

## **Ideas for Using Blogging in a Course: From the TXDLA Presentation Attendees**

Part of our session included some interactivity and I asked that some of you share your ideas about using blogs, how you were currently using blogs, and any questions or concerns you had about blogging. Here is a summary of the responses:

- In one case it was stated that a blog is being used instead of a wiki tool, and that Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, or podcasts are not currently supported by this particular school. This is a common situation, and it is hoped that in the future Web 2.0 tools will become more easily adopted. You may want to investigate creative ways to utilize blogs in your classes, the "Teacher" blog discussed below might be a good start.
- It also appears that blogs are being used as a resource for a course, rather than as a collaborative or reflective tool for the students. This is something that can work well, and you may want to consider creating a "Teacher" blog that the students have access to. You can not only share information with your students from one centralized location, but you can also model good online writing habits.
- It was suggested that blogging would be an excellent source for sharing of ideas between teachers. Some ideas for discussion and sharing were: what was or was not working in a particular class, behavior problems that had been encountered and how to handle them, and for general mentoring of new teachers.
- One concern expressed was as to the security of blogs in the online environment. Most blogging tools allow for the user to choose what kind of blog they have – private or public. Often these are password protected. Also, the user can usually control comments to the blog – often these can be moderated before they are actually posted. This is something that can come in handy when working with younger users who may not have had much practice on what is appropriate to post in the online environment.

- A couple of people expressed interest in why a blog should be chosen over a regular discussion board, and stated that they didn't really see much difference in the two forms of communication. Using a blog is really simply a matter of choice. In my case, the blog seemed to provide a more friendly and personal atmosphere. I also feel that blogs are great for private journaling, and this is definitely something that you can't do with the discussion board.

I really enjoyed presenting at TXDLA and I hope that the information provided is helpful to everyone!