

**BLOG WRITING****Table of Contents**

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### **What is a Blog?**

A Blog is a regularly updated website or web page, typically one run by an individual or a small group. It is written in an informal or conversational style.

### **Why are Blogs Written?**

- You can express your thoughts, opinions and passions to the whole world.
- It gives you a chance to reach out to thousands of people all over the world with very little effort.
- It can be created anytime from anyplace using an internet-enabled computer/ tablet and even a smart phone.
- It can serve as you personal diary albeit an open diary.
- It helps you sharpen your writing skills and inspires you with new ideas. It allows you to express yourself freely without any restrictions.
- You can connect with other like-minded people through your blog.
- You can gain a lot of knowledge about different fields by reading others' blogs.

### **How to Start Blogging?**

Even before the students can start blogging, you will have to get them interested in writing. You need to inculcate in them a love for writing. Without the ability to read and write, it would be nearly impossible to express articulately and creatively. Blogging is just expressing yourself with the aid of technology. Blogging has become very trendy as youngsters are interested in everything to do with technology.

Blogs are an effective medium for honing the children's language and writing skills as well as encouraging them to speak and put forth their opinions in front of a target audience. Once the students understand the significance of Blogging, they will be in a better position to write blogs. You can start with teaching Blog writing in the following manner:

- Start the class by asking the students if they know anything about Blogging. Explain to them the meaning of blogging.
- Ask them to state the purpose of blogging. You could ask them the following questions to initiate the conversation.
  - Why do you think people write blogs?
  - Do you follow anyone's blog? Why?
  - How do you express/ share your opinions with people?
  - If you want to share your thoughts with the whole world, how could you do it?
- Once students start showing interest in this kind of discussion, show them some sample blogs.
- You could then brainstorm about the topics that they would like to write about. The topics should be relevant, something the students strongly feel about or would like to write about, age –appropriate and most importantly fun.
- Guide them to avoid controversial topics. If they do, they should be able to defend their opinions logically and systematically.
- Before writing the blog, they should plan their thoughts and also conduct sufficient research about the topic.

- Then, select a suitable blogging platform which the students will find easy to understand and guide them step-by-step on how the site works. You can take the computer teacher's help to create a blog for the students. A short guide is given in Appendix A.
- There could be a common blog for the school or a common blog for a grade.
- The blog will need to be monitored by the teacher as well as an editorial team.
- You will need to select and train an editorial team to maintain and moderate the blog.
- The steps for selecting and creating an editorial team are given in the pages to follow.

### **Selection and Duties of the Editorial Team**

- In order to select the Editorial team, you can either select the students based on their performance till date or you could give a writing skills assignment to the class.
  - You could assess their proficiency and accuracy in English based on the assignment.
  - Apart from the above test, you need to consider the following skills for the editorial team.
    - Excellent in grammar: The editorial team will need to proofread and edit the writings submitted by the students.
    - Well-read: The editorial team will need to be well-read and well-versed with current happenings in India and around the world.
    - Creative and Innovative: They will have to be open to new ideas and experiences
    - Technically Savvy: At least one member of the team will need to have basic technical knowledge and skills.
    - Right Attitude: The students have to be interested in taking up a position on the Editorial team.
  - Once the team is selected, they will have to conduct the following duties:
    - They will finalize on a topic for the week/ month (This depends on how many times you would update the blog)
    - All the students of the class/ grade will write on the topics and submit their entries to the team.
    - They will filter all the write-ups written by the students and then select the best of the lot.
    - While quality is important, they will also have to ensure that majority of the students get an opportunity to publish their write-ups on the blog.
  - You may then ask them to send the write-ups to you for further assessment.
  - Once this is done, you can ask the Editorial team to post them on your school's blog.
-

**Procedure for Submission of Entries by Students**

- You can tell the students to write blogs on topics such as:
  - The history of their school
  - A book that they read lately
  - A place that they visited and loved a lot
  - A new recipe that they tried at home
  - Their opinion on any current happenings in their city
  - A report on the school trips/annual day functions/competitions etc.
- Now, you can select any 3 topics similar to what is mentioned earlier for blog writing, at the beginning of the first week through group discussion and inform all the students about it.
- Then, you should give them one week's deadline to submit their write-ups and simultaneously instruct them on the Do's and Don'ts for blog writing and commenting below the blogs.
- You can tell the students to go on the internet and read some sample blogs in order to understand the blog format.
- After they are done with submitting the write-ups, the editorial team will go through them and edit and proof-read them to avoid further mistakes.
- Afterwards, the editorial team will send the short listed write-ups to you for the final decision.
- Once the teacher approves the selected write-ups, they can be posted on the school blog at the end of the month/week.
- The Editorial team could also post one common blog from their side on the school blog every month.

### **How to run a Blog?**

- In order to run a blog, you will need to take help of your Computer teacher who would guide you properly on your blog related queries.
- Some of the popular Blog sites are as follows:
  - Blogger
  - Wordpress
  - Tumblr
  - Quora
  - LiveJournal
  - SquareSpace
- For starting a blog on Blogger.com, you simply need a Gmail account.
- For starting a blog on Wordpress.com, you need to download the software by following their instructions.
- For other blog sites, you can consult the Computer teacher.

### **Activity Overview**

- The Blog writing activity will comprise of 11 weeks in all.
- In the first 3 weeks, you can explain the basics of Blogging to the students and give them a topic for write-ups.
- In the fourth week, you can select the Editorial Team and assign them their duties and simultaneously create a school blog.
- From fifth week onwards, you can call for write-ups from all the students of your class. These can be then short-listed by the editorial team with your help and ultimately posted on the blog.
- You should make sure that you encourage as many students as you can for giving their entries for Blogs.
- Since the blog is going to be an evidence for their future portfolios, you should see to it that every student submits at least one write-up.

**Sample Blog**

‘Swami and Friends’ by R.K. Narayan- An awesome read!

Hey everyone! My summer vacations just got over and now it’s time to go back to school again. How boring is that...☹ Anyways, just wanted to share something about a book that I read in the vacation. It’s ‘Swami and Friends’ by R.K. Narayan. Wow! What a book! Simply awesome and a must read.

Talking about the story, well it’s a story of a ten-year old kid called Swami who lives in the town of Malgudi. He is a student at the British-established Albert Mission School which stresses Christianity, English literature and the value of education. The novel mainly explores Swami’s relationships with his parents, grandmother, residents of Malgudi and even with his new-born brother, when he is in second class.

However, the most amazing part that I loved the most in the story is the adventures that Swami shares with his friends Mani, Rajam, Somu and Sankar. They are all very cute, innocent, and mischievous and they land up in some or the other trouble all the time. Well, they reminded me of my friends actually. Hahaha...

And talking about Swami, well, he is so innocent, simple and sweet and so is R.K. Narayan’s style of writing. He has written the book by using such simple and short sentences that any kid would feel the book as his own. He has also been successful in enlivening the child’s world from the child’s perspective.

And talking about the adventures of Swami’s friends? Oh My God! They are simply hilarious. Hahaha... Just couldn’t stop laughing. And you know what! I actually fell off the chair while reading them. I especially loved the chapter ‘Broken Panes’ in which Swami and Mani listen to a freedom fighter's talk. The freedom fighter blasts the English rulers very much. He tells that if all the people of India go and spit on England, it is more than enough to submerge the whole England. Swami thinks it is true and asks Mani if they can attempt that. Hahaha.. This is so funny. And even in the chapter, ‘The M.C.C.’, the Malgudi Cricket Club (M.C.C.) which is started by Swami and his friends reminded me of my cricket team which is called ‘Thunder Boys’. The letter they write to Binns sports shop in Madras and the other happenings are really fun to read.

All in all, the novel is very beautiful. You ask me why? It's because it talks about affection, friendship, belongingness, parting, mischief etc. Plus, it also makes me feel nostalgic. Hence, I really insist to all my friends reading my blog over here that please read this book as soon as possible. And yeah! Don't forget to share your opinions in the comments below. Okay! See you soon... ☺

### **Writing Tips for Effective Blogging**

- Put a catchy title to attract the reader's attention.
- First organise your thoughts in a logical sequence and then start writing.
- Use a simple yet impactful writing style.
- Avoid spelling mistakes, run on sentences and too many clauses.
- Enliven your writing by engaging the audience by interacting with them through your writing.
- Use short and uncomplicated sentences thereby striving for clarity.
- Use full stops instead of commas and colons.
- Avoid using the Passive voice.
- Follow grammar rules.
- Visualize the scene or the step you are trying to write about. Break it up into smaller steps and then write it down.

### Do's and Don'ts of Blog Writing

The last but most important step is using the internet in a healthy manner to ensure online safety. In today's age, it is nearly impossible to keep children away from the internet. And why should we? It has so much to offer in terms of knowledge, information, and ideas. However, as a teacher it is your responsibility to ensure that your students browse safely and effectively on the internet. Hence, here is a list of Do's and Don'ts for Blog writing.

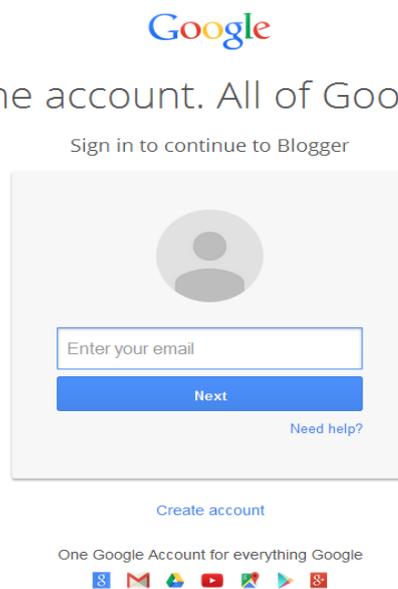
Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👍 Write about any topic which interests you such as food, shopping, cars, places, technology etc.</li> <li>👍 Express positive opinions about any recent school event e.g. annual day, competitions, school trips, industrial visits etc. In the form of a report.</li> <li>👍 Think about who might be reading your blog entry and be polite.</li> <li>👍 Write the blog in an engaging and conversational style.</li> <li>👍 Post pictures related to your write-up.</li> <li>👍 Be respectful of other's ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👎 Use rude language or insult any particular person by writing his/her name in the blog.</li> <li>👎 Write on controversial topics because it might get you in trouble.</li> <li>👎 Post any censored photos or any other adult content on your blog.</li> <li>👎 Use obscene language</li> <li>👎 Mention anybody's name in your write-up, without taking their permission to do so</li> <li>👎 Copy anyone's blog as it is from the internet. Plagiarism is a punishable offence in some cases.</li> <li>👎 Share personal information like email and home addresses, phone numbers or IM screen names.</li> </ul>

## Appendix A

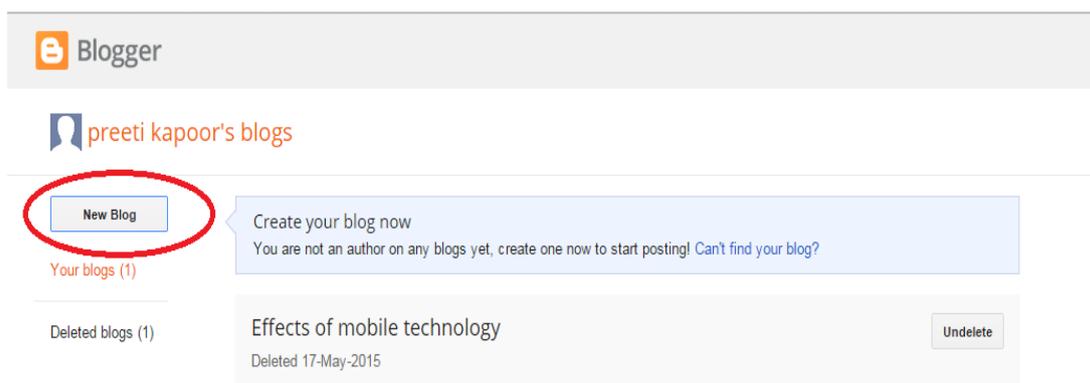
## How to Create a Blog?

Given below are some simple steps to create a blog. Blogs can be created on various different websites.

- i. Go to [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)
- ii. Sign in with your Google account and if you do not have Google account. Create a new Google account.



- iii. Click on New Blog to create a new blog.



- iv. The New Blog window will appear.

Blogs List > **Create a new blog**

Title

Address  You can also add a custom domain later.

Template

Simple Dynamic Views Picture Window

Awesome Inc. Watermark Ethereal

You can browse many more templates and customise your blog later.

Create blog! Cancel

- v. Write the blog title, address of the blog and select the template for the blog.

Blogs List > **Create a new blog**

Title

Address  This blog address is available.

Template

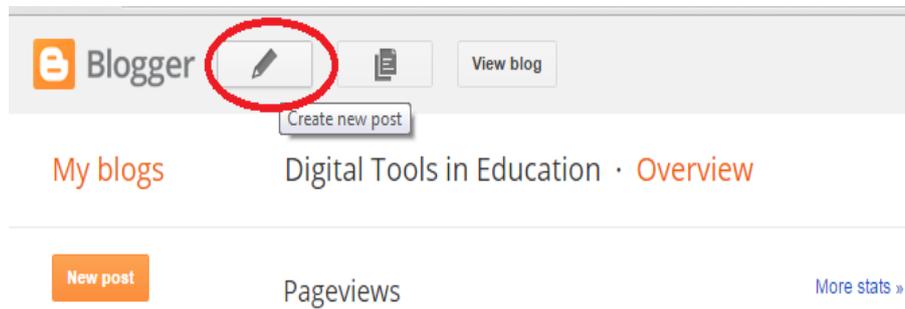
Simple Dynamic Views Picture Window

Awesome Inc. Watermark Ethereal

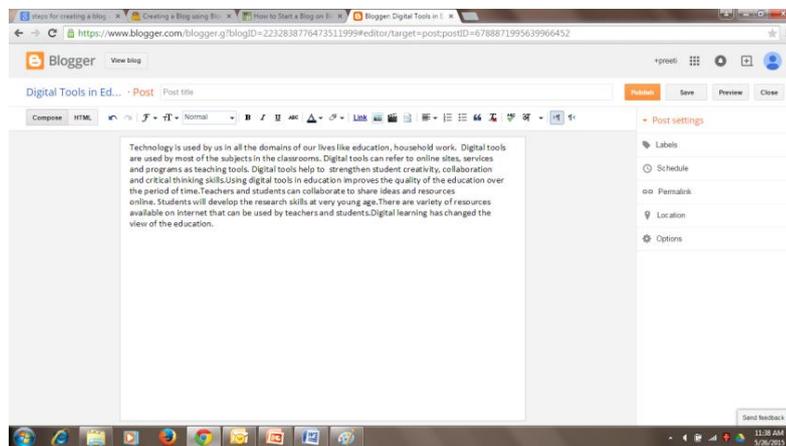
You can browse many more templates and customise your blog later.

Create blog! Cancel

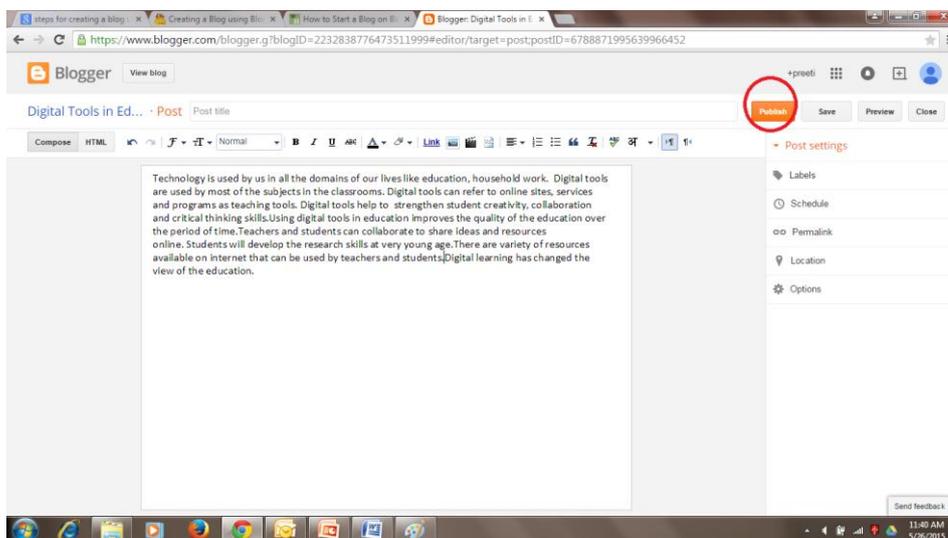
- vi. Click on pencil like button (create new post). You can create new posts and edit posts under the postings tab. You can also see the title of the post.



- vii. Write the text for the post.



- viii. Click on Publish Post to publish your blog directly.



- ix. The blog is published.

# Digital Tools in Education

**Monday, 25 May 2015**

Technology is used by us in all the domains of our lives like education, household work. Digital tools are used by most of the subjects in the classrooms. Digital tools can refer to online sites, services and programs as teaching tools. Digital tools help to strengthen student creativity, collaboration and critical thinking skills. Using digital tools in education improves the quality of the education over the period of time. Teachers and students can collaborate to share ideas and resources online. Students will develop the research skills at very young age. There are variety of resources available on internet that can be used by teachers and students. Digital learning has changed the view of the education.

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