Blogging in Education

By: Ryan Shumaker

Blogging in Education is all about social learning. In the “Old Days”, a teacher would ask a student to show his/her level of understanding of a topic by researching and writing a 1-2 page paper that discusses what was learned. Perhaps, if the teacher were really “Tech Savvy”, the teacher would ask the student to type the document using a word processor instead of handwriting. As a student in this type of classroom, I would do what the teacher asked me to do but I often wondered whether the teacher actually took the time to read all of our papers and I knew that no one else would ever see this document so often I did what I needed to get a good grade but never really got excited about what I was writing.

Now, fast forward to the 21st Century. Students are social beings and integrate this with technology. Their minds work much differently and are always “linked in” with others in some fashion or another. To teach them using paper and pencil or even paper and word processor can be an excruciating experience for them. They are just craving to share their thoughts with others and to have their projects shared. They want their work to be read by others. They WILL put more effort into their work if they think their peers/parents/others are going to be reading them.

**Objectives and Outcomes:**

* What is Blogging?
* Why Blog?
  + Students are already blogging using their favorite social networking sites .
  + Introverted students will be more likely to express themselves while many won’t speak out in class.
  + Get students actively thinking, writing, reading, and reflecting
  + Encourage collaboration by students interacting to other students’ work.
  + Reduce the use of paper in a classroom (save a tree or two).
  + Get students to learn anytime from anywhere.
* Types of Blogs
  + Teacher Blogs
  + Informational Blogs
  + Student Blogs
    - Journal Entries
    - Research Postings
    - Book Reviews
    - Class Discussion
    - Homework Entries
* Parent Blogs
* Where do I go to blog?
  + I encourage people to use: [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com) . It is a free Open Source solution that does not use advertising so it looks clean and professional.

**Resources:**

Trainging Documents and Help:

<http://wpsdtech.wikispaces.com/>

<http://wpsdtech.wikispaces.com/Blogs>

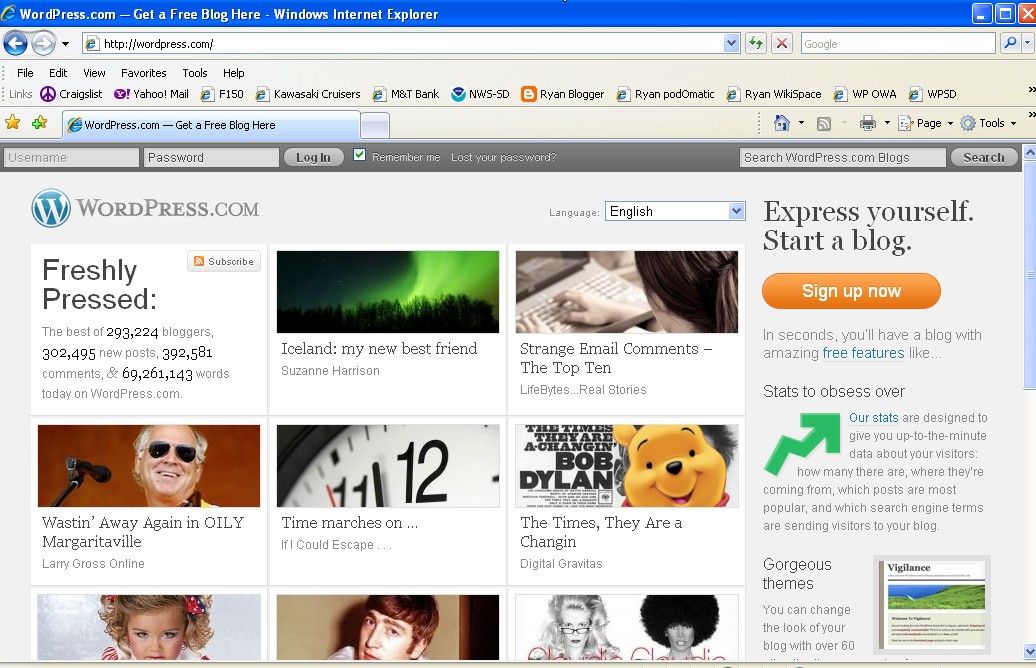
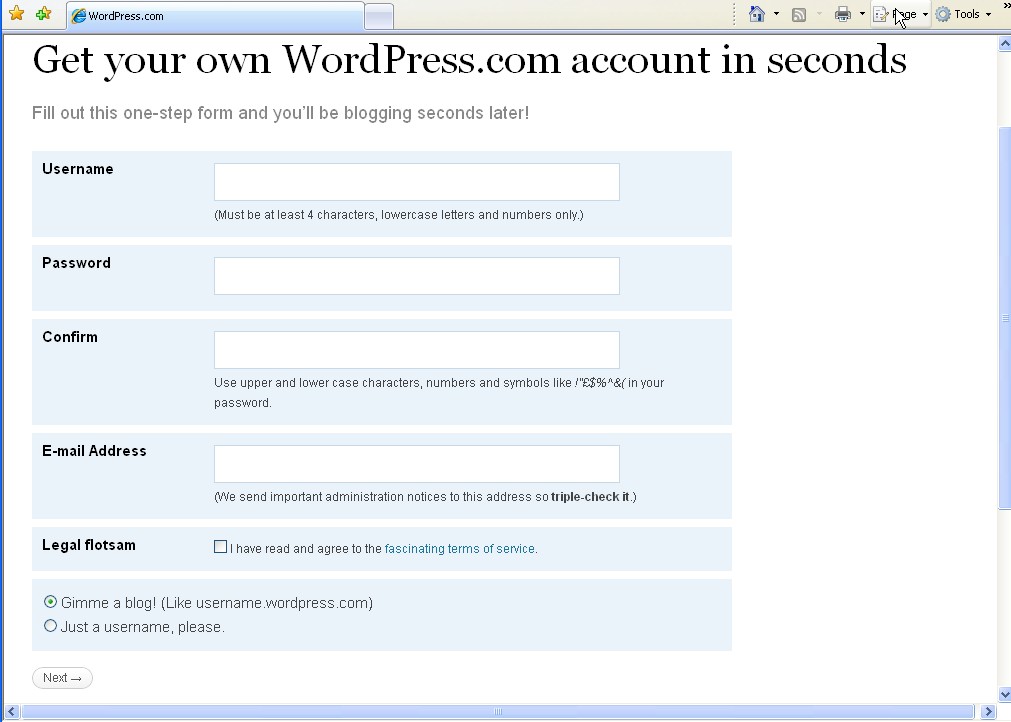
Sample Blog Site:

<http://westperrytraining.wordpress.com/>

**How to Get Started with Wordpress.com**

**To Create a Blog for your Classroom**

**AS THE TEACHER**

1. Visit the site <http://www.wordpress.com> (not wordpress.org which requires you to download an app) and Click on **Sign up now**.  
     
   
2. Enter Your information to Sign Up:  
     
   

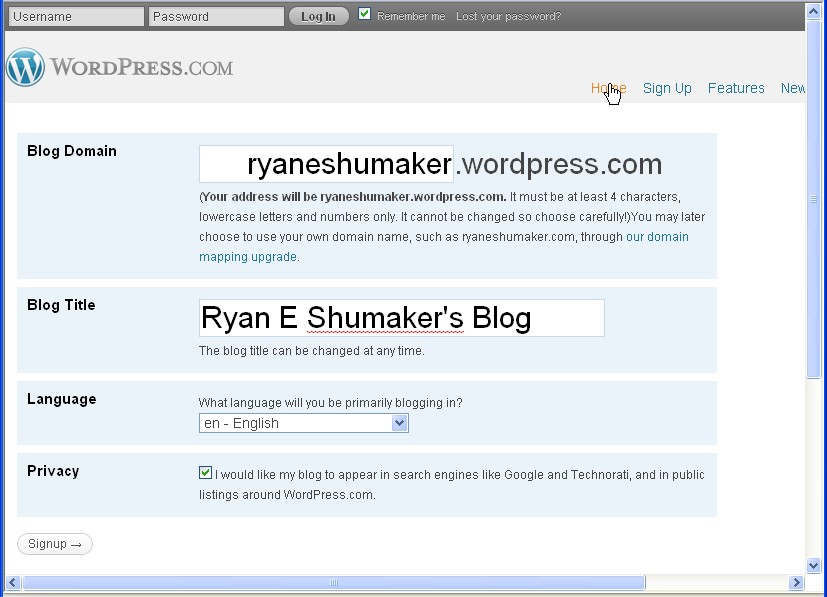
Choose to Create a blog: “Click on Gimme a blog!”

BE SURE to **Click on the Terms of Service**.  
I always miss this step ☺

Enter a Valid Email address

Enter and Confirm a Password

Enter a Username (No Spaces)

1. After entering all of the values in these fields, click on the “Next” link at the bottom of the page.
2. On the Next page, fill in a Blog Domain name, Blog Title, choose the language, and Choose Privacy Settings:  
     
   

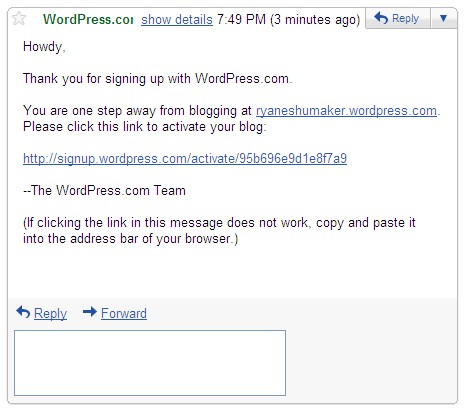
Click Signup.

Choose Privacy Settings:   
Most likely remove CheckMark so as to hide your Blog from Public Searces

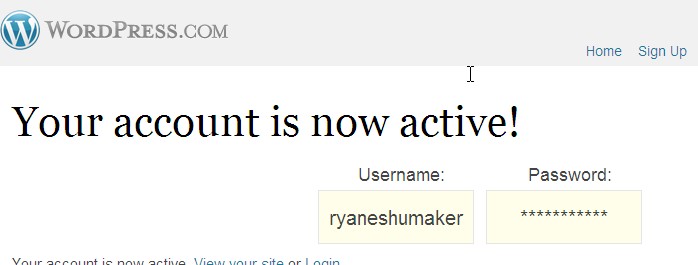
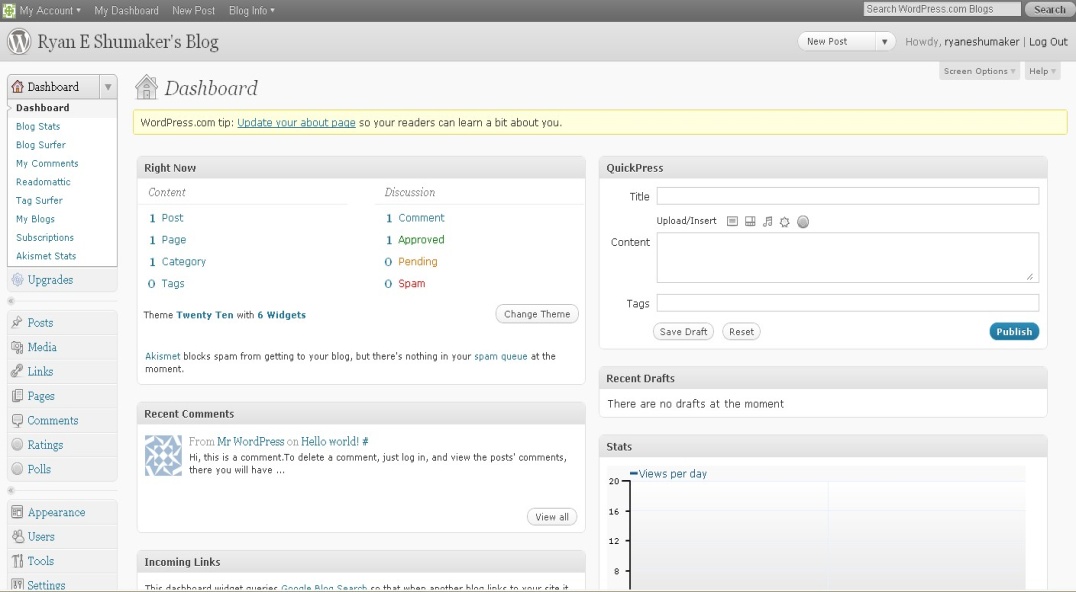
Most likely keep the Language at:  
“en-English”

Choose a Blog Title (can have Spaces):  
Will show up at the top of the Blog Page.

Choose a Blog Domain name (no spaces):  
Example: “Shumaker1stPeriod”

1. While waiting to receive Confirmation E-mail, fill in your Profile information: First Name, Last Name, and About Yourself. Then go check your e-mail to Activate your Blog.
2. In Your e-mail, click on the Activate your Blog link:  
     
   

Click to Activate your Blog

1. You will be taken to a link that tells you your blog is activated and will prompt you to login:  
     
   
2. Click the Login link and log in using your newly created username and password
3. This will take you to your Dashboard View:  
     
   

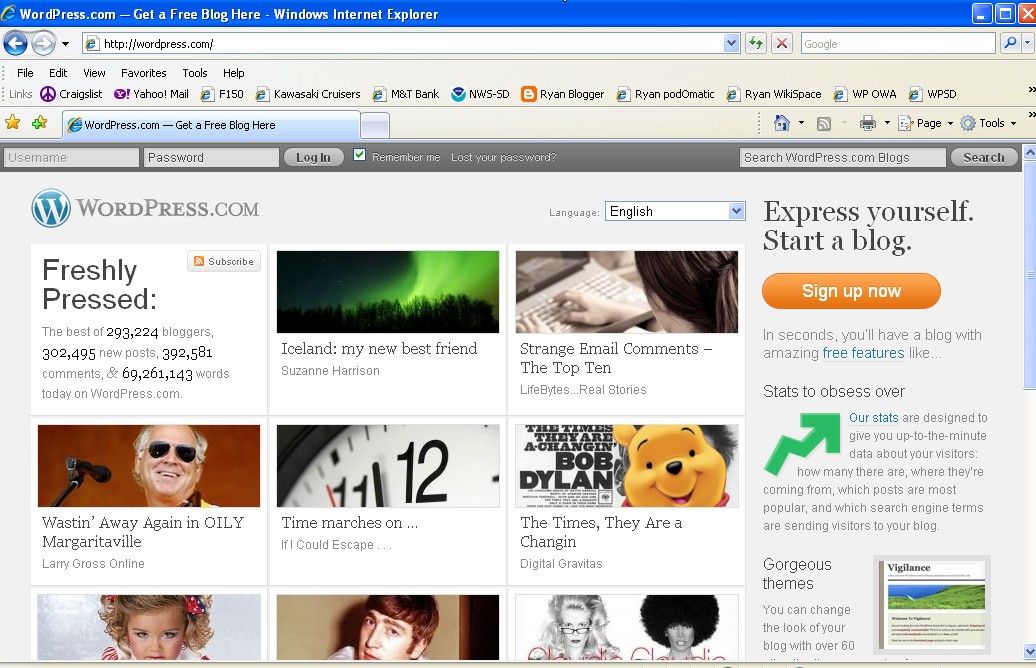
Click on New Post to Post your fist Blog Posting

1. New Post looks and acts much like an e-mail message. There is a Subject Line, A Body, and a Publish (instead of Send) button. The only other thing to keep in mind is to use “Post Tags” to help categorize your posts for future recall purposes, such as: “Lesson One”, “ClassicLiterature”, etc.
2. That’s it to Get Started! Explore, get comfortable, have fun, and engage your students! Feel free to explore the other parts of the Wordpress blog Settings.

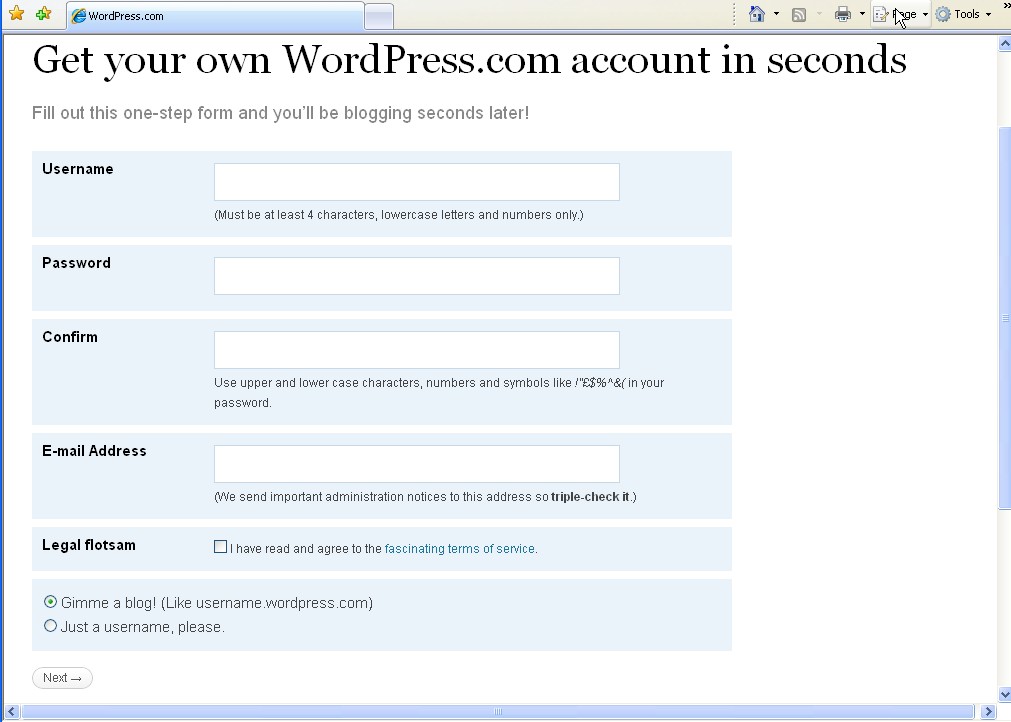
**When You Are Ready to Invite Students to Contribute**

1. Have your students sign up for their accounts using the page that follows. They will only choose to signup but create just a username. Have students go to: <http://www.wordpress.com>
2. Have students open another internet window and go to <http://10minutemail.com> to have students create their accounts and confirm their email address (to avoid AUP violations of e-mail use for students). <http://10minutemail.com/>
3. Have them complete the WordPress User Name Index Card (See Page 6 of this document). Be sure to gather their email address (10minutemail address). You may also want to collect their WordPress user account name, and their password in case they forget.
4. Once you have collected all of the WordPress User Name Cards, login to your account, go to your Dashboard, and under Users (lefthand toolbar).
5. Under Users, scroll to the bottom and in the User E-Mail: field, type the 10minutemail addresses for each student you wish to add to your class blog.
6. Then choose the role of “Author” and click the Add User Button. (If you wish to approve posts before they become active, choose the role of “Contributor”).
7. Your students should be all set to go!

**To Create a WordPress User Name: For the Student**

1. Visit the site <http://www.wordpress.com> (not wordpress.org which requires you to download an app) and Click on **Sign up now**.  
     
   

Click Sign Up Now button

1. Enter Your information to Sign Up:  
     
   

Click Next

Vist <http://10minutemail.com/> to get a temporary e-mail address to use to Register. (keep 10minute mail open)

Choose “Just a username, please.”

Enter and Confirm a Password

BE SURE to **Click on the Terms of Service**.  
I always miss this step ☺

Enter a Username (No Spaces)

1. Go back to your 10minutemail.com page, and wait for your email to arrive. You may have to press the “Give me 10 more minutes” link until the message appears.
2. Open the message and copy and paste the active URL: <http://signup.wordpress.com/activate/>... Into a new Internet Window to confirm your account settings.
3. Login with your Username and Password that you selected above.
4. You are all set. Be sure to give your teacher your username so that they can approve you to post to the Class Blog.

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Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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