

Title of Session: C3 - Pros and Cons of Blogging

Moderator: Davina Pruitt-Mentle

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BJB2: we can do introductions, Kimberly

BJB2: please tell us where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

BJB2: I teach communication in Pennsylvania

KimberlyBa: I am a student teacher from the University of Houston and I am teaching pre-k.

BJB2: the little ones :-)

BJB2: Remona?

KimberlyBa: yes

RemonaE: Okay I went away again. I will watch another time if that is okay. By the way, I am a high school Spanish teacher in rural eastern Kentucky.

BJB2: ahhh...the other end of the age range. Cool, Remona

KimberlyBa: I speak Spanish too

BJB2: what brings you to this discussion, Remona?

DavinaP joined the room.

DavinaP: hello all

BJB2: are you taking a class too?

BJB2 cheers...hi, Davina!

KimberlyBa: hi!

RemonaE: Yeah. I like the older ones. I am taking a class called EDUC 685 Principles of Distance Education and we are required to attend group sessions in tapped in...

DavinaP: sorry technical strange happenings

BJB2: thanks, Remona

KimberlyBa: Yea, I have to do this for a technology class too.

DavinaP: Please introductions again please

BJB2: Davina, Kimberly teaches pre K and Remona teaches high school Spanish

DavinaP: Excellent and in what state/country?

KimberlyBa: Texas

BJB2: both are taking classes that require that they attend TI discussions

DavinaP: Excellent and welcome

KimberlyBa: thank you

Remona E: Kimberly, you said that you speak Spanish? How did you learn. Martin county, Kentucky...ten miles from W. Va.

KimberlyBa: My parents were born in Mexico

DavinaP: last month we had an active discussion about pros and cons on blogging but I think both of you are new so let me first ask have either of you tried blogging in your classrooms---in your coursework?

KimberlyBa: I have used blogging as a student in my university classes.

DavinaP: and tell us a little about your experience?

RemonaE: No, I'm pretty much a novice to blogging. I have started a blog for EDUC 685, however.

KimberlyBa: It is an easy way to get information about your class and find out what is due.

DavinaP: Ramona where is the log located? open or for the class only?

DavinaP: Kim did you design the blog or your faculty instructor?

KimberlyBa: my faculty instructor did

DavinaP: were students eager to post? did folks share other insights or just due dates etc... how would this differ than say a website with static postings?

RemonaE: I got it through wordpress. I'm not exactly sure of my url at this moment, but I can look it up. It's open to anyone.

DavinaP: excellent

DavinaP: Remona what do you use your blog (the one you created) for?

KimberlyBa: no, the students did not post. It was more of a way for the instructor to give information to the students.

RemonaE: I am looking forward to trying to implement everything in my classes including blogging with students Spanish classes in other counties.

DavinaP: so was this any different than a website? just trying to figure out the reasoning behind why a blog was developed verses a website?

KimberlyBa: Well, this semester we have a discussion board where the students post.

DavinaP: Remona have you been in the classrooms yet? teaching?

RemonaE: Right now, I use it to post comments to particular readings that the prof requires plus general rambling.

DavinaP: Discussion board?

RemonaE: Yes, this is my third year. I am working on my master's degree.

KimberlyBa: awesome, I want to do that too.

KimberlyBa: I would like to go into counseling.

DavinaP: So does your school/school district allow blogging? allow access to outside blogs?

RemonaE: We use discussion board for both the classes that I am currently taking. The degree is Master of Art in Education - Educational Technology

KimberlyBa: yes, discussion boards

DavinaP: so (for both of you) what is a blog? what does it mean to you? what do you think it allows that other means (discussion boards, bulletin boards, websites, listserves do not

RemonaE: No, I don't think our school allows blogging right now.

KimberlyBa: oh, the elementary school?

KimberlyBa: no, the pre-k students do not do that.

RemonaE: Obviously, a blog is a communication tool and one in which people may feel a little freer to express themselves. I'm thinking about the other question.

DavinaP: Any ideas about bloggingsee question above..

KimberlyBa: It is a place where people may share information and gather knowledge.

KimberlyBa: It is easy to use.

RemonaE: Discussion has a topic and a blog you can blog about anything that you want to blog about.

BJB2: Blogs also let you use photos and multi media

BJB2: blogs are often one way...one person posts and others can respond, but it's not really interactive

BJB2 hopes she's correct ;-) and isn't sabotaging Davina's discussion

DavinaP: I like this definition or explanation from www.baclass.panam.edu/mana3333/glossary/chapter02.html A frequent, chronological publication of personal thoughts and Web links. A blog is often a mixture of what is happening in a person's life and what is happening on the Web, a kind of hybrid diary/guide site, although there are as many unique types of blogs as there are people. People maintained blogs long before the term was coined, but the trend gained momentum with the introduction of automated published, systems, most notably Blogger at blogger.com.

DavinaP: of course the "person" could be "a course" or class or topic but clearly there is a focus

DavinaP: Remona how do you envision utilizing (once your school board says OK) in your classroom?

DavinaP: Kim how could your past class experience (instructor) made "the blog" more of a blog and less of a "website"

RemonaE: I would like to connect with other Spanish teachers and students in the surrounding area and have our students create and comment on each other blogs, in Spanish.

KimberlyBa: She could have had the students post questions about the course that could

help other students with the same questions.

RemonaE: As their skills grow, it would be interesting to connect with students in Spanish-speaking countries.

DavinaP: comment on each others blog? so each student would have a blog with a partnering student?

DavinaP: Kim perhaps each day or lecture or session a summary with the class notes or extra papers and then students could post outside items perhaps other links or questions that others could answer etc...?

RemonaE: Yes...my idea many turn out to be more of a discussion board situation because I would be teaching specific topics and the students could add their own touches.

KimberlyBa: Yes, like a discussion board?

DavinaP: everyone take a few minutes to visit ePALS at <http://www.epals.com/> and come back and we can share if this might meet Remona's needs (if the school would allow :-)

BJB2 . o O (the Tapped In K-12 Student Campus would also work for what Remona would like to do)

RemonaE: My idea is sounding more and more like a discussion board. I could give them a topic and have the students practice their writing skills.

RemonaE: I have yet to take the Tips and Tricks tour. I tried to get in Saturday, but I gave up after 15 minutes. I am going to try the next time.

DavinaP: Remona tips and tricks in tapped in or epals?

RemonaE: YES! This is great. I just added it to Favorites. There is a Tips and Tricks tour that our professor wants us to take.

RemonaE: He wants us to take the tour in tapped in.

BJB2: ePals is an excellent resource

RemonaE: Kimberly, do you consider yourself bilingual?

KimberlyBa: yes

DavinaP: Once everyone gets back take a few minutes to explore some blogs at <http://educational.blogs.com/> to see a standard formatthen we can discuss again how we might utilize in our classrooms before moving on to the cpons and why school boards

may not be so swift in catching on

BJB2 has a slight bias for Tapped In, but is willing to concede that there are other sites that meet individual needs

RemonaE: That's cool. I am not a native speaker by any stretch, but did visit Spain in 2004 for five weeks and go along very well.

KimberlyBa: Yea, my sister just got back from Costa Rica where she took some classes.

KimberlyBa: over the summer

BJB2: Teresa's blog <http://fwe2.motime.com/> is very cool...Teresa is a Tapped In member

DavinaP: so were the "blog" located at <http://educational.blogs.com/> like you have set up? experienced in class or had envisioned?

DavinaP: and a good one for ESOL

BJB2 agrees with Davina

BJB2: It appears that you can use a blog for just about any topic...and make it as interactive or one sided as you wish

DavinaP: yes !!

RemonaE: These websites are very useful. I can't wait to share all of this info on my class blog.

BJB2: I would assume that the main criteria is that blog should serve some purpose if it is to be for education

RemonaE: The blogs at educationalblogs are more elaborate than the ones that we have created for our class, but most of us are first-timers.

DavinaP: I would assume...I wanted to show some quick links for my interpretation (could be wrong) was that the instructor version that someone spoke about didn't seem like a real blog

BJB2 smiles. We all have to start somewhere, Remona!

DavinaP: what do you think?

DavinaP: the blog you set up for exchange is it crafted in such a way or different twist?

BJB2 listens to what Remona and Kimberly think

DavinaP: and first time is an excellent start!!!!

KimberlyBa: It is good to start simple.

DavinaP: so with all the wonderful aspects to such an application what might be the downsides that have caused school boards to not hop on board?

RemonaE: most of us chose something like wordpress or uniblogs ... we are finding our way. I'm having fun with it.

KimberlyBa: Kids might stray away and it won't be educational any more

RemonaE: ...because the little darlings just might not stay on task.

KimberlyBa: yes

BJB2: school boards do not respect the instructor enough to provide guided learning via a blog?

RemonaE: Students require monitoring...that is just part of the process.

KimberlyBa: Kids can be mean!

BJB2: what about the equity issue? Do all students have access to computers?

KimberlyBa: no

DavinaP: so it would require the teacher to monitor the students input or posting?

KimberlyBa: yes

BJB2 . o O (bullying is another topic that Davina has discussed in previous discussions...check out the archives at www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

RemonaE: I'm not sure that trust is the issue. I think lack of knowledge is more the problem. I don't know for sure, but I'm doubting very few of the boe blog.

DavinaP: would you suggest that you require viewing first before posted or posting and just keeping an eye out and being able to edit if needed?

DavinaP: so I've seen off task, bullying, being mean, non-educational posts or if educational students not wanting to post what other issues you would have to monitor?

DavinaP: Just noticed the time---but one thing..

KimberlyBa: sex offenders

RemonaE: yes...I am going to look up the post on bullying. That is one of the topics that I was hoping we might discuss.

DavinaP: teachers have been discussing is what if a student posts but makes TONS of grammar and spelling mistakes ---what do you do ? knowing what kids would do?

BJB2: ahhh...access to a class blog by someone from the public? Would a teacher have control over that, Davina?

RemonaE: Do all blog sites send transcripts as does tapped in?

BJB2: no, Remona.

BJB2: most kids would ignore the spelling and grammar errors...

BJB2: they speak IM

DavinaP: not sure of your question BJ? you can set the blog up to have you as approver before it is posted?

RemonaE: That would be criterion for my class, all that grammar.

BJB2: part of the question is to approve posts before they are posted, but how do you determine who can post to your blog?

BJB2 . o O (anyone can join blogger and respond to any blog)

DavinaP: I am assuming the educational blogs would be "controlled" by teachers and therefore bullying and predators should not be a problem as the teacher should be able to delete or filter...

DavinaP: unless they are also opening it up to the general public but even then you as the admin of the blog should have control-unless you set up a wiki instead???

BJB2: Davina, what do you feel are the biggest obstacles in convincing a school board?

BJB2 . o O (about the safety of blogging)

DavinaP: one way is to give then user ID and password to control (make it a closed access) ---I have a few of those the other is to choose the option to make sure the posts are approved first--you get an...

RemonaE: One could set up a blog for a narrow window of time, say nine weeks and

shut it down afterward, right?

DavinaP: email that alerts you and then you review and determine if Ok or not like the C3 blog I have

DavinaP: Remona yes- yes although I am sure it depends on the blog provider blogger.com now goggle leaves them up it seems

BJB2: do you want to continue with this topic for October, Davina?

DavinaP: Since it October national cyber security month we may want to have a special focus on security issues

BJB2 nods...sounds good!

DavinaP: perhaps the title October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month and then I'll think of a sub title

BJB2: ok. any last questions, Kimberly, Remona?

DavinaP: hope everyone was able to meet their tapped in requirement. Please join us again

KimberlyBa: no

KimberlyBa: thank you

BJB2 . o O (you're allowed to participate in these discussions even if you're not taking a class ;-)

RemonaE: No,. This has been informative.

DavinaP: I enjoyed it good night

BJB2: thanks, Davina

BJB2 waves goodnight

RemonaE: ¡Buenas noches!