

All About Blogging ...

This page gives you all the background information you need about blogging and how to join and start posting entries and comments on our own class blog. Send any comments to bheidkamp@oprfs.org.

Feel free to follow the links below to skip to a particular section of this page:

[The definition of a blog](#)

[The reasons for having our own class blog](#)

[How to become a “guest author” of our class blog](#)

[How to post an entry in our class blog](#)

[How to post a comment in our class blog](#)

[How to start your own blog](#)

I. The definition of a blog

Weblogs, or blogs, are a way of publishing (“posting”) to the web one idea at a time. By simplifying the process of publishing to the web – allowing authors to create posts easily and seamlessly link to related ideas on the web – blogs make updating a website virtually effortless and enable almost anyone to become an active part of an online community.

The simplicity and immediacy of blogs made them extremely popular in a very short period of time, and they are used today by everyone from large media outlets to individual citizens.

As the blog medium has evolved, the collective posts which make up the millions of existing blogs, along with the links that they provide to each other and to other relevant content on the web, represent an important outlet for expression and communication.

Even as instantaneous social media options like Tik Tok, Instagram, X (Twitter), and Facebook have become the dominant means for making connections with other online, blogs have stayed relevant, since they have a more flexible and dynamic structure and style that enables them to present more in-depth and substantive arguments and conversations.

II. The reasons for having our own class blog

Our class blog is classified as a “group” or “team” blog, since we have many authors contributing to the same blog.

Blogging is a great addition to the other work we do in class – on many levels:

1. It allows us to continue discussions we have begun in the classroom and explore texts and issues often with more depth and thoughtfulness. The blog format forces us to "slow down" the discussion, listen to complete ideas and interpretations of others, and put our own arguments in writing.
2. It allows us to discuss issues that have not been addressed in the classroom (because of time limits or the particular focus of the units) but that are relevant to our study of literature and culture. You, as the authors of the content of the site, have control of what we talk about. You own the conversation.
3. Since the blog is public (people can find it through Google and other search engines and other bloggers and websites can link to our site as well as individual posts), everyone in class has a public voice and is a published writer. This "publicity" offers a wonderful opportunity to have an audience for your ideas and an important responsibility to present ideas that you truly believe in while developing a mature, confident style.

For more information on what exactly are your responsibilities as an author of our class blog, see the individual assignment sheet for your course.

III. How to login to the blog for the first time

We use the Wordpress platform for our class blog — via Edublogs.org. Before becoming an author of the blog, you need to join our blog. Click on the invitation link I shared and then enter your username, password, and email in the following format:

Username: [whatever comes before @student.oprfhs.org]

Password: [same as your student account]

E-Mail: [your @student.oprfhs.org email address]

Click on "I agree to terms of service" and "I'm not a robot." Do not click on "I'd like edtech news and tips by email"

Click through until you get to your Dashboard.

Before you start composing posts for our blog, you first need to modify your profile. Click on the profile icon in the upper right-hand corner and then click on "Edit Profile."

Add a "Nickname" that is your first name and **last initial only** -- and then change the "Display Name Publicly As" to that new nickname. We want to provide some anonymity while still allowing your classmates and teacher to be able to identify who you are. For example, "Bernie Heidkamp" would "Bernie H."

In the future you can just go to edublogs.org, click on  and then:

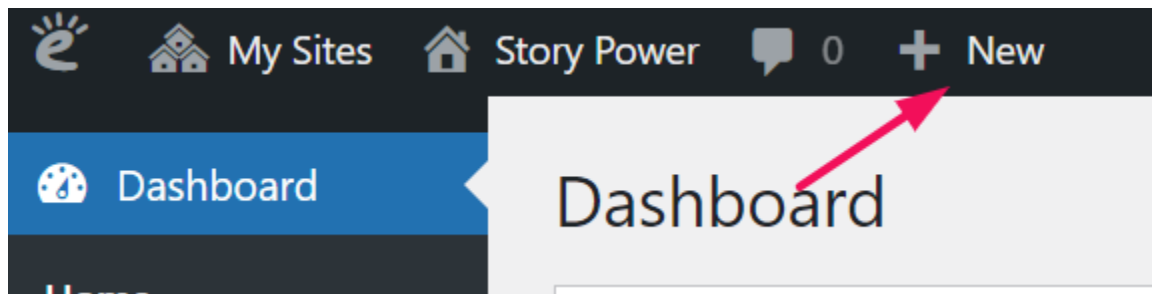


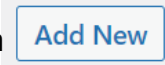
Continue with Google

IV. How to post an entry in our class blog

An entry in the blog will be listed by date (the most recent entries will be displayed at the top) on the main page of the blog. You can comment on an entry and each entry will be “archived” by date and category. Even after the entry is no longer on the main page (only the more recent entries will appear on the main page), it always has its own “Permalink” page (in case you – or anyone else – wants to link to that particular entry).

To post, simply click on the “+ New” option at the top of your dashboard:



Or click on  Posts in the left column of the dashboard and then 

If you have saved a post in draft or want to edit one of your older posts, you can find the post on the Posts page.

When you are in the new post editing window, do the following:

1. *Give your post a title.* Remember, the title is very important, since the posts will be listed only by their titles in the “Recent Posts” column and many people will decide whether to read a post on its title alone. Be specific but brief.
2. *Choose a category or categories for the post.* Click on “Categories and Tags” in the right column -- and choose from the list provided. Assigning categories is important because someone might just want to view all the entries on a specific topic.
3. *Write your entry.* Don’t be afraid to create multiple paragraphs (when journalists write for the web – as opposed to newspapers or magazines – they try to use shorter paragraphs). To create a new paragraph, simply hit return twice. There is usually **no indenting on the web**.

Your entry will be out there in the world for everyone to see – so you must check and double-check your writing for any spelling or grammatical errors.

Your web browser has its own spellcheck. In Chrome, look for words underlined in red.

4. After writing the entry, click on the  button in the upper right-hand corner. Realize, though, that as soon as you click on “Publish” your entry is on the blog – open for everyone to see and comment on. Make sure you are comfortable with the substance and style of the post before you proceed. If you want to preview your post, you can hit “Preview” instead of Publish. If you want to save your post but not have it appear on the blog yet, you can just click on “Save” at the top of the page

Once you publish your post, Wordpress will take you to the permalink page for the now live post. Make sure it looks good. Hit “Edit,” if necessary, or go ahead and “Visit site” to see the blog as a whole.

V. How to post a comment to the blog

To post a comment on a specific entry, click on [LEAVE A COMMENT](#) at the top of the post on the main blog page (or just click on the title of a post and it will take you to the permalink page; scroll down to leave a comment).

You should automatically be able to begin typing your comment as long as you are logged into your Edublogs/Google identity. Others outside of our class can sign in using a variety of verified options.

Once you press  your comment will be live. One exception: as an anti-spam measure, if it is the first time you or anyone is commenting, I will need to approve it before it appears.

VI. How to start your own blog

Blogging is a great outlet for presenting your ideas or simply chronicling your life for everyone to see. If you are inspired to create your own blog, do it! Being a published writer takes courage and it is a lot of responsibility – but having an audience can be very empowering and encouraging.

Our class blog uses a modified version of the **Wordpress.com** platform – which one of the most powerful and expandable platforms out there. And the free version is a pretty decent start.