

eFuture lesson plan

Web 2.0 and/or Mobile learning

Title

Teaching English or Irish through blogging
Class: English/Irish

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Description

This lesson aims to make the English and Irish lessons more interactive, more collaborative and to introduce group/peer assessment and group/individual reflective practice into the classroom.

Teaching with Blogs

A blog is simply an online journal in which a user, or a group of users, can record their thinking and experiences with the wider world. Blogs can incorporate multimedia or can be simple text. Blogging platforms come in all shapes and sizes and can be accessed via computer or mobile device – allowing for some real immediacy in their content.

Resources required

A blogging platform and account

There are many platforms to choose from when you want to start using blogging like [Tumblr](#), [WordPress.com](#), [Edublogs.org](#) and [Blogger.com](#) which provide free, easy ways to create blogs with your students – and require little or no technology knowledge.

Choose one platform and require every student to use it – no matter their personal preference. Even if students already maintain a personal blog, be sure they create a new blog solely for the purposes of class. Collect each student's blog address and distribute the list to the class via email.

Lesson 1: introduction

Aim: to introduce the concept of blogging and peer assessment/critique.

Task 1: individual task

Ease into incorporating blogs into the classroom by assigning a "traditional" English assignment, but requiring students to post their finished product on their blog.

Define the parameters for the assignment and ensure they know that the blog will be held to the same standards of grammar and style as a printed essay.

Once all students have done this ...

Get comments rolling

Instruct students to read each others' essays and post comments on a number of them. Encourage students to offer both praise and constructive criticism of their peers' work, and reiterate rules around e-etiquette, respectfulness etc.

This will serve to introduce the first elements of peer assessment and reflective practice into the classroom. It also tends to help the “quieter” students who are not so willing to make comment verbally in class.

Task 2: Individual activity

Continue to use the blogs in the classroom. This time ask all students to write a new blog post that reflects on the comments their classmates gave their work – what did they learn from the process, did the comments seem fair, has it made a difference to how they viewed their original work?

Task 3: Individual/Group activity

Ask students to rework their original essay in line with the comments and the reflection time they have had. Ask them to create accompanying blog posts that explain why and how they have revised their essay.

Take these posts and use them in classroom discussions – do they seem right or wrong, what do they say about the nature of creativity and writing?

Encourage students to continue posting comments on peers efforts, assign some reward to those who do so regularly – incorporate the process of blogging and commenting into the fabric of the classroom.

Hold a discussion around how useful the sharing, commenting, reflecting process is – should it be extended to other subjects, does it make them feel different about their work or work effort?

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