

IISME Summer 2005 Veteran  
Blog  
Reflection Paper  
Cabrillo Middle School

Tom Perazzo

Intel

Platform Engineering

## **IISME Summer 2005 Veteran Blog Pilot**

Until I began my blogging efforts in June I had not explored the Blog phenomenon. I had of course heard of the new craze and had seen my wife's blog as she participated in a Creative Writing class at San Jose State University but it wasn't something I'd planned on exploring anytime soon. In the 2004 election I thought it was interesting that blogs have become a new tool of the media. After doing a daily blog for the summer I've become a blogger. Great. Now I'm even more of a Technology Geek.

### **CLAD CERTIFICATION**

The third week of the summer I took a about two weeks off for a Cross Cultural Language Acquisition and Academic Development Certification class. We learned to address learning needs of children whose first language was not English. For students who are in the advanced intermediate phase of English language development a journal is a very useful tool for assessment of student learning. Better yet an interactive journal provides a means of 2-way communication allows a teacher to provide continuing support and model appropriate written English Language. Personal attention and interaction with the teacher will lower the affective filter (learning stress level) and foster

participation in learning. Both student and teacher are able to observe the student's progress in English. This fosters autonomy through self monitoring/self assessment and provides opportunities for two-way communication as well as a record of literacy development and ongoing opportunities to tap prior knowledge. Any learning or assessment strategy that is good for English Language learners will be good for all students too.

## **ELECTRONIC JOURNALING**

And what is Blogging but Interactive Electronic Journaling? So right away I've got a new tool for my 7<sup>th</sup> grade Technology class. When our school chose to use Language Arts in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade to implement the 20:1 student – teacher ratio I helped our teachers integrate the use of Technology in the writing curriculum. 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were introduced to the use of their student accounts on our server (saving their work on the server for school-wide access) as well as the use of Microsoft Word for word processing skills. As budget cuts have come down in the past three years this is no longer possible. I've taken the role of teaching students basic MS Office use. We have an Elective Wheel in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade so that I have each 7<sup>th</sup> grade student in my Technology class throughout the three trimesters of the school year. These students get instruction in Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Internet Research.

## **PLANS FOR THE 2005-2006 SCHOOL YEAR**

Beginning this fall my 7<sup>th</sup> grade Tech class will include the use of blogging. I agreed to take a 6<sup>th</sup> grade Math class to help balance out the schedule this coming school year. My 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will use blog writing for a Math journal to integrate writing skills into the Math curriculum. I'm thinking of having

my 8<sup>th</sup> grade Multimedia students collectively work on weekly blog entries for our school website. I'm thinking of how I can use a blog as a means of Staff/Principal/PTA/Community communication – a school site blog – maybe a staff blog or something in between.

## MY BLOG EXPERIENCE

I used the last hour of my day at Intel Corporation reading other teacher's entries leaving my own comments and looking back at my day. This became a great....what's a good term – **mind vacation**. Every day I would get really into it and then when was time to leave I would find I was not ready...you'd think I'd be watching the clock and be out the door at 4:29:59 but I wouldn't *want* to go! I wanted to keep writing and responding to other bloggers. One of the other bloggers mentioned that someone had placed himself on auction in EBAY for rent as a corporate blogger for rent and had a bid for \$500 for three months of 5 posts a week. Another started at \$100 and climbed to \$1600 for the same amount of posts. Hey I can do that.....maybe that can help pay for my wife's college.

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## THE IISME BLOG

At its worst the blogging would degenerate into web-babbling At it's best the IISME Blog pilot was a great tool for connecting with other teachers. It was nice to be able to see how other teacher's challenges were similar to my own. Reading other people's difficulties and triumphs can be reassuring that you're on track. Having other people comment on your thoughts is a nice ego boost too.

Top 5 Things I've learned through this summer's Blogging

~Blogging is a very effective tool for self-reflection

- ~A very effective tool for communication
- ~Good for students in ESL
- ~Staff Communication
- ~Just plain fun.