Teacher Checklist for Blogging Projects

Because blogging projects mirror work that most teachers are already having students do in class—producing written content—they are a natural first step for digital novices. The following yes or no questions will help you determine whether or not you are prepared to facilitate blogging projects in your classroom. Under "Your Response / Next Steps," list what needs to be done along with a date for when this action should be completed.

Technical and Procedural Preparations

1. Does your school or district's technology services department have a preferred blogging service? Have they already made arrangements for students or teachers to have free accounts at those services?

    Your Response / Next Steps:

2. Have you checked with your school or district's technology services specialists to learn more about any restrictions they have placed on the creation of digital work by students?

    Your Response / Next Steps:

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?

    Your Response / Next Steps:

4. 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?

    Your Response / Next Steps:

5. 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?

    Your Response / Next Steps:

6. Are you planning on using a feed reader (content aggregator) to organize a collection of blogs for your students to read and respond to?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

7. Have you developed a comfort level with the basic steps involved in crafting and posting entries in the blog service that you plan to use?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

8. Are you planning on using visitor map and stat tracker services like ClustrMaps (www.clustrmaps.com)?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

Pedagogical Preparations

1. Have you thought through the kinds of entries you would like to see students making on your classroom blog?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

2. 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?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

3. Do your students understand the important role that commenting can play in student blogging projects?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

4. 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?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

5. Are you planning on advertising student blog entries with the parents of your students and your professional colleagues in order to drive traffic to your site?

   Your Response / Next Steps:

6. 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?

   Your Response / Next Steps: