

ELT meets the blogosphere

ABSTRACT

This presentation explores the limitless potential of blogs in the language classroom in a highly visual way and gives some practical ideas on setting up a blog for use with your own classes in the light of a successful experience creating and maintaining a blog throughout an academic year with ninety-three 5th grade students in a private school in Turkey.

SUMMARY

At the beginning of the 2007-2008 academic year, I decided to make more effective use of the Internet in my lessons. I was already aware that my 5th grade students were spending a lot of time in front of their computers playing games, chatting on MSN or surfing the Internet. So I created a blog which became an authentic example of using blogs in language classrooms with high teacher and student interest. The blog has become the first place they visit every day on the Internet.

I make effective use of the blog in various ways:

- Regular colourful and attractive messages from the teacher which encourage students to write comments.
- Providing meaningful reasons for students to write in English.
- Teacher responding to student comments regularly either from the blog or face-to-face.
- Various approaches to mistake correction.
- Providing links for performance tasks and projects, helping students find safe and appropriate resources on the Internet.
- Sharing activity videos or photos.
- A good chance for the teacher to receive positive feedback from students, parents and supervisors.
- Videos that help students improve their language skills while having fun.
- An effective way to show parents what is happening in the classroom.
- A highly valuable experience for the teacher.

After briefly outlining what blogs are and how they are used, I would like to share the points stated above and more with the participants by showing various examples and a film of student comments.