

Journals/Blogging

Activity Summary

Journals and blogging are similar online activities. Both are writing activities comprised of a collection of reflections, commentary, analysis, editorials, and/or essays made by the learner. Journals tend to be private with only the writer and instructor able to access the writings whereas blogs are intended for a wider or public audience.

Objectives

- Relate connections between personal experience/knowledge and course content.
- Examine and analyze readings.
- Compose personal reflections on course content.

Interaction Type

Learner-Content

Tech Skills Required

Learner – Novice
Facilitator - Novice

Mode

Asynchronous

Time Required

Ranges – 2-3 days, 1-2 weeks, or over the course of a term

Tools/Materials

- Access to the internet and web browser
- Reading base (textbook, literature, non-lit)
- Journal or Blog tool in Blackboard OR
- WordPress/Blogger/Alternate blogging platform

Activity Prep Guidelines

1. Preparation:
 - a. Determine number of posts per week/semester/topic. Include in course calendar/schedule.
 - b. Decide on the platform. Depending on if you use the Blogging or Journal functionality in Bb or go with an external blogging platform will determine what prep needs to be done to create the blog(s).
2. Identify journal/blog prompts on topics or themes covered in the course. Should align with learning objectives. Consider the cognitive nature, reading base, style and type of prompt, and experiences of the learners.
 - Leading statements or questions: What do you think is the main issue/point? How does this relate to ...? I like/dislike...because... Observations (good for science courses)
 - See "[How to Start a Blog](#)" for inspiration for journal/blog prompts.
3. Create a rubric with the criteria for the assignment: Content, number of posts/entries, use of resources, writing style, etc. Create a sample post as a guideline for what is expected for student entries.
4. Link to tutorials or instructions on how to use the blogging/journal platform. Or, create your own!
5. Have students use the writing prompts to create entries/posts based on the course calendar/schedule.

Variations

Make this a collaborative activity by assign groups of 5-8 learners to create a group blog. Group blogs can address the same prompts or be assigned a specific course topic, issue, or theme. A group blog will require more entries to allow for everyone to participate.

Create a single blog that all learners in the course contribute to. This is good for courses with <15 learners.

References

7 Things You Should Know About Blogs | EDUCAUSE.edu. (n.d.). Retrieved October 22, 2014, from

<http://www.educause.edu/library/resources/7-things-you-should-know-about-blogs>

How to Start a Blog - ReadWriteThink. (n.d.). Retrieved November 4, 2014, from <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/tips-howtos/start-blog-30117.html>