone to learn how to blog?

HilarioP: who would read them?

BjB: but we are neglecting our discussion leader who I'm sure has lots of great stuff to share with us

CarlosJ hears crickets chirp

DavidW smiles

DavinaP: <http://www.haranbanjo.com:16080/kidzblog/> and David's <http://classblogmeister.com/> look interesting due to passwords and safety but I would have to learn more

ElissaR: sorry, I thought her connection kept dropping

RaylaS: me too

LourdesR: we need to be patient

DavinaP: oh no keep discussing I was just trying to read and catch up

DavinaP: Looks like many have been discussing the wonderful things that can take place with blogs (pros) ...

DavinaP: has anyone had problems having their schools allow them to utilize?

LourdesR: I am not in the school system yet

CarlosJ: I have in the past, but not at my current school

AidaM: I don't know

AidaM: that is a good question

ElissaR: my guess would be that since I am teaching younger children, it would be great for me to screen the entries before uploading them.....then, if things started to get a little "murky" and I saw kids being a bit unsafe, or unkind, or irresponsible, I could speak directly to those kids, teach a mini lesson on internet "smarts", etc....maybe even use some of the "paper trail" to present at a PTA meeting, that way I would not get "....MY child doesn't do that...I don't HAVE to supervise so closely,..." etc

DavinaP: ah interesting. seems more and more (school systems) are blocking these options from teachers/students . How do you feel about this ?

KarenLN: Does anyone have a suggestion on how to get admin. to buy in?

LourdesR: I think it is a great idea b/c it would be safer I think

ElissaR: my school system only blocks MY SPACE because too many HS and MS kids were using it and it was slowing down the servers

DavinaP: just My Space or all social networking sites? and just networking sites or blogs as well?

AidaM: I always thought that the blog was not a good idea

CarlosJ: I think that school's are responsible for their students' safety, if a student put something on the internet that could endanger their safety and they put in on using the school's computers and internet the school would be in trouble

ElissaR: Just My space, so far,

StephaniK1: I think the teacher needs to maintain the blog... There are a lot of great opportunities to use them - but teachers just can't let them go "free-nilly"

LourdesR: I don't think it is very safe. that's my opinion

DavinaP: Elissa interesting My space is only one of many that students utilize

KarenLN: keep an eye on the file-sharing:)

StephaniK1: the safety issue is why I like being able to OK each post before it's put on the internet

ElissaR: So far, the admin. wants the kids to become responsible for their actions.....we've had some funky stuff, but the kids don't want it known that they might be the reason for the rest of the district losing their privileges

DavinaP: so perhaps some screening of the content before it goes up (screening by a teacher for example?)

StephaniK1: If you had parents that were really worried about safety, I suppose you and the student could make up a "pen name"

KarenLN: good idea

ElissaR: we've got a really LARGE, affluent population

KarenLN: listservs have a moderator

DavinaP: so screening and pen names and passwords etc... help with the safety aspect but then how does that effect the purpose of the blog as you were discussing (I think) before? or does it have no effect?

ElissaR: Uh oh, it got so quiet

ChristineQ: screening every post would just take up time and resources

BjB . o O (it's allowed to get quiet, Elissa...thinking time)

DavinaP: time from teachers?

ElissaR: I guess each classroom teacher might need to figure out his/her own agenda for the blog, ex; to spread info, to excite writers, to get feedback, etc

DavinaP: so how should we tackle these issues i.e., blogs are great ways to...

ElissaR: blogs are great ways to inspire creative thought?

KarenLN: introduce innovative ideas

DavinaP: get kids to write and share but if for "educational purposes" which is what most districts require their network to utilize...

KarenLN: answer questions

ElissaR: blogs are great ways to utilize safe, stress free editing

DavinaP: how does one balance the two...w/out using the teachers time?

ElissaR: blogs are great ways to share and develop ideas?

BjB: peer editing, Davina?

DavinaP: would your school districts allow peer editing?

ElissaR: I don't think you can do anything without using teachers time, but maybe this can be done at my leisure, i don't mind "giving the time" I just cant give it all during the hours my district insists upon

MichaelA: they do that in marching band

ArturoM: they do?

MichaelA: sure

ElissaR: do what is marching band...peer tutoring?

ArturoM: I didn't know that

MichaelA: well yea

MichaelA: they assign the veterans to teach the incoming freshman

MichaelA: and to teach the rest of the band

StephaniK1: take things you would do anyway.... for ex: you might have kids express their thoughts in a written format about the Iraq war... instead of handwriting it, or typing it and turning in a paper, they blog about it and can feed off each other... you were going to do the assignment anyway, and grade it, not it's just online

ElissaR: peer tutoring is a very common practice, but I am not sure that peer editing would be the same.....with older kids, I would think that I, as a teacher might want to read the posts first, so as to limit the cyber bullying, gossip, etcif the peer tutor sees it first, that might defeat the purpose

DavinaP: I am curious if the difference (as viewed by school boards etc..) RE peer editing would have to do with online posting (since many could see etc...)

LourdesR: this all new to me since I am not teaching yet and am not very familiar with this

DavinaP: Several of you have brought up the major issue schools are looking at...

CarlosJ: I've found peer editing to make me want to write better so my peers won't think less of me

ElissaR: I just took an online course, and the instructor posted all his comments onto the "discussion board", even though my comments were all positive, I found it uncomfortable to read some of the other comments, I loved that ALL the completed assignments were avail. for all of us to see, but I felt the comments should have been private. same with this

DavinaP: how do we utilize current practices ie blogging etc... but done in a way as to assure educational content and safe and secure methods are in place

ElissaR: I guess by clearly stating the blog's agenda, purpose, criteria and rules...and then monitoring it

BjB : good, Hilario

LourdesR: good answer Elissa

ElissaR: by choosing sites that allow the teacher (or adult) to moderate before posting

DavinaP: Yes I believe that is what we will see more of--and more password protected type blogs cropping up

AdrianB : agree with Elisa

DavinaP: unfort that means more work again for the teacher...which often turns them off to using it

LourdesR: that is true as if they needed more work

ElissaR: I would hate to see password protecting, because one of the things that gets my kids so excited about their projects that I "upload" is that it can (and often does) get viewed from all over the world, depending on the search criteria, I'd hate to lose that

DavinaP: did you talk earlier of blogs you liked, enjoyed? found interesting?

DavinaP: so perhaps less password and more oversight? perhaps we can argue this perspective to school boards?

ElissaR: Maybe blogging can be a weekly assignment.....like 5 kids per night, Andy, Jane, Mark, etc. every Monday, Jill, Joey, John, Tues., etc

BjB : I liked Stephani's comment about reflective writing as part of an assignment....

BjB : where the poster would need to back up opinion with research

ElissaR: if you broke it down a bit, then as a teacher, maybe I wouldn't be as overwhelming

RaylaS: what is the main topic that we are talking about now???

ElissaR: Maybe if, as a classroom teacher, you created a blog, with all the bells and whistles, moderated, protected, screened, whatever.....THEN you became proactive and presented to the board, they'd be more likely to agree with the value and actually support and encourage you

RaylaS: I feel lost

DavinaP: what are some of the things you would suggest to share with students (and to explain to the parents that you will be sharing with students) to make the blog a good "educational" experience?

AidaM: me too

LourdesR: I agree

AdrianB: me too

ElissaR: what do you agree with....sorry

RaylaS: we're lost

ElissaR: oh

AidaM: Yeah

ArturoM: me too

BjB: hmmm....lots of lost participants, Davina

CarlosJ: ya

ElissaR: I might talk about how neat it is to have an authentic audience for their writing and their opinions

BjB: how would you guarantee an authentic audience, Elissa?

DavinaP: just trying to get folks to think about safety issues related to blogging ...why many school districts are not allowing teachers to utilize...even though as you are mentioning there are many pros to their utility

DavidW: schools could run blog software on their own servers - maintain more control of it that way

DavinaP: so....

BjB nods to Davina.

ElissaR: hmm, not sure, maybe just because it's on the net, it is then available for all to see....my students are young, they could tell their grandparents....imagine that....all the retirement villages, in their club houses....logged on to my blog...my mom would be thrilled

BjB thinks that this topic might be continued next month, Davina?

CarlosJ: again were all lost

ElissaR: I am so sad.....that this is ending.. by next month I wont have the time to spend on line....although I will try...this was very interesting...

KarenLN: good idea! can it be, Davina?

DavinaP: if your school policy does allow you to utilize why do you think they have made this decision and how could we assure them...

BjB . o O (September 3? That is Labor Day)

LourdesR: thanks for all the great info. enjoyed it!

RaylaS: thanks a bunch bye

AidaM: good, I may be able to attend

KarenLN: thanks, nice chatting :) thanks, Davina.

ElissaR: not sure how to assure them about safety, if their mind is already made up. I would try it first and then show it to them

DavinaP: sure..sorry I tapped in late still no rain although my lights flickered again perhaps folks are using too much power in our neck of the woods?

AdrianB: yes thanks a lot it was real interesting

DavinaP: we will try again next month ...think about how you could assure student safety utilizing a blog to convince your board

ElissaR: k

DavinaP: good night all

ElissaR: good night, stay comfy and safe

ChristineQ: night

JeffC: gnite Davina

AdrianB: good night

DavidW: Elissa, I think, as with many things connected to the Internet and schools, you need to inform people of possibilities...

DavidW: good things may happen, bad things may happen - how are we going to handle those things WHEN they happen?

ElissaR: yes, I think you do...I think you need to be prepared whenever children and parents are involved..

DavidW: people will pull the fire alarms in schools

DavidW: there tends to be a procedure for dealing with that

ElissaR: but...you can't really INSURE safety, you can try to teach about responsibility

DavidW: I think you do your best to look both ways before crossing EVEN a one-way street

DavidW: can't rule out anything happening

ElissaR: you can try to teach about kindness, common sense, etc. but if you allow the admins to control all the variables, then the kids will never learn

DavidW: but you can take steps to make provisions for how to deal with misbehavior

ElissaR: you are correct, at some point, mom and dad watch from a very safe distance, but they allow their kids to try

DavidW: what may be appropriate in high school may NOT be appropriate in elementary school

DavidW: can't learn to stand up if you don't fall down

DavidW: the trick is to balance off the positive educational benefits and hopefully see they outweigh the possible negative things

ElissaR: you are correct, I think as an elementary school teacher, It is my job to teach the responsibility, compassion and common sense,, cause...once those hormones kick in.....all is lost (mostly)

DavidW smiles

BjB waves goodnight. I'll send Davina a transcript of the whole discussion so she can figure out what the heck took place ;-)

DavidW hugs Bj

ElissaR: k

DavidW: Good deal

BjB hugs goodnight