

Introduction

Blogging is an important tool for education leaders and students. Since writing is a vital part of communication, blogging brings those essential skills to virtual connection; it takes the 140 characters of Twitter and develops the sound byte into reflective depth for formative learning. Generating an online space to openly share ideas and reflections richens the complete educational experience.

Unfortunately, not every educator is prepared with the necessary twenty-first century skills to blog regularly or teach kids how to develop an online presence. Learning what a blog is and how and why educators need to be doing it, teachers and administrators will have a better understanding of how to start a blog quickly and turn small bits of writing time into a tool for growth. They are then able to turn that knowledge into an effective teaching tool for their students.

With the Common Core Standards and other state standards being a part of the changing educational landscape, reflection has been brought into the forefront of our collective consciousness. Although many of us believed it before, we now are actually discussing and implementing new reflective tools to help students and educators develop more metacognitive skills; it is in this way we learn to foster an authentic voice with a deeper understanding of our strengths and challenges. Blogging is a space to do this—but not just within the confines of a journal with an audience who wants to connect and participate in that growth.

The development of an audience increases the level of urgency we place upon ourselves to commit to the act of writing. When others are waiting to hear what we have to say or waiting for us to provide feedback on what they've said, we generate a reciprocal relationship that strengthens each person in a number of different ways: it strengthens our ability to be honest about who we are and what we want, it allows us to see ourselves as others see us and how that contrasts with what we feel inside, it provides a realistic sounding board for challenges we face individually that don't have to be faced alone, and it offers us an opportunity to brand ourselves in an authentic way to promote a community of learning.

Before each of us has become inhibited by the rules of society and the learned behaviors of others, we see the world with curiosity and life, nothing is impossible. As we grow, we still know this within, but allow outside factors to separate us from this core belief. Blogging is one way to get back in touch with ourselves and communicate the truth of our experiences with others.

Throughout this book, the reader will take away many things, most importantly a practical approach to developing a blogging routine and an inroad to teaching students to do the same thing. When leaders in an educational community can speak from genuine experience and encourage others to take that initial leap, they become better equipped to support those around them to grow as people, in turn making the community stronger.

Learning Intentions:

By the end of this book you will know:

- What blogging is and why educators should do it
- How to blog and which platform to do it on
- Who we blog for
- How to use blogging to connect