

# Minnesota Writing Project

## --- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

### **Title of lesson: Writing Through Blogs**

**Suggested grade/age:** Adaptable to K-12 - This lesson is designed as a staff development introduction to blog writing.

**Approximate time needed to complete lesson:** This staff development lesson requires 70-90 minutes, followed by time for teachers to set up their own blog.

### **Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:**

- Understand the differences between blogs and wikis
- Uncover the benefits of blog writing: Writing in blogs provides students with:
  - A real purpose for writing
  - An authentic audience for their writing
  - A network to get to know others outside the classroom
- Understand that blog writing lends itself to a variety of purposes and group structures (whole class shared writing, small collaborative groups, pairs, or individuals)
- Brainstorm possible applications for blogs in your classroom

### **Brief summary/outline of lesson:**

Even though the lines between blogs and wikis are becoming blurred, unlike a wiki, a blog gives the administrator control over all edits and comments.

The purpose for writing on a blog must be carefully examined so the blog:

- provides a real life purpose for writing
- gives students an authentic audience for their work
- enhances the curriculum
- is manageable and can be sustained over time → Pick small battles. Chew little bites.

Look at examples of blogs from Kindergarten to high school to get an idea of the different purposes for writing on blogs. Blogs can simply showcase student work; or they can be set up so each student has his/her own blog page to display work. Teachers can post pictures, writing prompts, etc, to elicit student short response or more polished pieces. Blogs can be used to publish fully revised and edited texts. Blogs can be used to share real-life useful information with the larger Web community, such as book reviews, cultural information, etc. The possibilities are only limited by one's imagination.

Brainstorm with colleagues how blogs could best be used to enhance your curriculum and serve an appropriate purpose for student writing. Again, remember to start small and make it manageable over the long run.

**Related Resources:**

Richardson, W. (2008). *Blogs, wikis, podcasts and other powerful Web tools for the classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Blog Host Websites:

- Blogger: [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)
- Edublogs: [www.edublogs.com](http://www.edublogs.com)
- French-speaking blogs: <http://blog.enseignons.be/>

**Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:**

Follow-up staff development could include:

- How to find other classes to be the audience for your students' work.
- Sharing the types of writing done on blogs with job-alike colleagues across the district
- Conduct on-going staff discussions/problem-solving sessions to provide support and keep teachers motivated

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