

tumblr

Replaces Traditional Blogging



According to Wikipedia, “a *tumblelog* is a variation of a blog that favors short-form, mixed-media posts over the longer editorial posts frequently associated with blogging. Common post formats found on tumblelogs include links, photos, quotes, dialogues, and video. Unlike blogs, this format is frequently used to share the author’s creations, discoveries, or experiences without providing a commentary.”

Educators will like tumblelogging because it is easier to use than blogging and less intimidating. Teachers who fear the use of blogging with students because of safety and educational privacy restrictions can use this alternative form. Traditional blogging can be time-consuming because of the large number of posts. Tumblelogging is so quick and effective that even younger students can participate.

Tumblr: Blogging for Dummies

Tumblelogging is currently being popularized by the site **Tumblr** (tumblr.com). A simple analogy from Tumblr states, “If blogs are journals, tumblelogs are scrapbooks.” Tumblr is a free service that requires a quick registration process. The concept is to share things quickly, with less of the physical and mental overhead of the traditional blog. There are built-in tools for posting content including text (for traditional post blogs), photos, quotes, links, chats, audio, and video clips. Tumblr can be an online replacement for a traditional bulletin board or used to create a classroom website. It’s both visually appealing and accepts ongoing changes. You may wish to have students create their own sites as well!

Navigation

Tumblr is divided into three major areas. The Dashboard is where you create and edit content. The Channels section provides the option to create a special channel that gives access to selected students. The Account area provides various site settings such as theme, personal information, creating RSS feeds, and a help section.

Vimeo

You might think that creating videos is too complicated. Tumblr allows users to list any URL from various video sites. Embellishing your Tumblr site with pre-existing educational videos and creating original class videos will bring the educational experience to a new level. **Vimeo** (vimeo.com) is a social networking site that stores user-created videos to be shared. Vimeo lets users choose whom they want to view their videos. It also has the capacity to create high definition video that reveals a full-screen picture without distortion. Vimeo integrates well with Tumblr.

Vimeo saves files in Flash format so that it is compatible for both PC and Mac users. Be sure to have the latest version of Adobe’s Flash Player (adobe.com/products/flashplayer) installed on your computer.

Entry level digital camcorders such as the **RCA Small Wonder** (mysmallwonder.com) or **Flip Video** (theflip.com) can be purchased inexpensively for approximately \$100. Many digital cameras also support video mode, as well as still shots.

Additional Video Ideas

Here are some additional ideas to help you use digital videos.

- Digital pictures from a scanner or camera can be placed on a timeline within iMovie (free with Macs) or **Windows Movie Maker** (www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/updates/moviemaker2.msp). For audio, add a song or narration with a microphone, insert video titles and transitions, and save your completed video. Vimeo will import your finished product.
- YouTube is a viable source for using video with Tumblr. The **YouTube Help Center** (www.google.com/support/youtube/bin/answer.py?answer=80692&ctx=sibling) explains in detail how to make a video out of JPEG images and upload your movie.
- For PC users, turn your student PowerPoint presentations into digital movies using the free version of Microsoft Producer 2003. Then, upload to Vimeo or YouTube and post to your Tumblr site. For a tutorial and download go to www.123ppt.com/newsletter/edition-004/presentation-tutorial.asp.
- For Mac users, export your PowerPoint presentation into a movie and add to Tumblr. Here are the directions: www.absoluteppt.com/movie/makemoviemac/index.html.

Your students are your best trainers. If you feel overwhelmed by the daunting task of creating videos, have your students assist you (trust me... they will know exactly what to do). As the facilitator, all you have to do is give them the specific guidelines for the video content. This special demo site was created for this article to provide a visual example of Tumblr’s style and format.

Tumblr and Vimeo: Additional Tips and Information
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