

Directions for Posting Blog Entries

As our class crafts new open letters to world leaders on the controversial topics that we are studying, we'll be posting our work in our blog for the world to see! This set of directions will help you to make posts on our shared blog—which is hosted on Blogger, Google's blogging service:

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Step	Directions
Signing in to our blog	<p>Open a web browser and navigate to Blogger (http://www.blogger.com). Find the Sign in to use Blogger window in the top-right hand corner of the screen. Use our classroom's username and password to sign in.</p> <p>Our username: _____</p> <p>Our password: _____</p>
Starting a new entry	<p>After signing in to Blogger, you will land on a page known as our blogging Dashboard. Here, you will see all of the blogs that our classroom has created and is maintaining. Remember that some of the blogs that you will see may be retired blogs that were created and maintained by earlier classes.</p> <p>Begin by locating the blog that you would like to write for. Click the New Post button found beneath the blog's title. Enter a Title for your new entry and begin crafting your draft in the Compose window that appears. While writing, consider clicking the Save Now button found at the bottom of the Compose window to protect your writing.</p>
Inserting links into your entry	<p>If you're like the average online reader, you probably love links, right? You spend a few minutes reading, find a link that seems interesting, click on it, land at a new site, do a bit more reading, and click again. Reading in a link-filled world becomes kind of like a never-ending adventure!</p> <p>But links to external sources are also important in online writing because they can be used by bloggers to reinforce their ideas, prove their claims and introduce readers to new ideas related to their topic of study. Links prove that a writer can be trusted, lending credibility to your thoughts and claims.</p> <p>To insert links in your blog entry, highlight the text where you would like a link to appear. Then, click the Link icon—it looks like the link of a bike's chain hovering over a globe—found in the editing toolbar. Paste the web address for the site that you would like to link to in the message box that appears and click OK. You'll notice that your text is automatically underlined and changes color, looking just like the links you see in the websites created by other authors!</p>
Inserting images into your entry	<p>Blog writers also use images to engage their readers—and inserting images into Blogger entries is really easy! Begin by placing your cursor at the location in your draft where you would like your picture to appear. Then, click the Add Image icon—it looks like a picture of a mountain with a blue sky in the background—found in the editing toolbar.</p> <p>In the window that appears, you will have two choices. You can either Add an Image from Your Computer—which requires browsing to a picture that you have saved somewhere on your machine—or Add an Image from the Web—which requires copying and pasting the web address where your picture is currently posted online.</p> <p>After telling Blogger where to find your picture, Choose a Layout and an Image Size for your picture. Most writers select Left for layout and Medium for image size. Once these</p>

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	<p>choices have been made, click the Upload Image button found in the bottom left-hand corner of the Add Image window to insert your picture into your post!</p> <p>Important Note: Pictures—just like text—can be covered by copyright laws! That means you can't just take any picture that you find online and use it in your entry. Instead, you've got to use pictures that you've taken yourself or that photographers have given you permission to use. These are called Creative Commons images, and there are many places where you can find entire collections of Creative Commons images online!</p> <p>Start with Morgue File (http://www.morguefile.com/) or the Wikimedia Commons (http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page), two sites that are unlikely to be blocked at your school and that contain tons of pictures to choose from. Flickr also has a Creative Commons Collection (http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/), but you should always have your parents' permission before browsing Flickr images because Flickr users often post personal images right next to professional shots.</p>
Embedding video into your entry	<p>To really make your blog post engaging, consider embedding a video connected to the topic that you are writing about. While embedding video sounds like a challenging technical task, it's really pretty easy.</p> <p>Here are two ways to get video into your posts:</p> <p>If you have the video file saved on your computer, click the Add Video button—it looks like an old-fashioned filmstrip and is found on the far right-hand side of the editing toolbar. In the window that appears, use the Browse button to point Blogger to wherever you have saved your video on your computer. Give the video a Title, click the Terms and Conditions button, and select Upload Video from the bottom of your screen. Blogger will automatically insert your video directly in your entry.</p> <p>If your video is already posted online—in a video warehouse like Teacher Tube (http://www.teachertube.com), YouTube (http://www.youtube.com) or Blip TV (http://www.blip.tv)—start by visiting that site and finding the Embeddable Text for the video that you'd like to add to your post. Embeddable Text is a code written in computer language that looks something like this:</p> <pre><embed src="http://blip.tv/play/AGnoCkC" type="application/x-shockwave-flash" width="480" height="300" allowscriptaccess="always" allowfullscreen="true"></embed></pre> <p>You may have to look around for it, but almost every video sharing website will give you the Embeddable Text for their videos under buttons that say things like Share This or Embed This Video. Once you've found the Embeddable Text for the video that you want to post, highlight and copy it using the right-click button on your mouse. Then, return to Blogger.</p> <p>Next, click the Edit HTML tab found in the top right-hand corner of the Composing window. You will see your entire post written in computer language! Don't be intimidated. Instead, carefully skim, looking for the place in your post where you would like to insert your video.</p> <p>Use your mouse to place your cursor in the right location and then paste the Embeddable Text directly into your post. Then, click the Compose tab found in the top right-hand corner of your screen to return to an easier version of your entry to read. Once your post has been published, Blogger will automatically insert it into your final copy!</p>

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<i>Adding Labels to your entry</i>	<p>To make it easy for readers to find information on a <i>Blogger</i> website, users can sort the entries that they write into categories that appear as links in the sidebar of a site. Sorting entries, though, requires that writers add <i>Labels</i> to their posts before publishing. Each <i>Label</i> added to a post becomes a new category that will appear in the sidebar of your site.</p> <p>To add <i>Labels</i>, begin by looking carefully at the categories that the posts on our classroom blog have already been sorted in to. Does your new entry fit well into one of these categories? If so, you'll want to put your post into that category. If not, you'll want to think about the kinds of categories that your post <i>would</i> fit into.</p> <p>Once you've come up with two or three categories for your post, type each into the box titled <i>Labels for This Post</i> found in the bottom right-hand corner of your composing window. Separate each new <i>Label</i> that you add with a comma.</p>
<i>Publishing your entry</i>	<p>Once you've crafted your draft, inserted links to outside sources, and added any images, videos and/or labels to your post, you're finally ready to <i>Publish</i> your final copy for the world to see—and strangely enough, that is the easiest step in the entire process!</p> <p>To add your entry to our classroom blog, simply click the orange <i>Publish Post</i> button found in the bottom left-hand corner of your <i>Composing</i> window. That's it. You're published! Go check out your final copy online—and be sure to tell your friends and family to stop by and read what you've written.</p>