

Dear Families:

Throughout the year, students in English class will use technology designed to help them develop their writing and explore their interests by sharing their writing with a real audience. Students will be using personal Weblogs to post their writing to the Internet. We may also use websites, podcasts, and wikis to showcase our talents.

A Weblog, or blog as they are commonly called, is a special type of Web page that can be created and easily updated using a Web browser. Each new entry has its own date stamp. Each entry has a comments section where visitors to the blog may leave comments for the author.

### **How it Works**

Each class will have its own blog. I create a post and students make comments. Posts may consist of journal prompts, discussion of class topics, responses to independent novels, etc... Individual classes will vote to decide if they want their blogs to be available for viewing by everyone, only our team, only our class, or only by the teacher. In order to post a comment, you need an invitation to join our group. This limits the ability of people outside our class to post comments.

Having a real audience is one of the key components to this activity. As the year progresses, students may be creating their own individual blogs. In addition to receiving comments from their classmates, students will receive comments from me. Parents are also invited to visit the blogs. Potentially, anyone on the Internet could view our blogs; however, it is not likely that the world at large will stumble across them.

### **Security**

This blogging project is designed to minimize risk to your child. The only identifying information included in the blog will be their first name. There will be no mention of our school name or our location. Students are allowed to post their interests and opinions, but not their age, email address, photographs of themselves, or other sensitive information. Your help in monitoring their work is greatly appreciated!

### **Assessment**

The blog assignments will be part of your child's language arts grade this term. As with other projects they have completed this year, students will receive a scoring rubric that explains the expectations for these assignments. The rubric will include a section for the comments they leave in other students' blogs.

## Permission

Before your child may start posting to the blog, we are asking for you and your child to discuss and sign the following form.

### *Blogging Terms and Conditions*

1. Students using blogs are expected to act safely by keeping personal information out of their posts. You agree to not post or give out your family name, password, user name, email address, home address, school name, city, country or other information that could help someone locate or contact you in person. You may share your interests, ideas and preferences.
2. Students using blogs agree not to share their user name or password with anyone besides their teachers and parents. You agree to never log in as another student.
3. Students using blogs are expected to treat blog spaces as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is not appropriate for your blog. While we encourage you to engage in debate and conversation with other bloggers, we also expect that you will conduct yourself in a manner reflective of a representative of this school.
4. Student blogs are to be a forum for student expression. However, they are first and foremost a tool for learning, and as such will sometimes be constrained by the various requirements and rules of classroom teachers. Students are welcome to post on any school-appropriate subject.
5. Students blogs are to be a vehicle for sharing student writing with real audiences. Most visitors to your blog who leave comments will leave respectful, helpful messages. If you receive a comment that makes you feel uncomfortable or is not respectful, tell your teacher right away. Do not respond to the comment.
6. Students using blogs take good care of the computers by not downloading or installing any software without permission, and not clicking on ads or competitions.
7. Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in this project.

I have read and understand these terms and conditions. I agree to uphold them.

Student Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_