

Great Classroom Idea



Grade level: Any

Subject (if applicable): All

Please check all that apply:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> lesson plan | <input type="checkbox"/> project-based teaching/activity idea |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> technology integration idea | <input type="checkbox"/> graphic organizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> integration of faith and learning idea | <input type="checkbox"/> webquest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> classroom management technique | <input type="checkbox"/> virtual field trip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> devotional | <input type="checkbox"/> bulletin board idea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> science demo or experiment | <input type="checkbox"/> critical thinking strategy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> assessment tool | <input type="checkbox"/> original classroom game |
| <input type="checkbox"/> relationship-building idea | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |

Description: (attach supplementary materials if needed)

Blogging: New Journal or Old Bulletin Board?

It first started in 1988 when students in Indiana used something called BuddyNet. It was basically a bulletin board where students posted their writings electronically. Using this device, students wrote poetry, stories, and expressed their opinions to others. Students engaged with real audiences for their writing. They met and discussed issues with others from their community and from across the state. Today, classrooms connect worldwide using a similar technology, simple called blogs.

Blog is short for Web log, or an online journal where others can view and comment on an individual's writing. Blogs can be private (accessed if you have the required login and password) or public (no login needed). Blogs can be created and regularly updated directly using any web browser and managed from any computer with an Internet connection, anywhere in the world. It is estimated that more than 12,000 new blogs are created every day.

You may ask, "Why should my class blog?" Blogs offer a way for students to engage in reflective writing on any topic. Students know they have an audience other than their teacher, often producing more thoughtful (yes, better) writing. Peers can respond to their blogs, providing immediate feedback. It's also a great way for parents to be connected to their child's classroom. They can see class assignments, as well as read their children's postings, perhaps gaining new insights about their offspring. The blog can serve as a natural writing portfolio, visibly displaying writing skill improvement as the year progresses. As a teacher, you can quickly respond at the student's blog, providing immediate feedback not feasible by traditional paper evaluation methods, and it can take less time to manage.

Getting started with blogging is easy, with the use of "open" sites such as blogger.com and livejournal.com. You can also buy blogging software to set up classroom and school network blogs that provide local control. Check out Moveable Type or Manila blogging software; both offer licenses at special rates for educational institutions.

(see cartoon next page)

Submitted by: Bruce Wentzell

School: Sandy Lake Academy

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