BLOGGING AS A TOOL FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTIVE LEARNING*

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How can assessment enhance student learning?

Assessment...is the engine which drives student learning

(John Cowan)

INTRODUCTION

Assessment
a process of collecting evidence of what students know and can do
- Ohio Dept. of Education

Formative Assessment
performed over the course of a lesson to determine student progress so that teachers can adjust instruction and students can reflect on their learning
- Ohio Dept. of Education
INTRODUCTION

Reflective Learning
the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern
- Boyd & Fales, 1983

Learning Journal

➢ usually a vehicle for reflection - Moon, 2003

➢ meet specific goals like polishing skills - Hopkins, 2010

http://missaliblahblah.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/reflect_cartoon.gif?w=500
INTRODUCTION

Blog or Web blog

a type of Web page that is simple to create and to disseminate, and is used as a form of online journal

- Mason & Rennie, 2010

Blogging

presents a mix of opinion, commentary, news, and other types of content

- www.svea-project.eu
## Objectives

Describe the use of blogging as a potential tool for formative assessment and reflective learning of Advance Ecology (BIO 260) Students.

**Specific Objectives:**
1. Determine the advantages and disadvantages of using blogging.
2. Describe the FIC’s observations on students’ experiences with blogging.

## Rationale

1. Assessments can help teachers determine student progress and adjust lessons according to individual needs.

2. Assessments can help students understand how they learn & how they can improve their own learning.

## Methodology

1. Collection of information and data from existing UPOU documents and databases;

2. Interview of BIO 260 faculty-in-charge (FIC); and

3. Viewing of the blogs created by the BIO 260 students.
RESULTS

Blogging as a Formative Assessment and Reflective Learning Tool in BIO 260

- 20% of the student’s final grade; number of entries: 10; Total score: 200
- Distribution of Points: presentation (30%), grammar (35%), and correctness of understanding of concepts (35%)
- Blog entries can be time-based, module-based or topic-based
- Used to assess the BIO 260 students’ understanding on important ecological concepts, review on what they have learned, and develop their writing and analytical skills
- Allowed BIO 260 students to maximize the use of the Internet in recording their learning process
RESULTS

Sample Blogs of BIO 260 Students

http://jason81ecology.blogspot.com/

http://berdengbabaesaabudhabi.blogspot.com
RESULTS

Advantages of Using Blogging in BIO 260

- Available 24/7
- Ideal for interactive learning
- Enhanced reflections on the subject matter
- Has potential for developing learners' skills
RESULTS

Disadvantages of Using Blogging in BIO 260

- Internet connectivity dependent
- Students are tempted to just copy and paste the explanation of the concept
- Require additional time from the students to be able to come up with an entry
- May discriminate some learners
“When students are asked to reiterate their learnings/understanding of the content, and put them into action, they will be able to see whether or not they have learned it correctly... it's actually a visualization of their conception of the contents... visualization of their conception can help them re-check whether it is correct or not... so once seen as misconception, they can easily rectify it...” (R.B., BIO 260 FIC)
FIC’s Observation on Students’ Experiences with Blogging as a Reflective Learning Tool

“the things that they are putting into the blog are actually reflections of the contents...and as I observed, they are even putting additional information.. over and above the things discussed in the class... likewise, it allows the students to determine whether or not they have weak writing and analytical skills... and as the teacher, it will help me identify the type of support that i need to provide to students...”  (R.B., BIO 260 FIC)
Student’s Experience with Blogging

…it seems this is my first course where I have to read and read and read. I'm not complaining. There's no use. I actually learned a lot. From experience, I seem to learn more on my own.

(J.A., Cross-enrollee, BIO 260 student)
CONCLUSIONS

1. Blogging is a potential tool for formative assessment and reflective learning.

2. There are advantages (e.g., available 24/7, ideal for interactive learning, enhance reflection) and disadvantages (e.g., internet connectivity dependent, tendency to copy concepts, time constraint) in using blogging as an assessment tool.

3. The FIC observed that using blogging as an assessment tool may discriminate some students (e.g., no Internet connection, little background), but making blogging as part of the course requirement compelled students to develop blogging skills and read scientific papers.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The FICs/teachers should ensure that the assessments they will be using will give their students the opportunity to be active and reflective participants in their learning.

2. The FICs/teachers should use assessments that will help students understand how they learn to enable them to improve their own learning and thinking skills.

THANK YOU!