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**Let’s Start Blogging…**

We’re going to treat this year almost like a reality show! In other words, people are going to be watching what you’re doing. How? They’re going to follow your VTfT journey through your own personal blog—an online journal which indicates what you’re experiencing each week in school. Here are some frequently asked questions about your blogging experience…

VTfT II

1. ***Who’s reading what I’m writing?*** Keep in mind that this is a public setting; in other words, the entire World Wide Web could log-in to read what you’re blogging; now whether someone in Saskatchewan will check out your blog remains to be seen, but he could…smile. However, Mrs. Frierman is even going to ask all our FC teachers and some citywide teachers of the year to check out what you’re sharing. She’ll even share your blogs with your parents. So, watch out…people will be commenting on your blogs!
2. ***Can I invite people to follow my blog?*** Yes, most definitely. We want as many people to follow your blog throughout the year as possible.
3. ***What do I call myself in my blog?*** Don’t use anything other than your first name.
4. ***What do I call students in my blog?*** DON’T USE NAMES AT ALL. Give students pseudonyms (aka nicknames). Students’ privacy is very important, and remember, they (or their parents) could be following your blog themselves.
5. ***Do I have to write in MLA format and use proper grammar?*** You certainly don’t have to use MLA format; however, please use your best grammar, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics skills at all times; remember that people judge teachers on their use of the English language in writing and speaking. No one wants you to come off stupid, idiotic, or Neanderthal-like.
6. ***What do I do if I’ve had a bad day?*** Try to remain as positive as possible at all times. If something negative happens, share the experience, but then talk about what you’ve learned from it. Avoid venting; if you must complain, be very discreet and remember not to use students’ names.
7. ***What should I write about?*** Begin by reflecting back upon the week and talk about what was discussed in class. Then, explain/discuss how the information presented is changing/not changing your perceptions as a student, future teacher, and/or about education. Ultimately, you want to answer the following questions:
   1. What did I learn?
   2. What does it mean to me?
   3. How can I use it?
8. ***Do I have to be all formal and stuffy—like I’m writing a research paper?*** Heavens, no! This blog should capture you as a person. Readers should be able to read your blog and almost hear you talking. Embrace your own personal voice and writing style. Take a tip from Mrs. Frierman’s writing in her worksheets. Get it? Be you—not some boring textbook!
9. ***How much do I have to write each week?*** Mrs. Frierman never likes to dictate how much you have to write; she simply wants to tell you to write a good entry which is interesting and detailed. You should definitely write two to three (2-3) good paragraphs. **Note that says “paragraphs,” not “sentences.”**  Think of each entry as a mini-essay about your VTfT life. It’s like a journal or diary—the only difference is that everyone can see into it if they want to. Scary, huh? Exciting, too!
10. ***Can I add pictures to my blog?*** Yes, most definitely. Just remember that if you use pictures of students, you must have the proper VBCPS paperwork signed by their parents. Also remember to only use their first names. One note: never add a picture to your blog and then vent about the incident or student. Pictures should portray happy moments, not bad ones.
11. ***Can I add documents—like my original projects or worksheets—to my blog?*** For sure, you can! Just remember that these should be things that you’ve created yourself. If you’ve borrowed something from your cooperating teacher or another teacher, you can still add them to your blog, but you have to remember to give the original author credit for his or her work. You can’t take the English teacher out of Mrs. Frierman!
12. ***Can I talk about our VTfT assignments, other First Colonial schoolwork or my personal life?*** Yes, you can talk about these things, but don’t make them the focus of your entries. If you talk about these things, then you should be discussing in your blog entry about how you’re trying to mesh or blend these things into your teaching life. **Remember, the focus of you blog should always be teaching and how you’re learning from this experience**. These kinds of ideas should be secondary.
13. ***Do I have to title every blog entry?*** Yes, you should come up with a creative title for each of your blogs. **You’ll start with that week’s blog number, and then you’ll devise an interesting title that grabs the reader’s attention—a hook or motivator, if you will**. For example, “3.4 Skirt hems aren’t what they used to be.” Then you could write about the time you bent over to check the smart board plug, and your skirt fell apart. Now that would be interesting! How would you turn that one into something positive? Don’t you just love the way Mrs. Frierman makes you think?
14. ***How often do I have to blog?*** You are going to pretty much blog once a week, every week, for seven weeks each quarter. **Weekly blogs are always due on Sunday at 11:59 p.m**. See your intern calendar for specific due dates.
15. ***What does a typical blog entry look like?*** Ahhhh…a great question!
16. ***How will the blogs be graded?*** Another excellent question. See the rubric on the next page.

***REMEMBER***

I am only a text away if you ever have a question.

**Blogging Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **4**  **Superior Competence** | **3**  **High Competence** | **2**  **Emerging**  **Competence** | **1**  **Minimal Competence** |
| **Writer’s Position** | States or clearly implies the writer’s position, thesis, or focus. | States or implies the writer’s position, thesis, or focus. | Limited in stating or implying a position, thesis, or focus | No clear position, thesis, or focus. |
| **Critical Analysis** | Demonstrates critical analysis of the text and/or topic. | Addresses the general meaning of the text or topic, perhaps presenting a simplistic view. | Analysis of text or topic is vague, mechanical, incomplete, or overly generalized. | Little or no address of text or topic. |
| **Organization/**  **Idea Development** | Organizes and develops ideas logically. Clearly explains key ideas, supporting them with well-chosen reasons, examples, or details. | Analysis of text or topic is vague, mechanical, incomplete, or overly generalized. Explains some key ideas, supporting them with adequate reasons, examples, or details. | Limited control in organization and development of ideas. Inadequate reasons, examples, or details to explain key ideas. | Weak organization. Very little or no development of ideas. |
| **Voice** | Purposeful tone. Voice is clear and strong. | Voice is apparent and mostly clear. Tone is appropriate with some lapses. | Writer’s voice is emerging. There are major lapses in tone. | Lack of control of vocabulary and information prevents tone and voice from emerging. |
| **Grammar, Usage, Mechanics** | Virtually free of errors. | There may be errors, but they do not detract from the message. | An accumulation of errors interferes with message. | Frequent and/or serious errors. |

**Scale**

20 = 100 15 = 89 10 = 79 5 = 69

19 = 98 14 = 87 9 = 77

18 = 96 13 = 85 8 = 75

17 = 94 12 = 83 7 = 73

16 = 92 11 = 81 6 = 71