

## **Reflection: Creating a Blog Using Blogger in an educational setting**

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MEDT 7462- Module 5

*I have never blogged.*

There, I said it. It feels really good to get that burden off my chest.

I have been an Instructional Technology Specialist for almost 15 years and I have never blogged.

The Module 5 assignment for my MEDT7462 class was my first blogging experience, so my reflection is based upon this single experience. It was... surprisingly easy.

Now, just because I've never blogged personally doesn't mean that I don't understand the educational significance of the tools. (What kind of ITS would I be if I didn't keep up with the modern trends in education?) I most certainly see the unique writing experience that a blog offers. Instant worldwide publication, reader feedback, and never-ending revisions. It is a writing experience unique to the internet.

I also think that it is a writing experience suited for today's young learners. They crave the instant results that posting a blog provides. They need the peer feedback to encourage them (peer pressure and peer acceptance are strong motivators). They need the never-ending revisions because it models their ever-changing mindset.

As an admittedly conservative educator, I would be immediately fearful of how such tools could be misused. I work with middle-schoolers after all. If they can find a way to misuse something... they will. Thoughts of online bullying and online stalkers dampen my excitement over using these tools with students.

I was happy to discover blogging tools created for a school environment, however (available through dozens of other class blogging sites). With the appropriate tools available for teacher monitoring, I can see this tool being a fantastic (and safe) way to get students excited about writing. This is a "real world" tool that takes them beyond the walls of their classroom and makes them a part of a global community. This is what technology is all about.

As for the Blogger tool itself that I used for this assignment, I really love the ease of publication. The tools were uncluttered and clear. I could easily direct even the most technology-timid teacher to this site and they could be up and published within the hour. I like the automatic saves (which makes a loss of power or internet connection survivable) and I like the choices of attractive ready-made

templates. These are thoughtful and surprising features to have included in a free tool. The more Google apps I explore, the more I appreciate the contributions Google has made to the Web 2.0 community.