Working with Edublogs

Web sites for educators & students



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Getting started

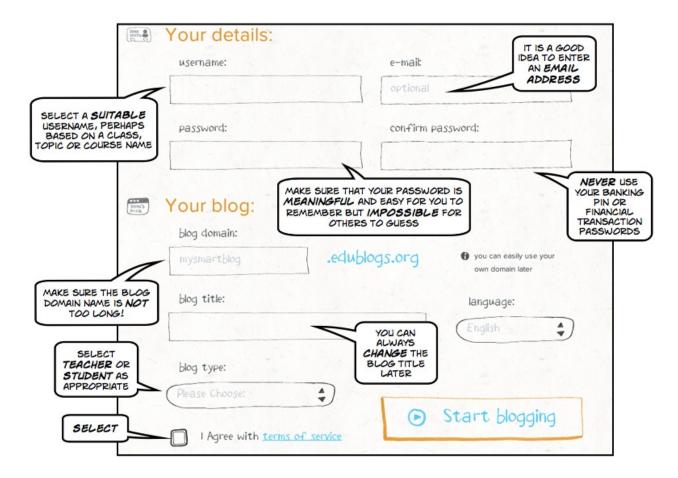


Edublogs allows educators to set up a professional quality web site that runs on the stable and well supported Wordpress publishing platform.

Teachers and lecturers can set up multiple web sites and either invite students to participate as contributors or authors, for example, to the site. If the educator or institution signs up for an upgrade with Edublogs they are able to access additional management and publishing features for a **fee**.

The **free version** of Edublogs is quite good and allows teachers and students to post journals, stories, and written works that can include embedded images, artwork and photographs together with links to audio files and other resources. Comments and posts can be moderated by the teacher or lecturer prior to publication dependent upon the settings established for the Edublogs site.

Signing Up

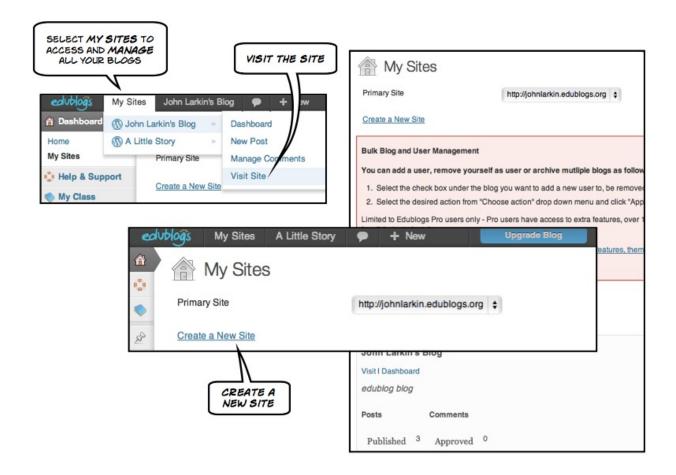


After you have clicked on the "Get Your Free Blog Now" on the opening page of the Edublogs web site you are then required to complete a fairly straightforward sign-up form.

Field	Description
Username	Ensure that this is suitable, logical, easy to spell and easy to remember. It could be based on your name, class, subject or topic.
Password	Something that is meaningful but impossible to guess. Never use the same password used for your banking pin or financial transactions.
Blog domain	This will be part of the Internet address for your Edublogs site on the web. Make sure it is meaningful yet abbreviated. Keep it short! This will be the Internet address of your Edublogs web site.
Blog title	Give your Edublogs site a name. You can always change it later.
Blog type	Indicate the type of blog that you are creating: Teacher or student.
Language	Select the language.

Getting around

Once you have logged in to your Edublogs site simply click on My Sites or even Dashboard to allow yourself to get orientated. If you are ever "lost" simply click on the My Sites item in the top menu.



Once you are on the My Sites page of your Edublogs Dashboard you can manage and access the various sites that you have created.

From the **My Sites** menu item you can perform these actions for **each** of your Edublogs sites:

- 1. Access the Dashboard
- 2. Create a New Post
- 3. Manage Comments
- 4. Visit the site (the actual web site online)

Visiting your site

As you add to your Edublogs site you may like to **visit** the site to see how your changes and new posts appear.

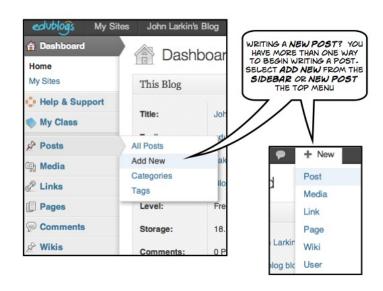
In order to do so simply select **Visit Site** from the **My Sites** menu item at the top of the Edublogs window.



You will be able to view the site. You can also view the site after each draft made to a new post or page. You can also view the site after you have completed creating and publishing a post or a page.

Remember that you you can copy and paste the **web site address** of your site from the Internet address field of your web browser. You can then send that link to your students, colleagues and collaborators or add the link to a relevant web site so that others can easily locate your Edublogs web site.

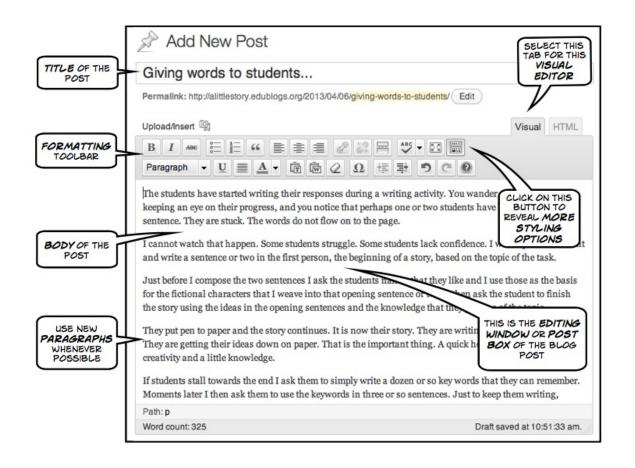
Writing a post



Writing a new post is easy.

If you know how to send an email then you know how to write a post in Edublogs.
You can either select "Post" from the "+ New" menu item at the top of each screen in Edublogs or select "Add New" from the "Posts" menu in the sidebar of your Dashboard.

When the post editing window appears you simply need to give the post a title and then commence writing in the **post box** or editing window of the **Add New Post** page. You can format the text as well. Use the **Visual Editor** to compose and format your post. Just like a text document.



Writing a post is similar to working with a word processor.

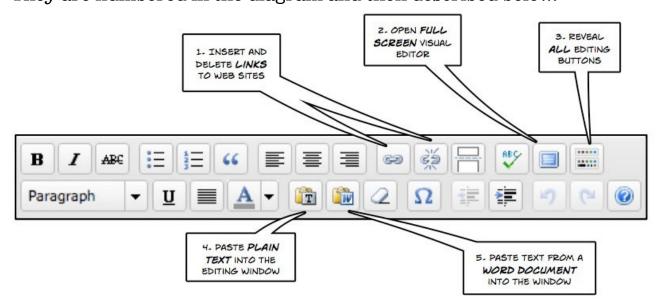
You can choose to use the Visual Editor or the HTML Editor. If you are familiar with HTML or you need to paste in some code for a link to a YouTube video or other web element for example you can use the HTML editor.

Normally you would select the Visual Editor to compose your post in WordPress. Click on the Visual tab when you wish to write your post.

You are able to alter the font, size, style and colour of the text. You can add links to web sites. You can insert images and audio files.

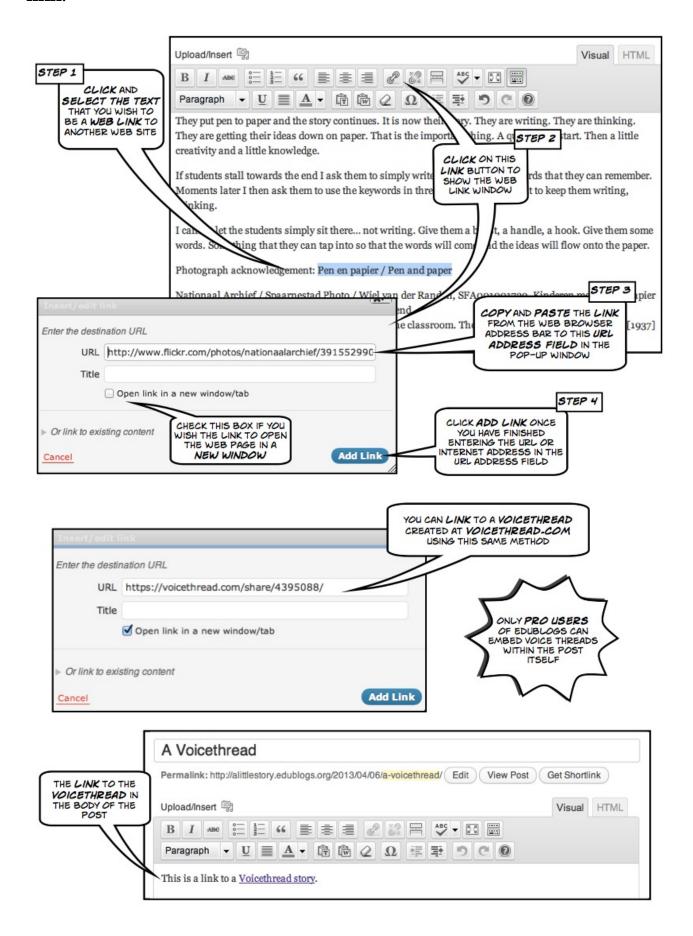
You can also check the spelling of your post. The best way to discover the features of the visual editor is to simply explore each button. You can always use the Edit > Undo menu item to correct any errors.

A number of the buttons in the visual editor are worth highlighting. They are numbered in the diagram and then described below.



1. In order to insert an **Internet link** to a web site you must ensure that the text or word that you wish to act as the link has been selected otherwise the Insert Link button will not be highlighted. It will be greyed out. The same rule applies to editing or deleting a link. The text

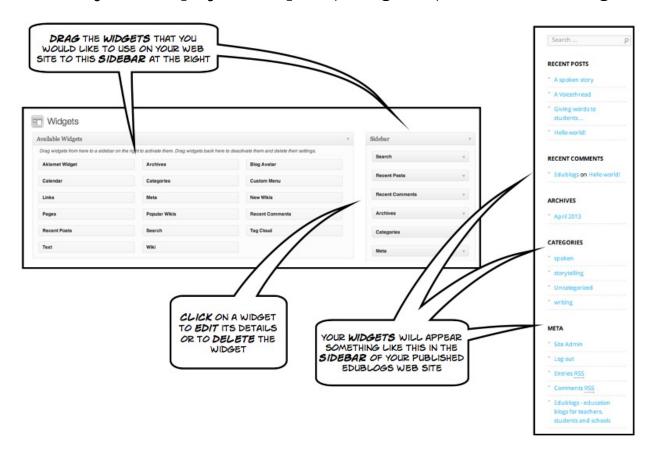
or word must be selected otherwise you cannot insert, edit or delete a link.



- 2. If you would like to expand the Visual Editor window click on the **Full Screen** button. This will open up a window similar to the one illustrated below. Click on the same button to restore the Add Post screen.
- 3. Normally only a single row of buttons is visible in the Visual Editor. Clicking on the **reveal all** button will show all of the available buttons for you to explore and use.
- 4. You can paste **plain text** directly into the Visual Editor using this button.
- 5. You can paste **formatted Word** text into the Visual editor using this button.

Widgets

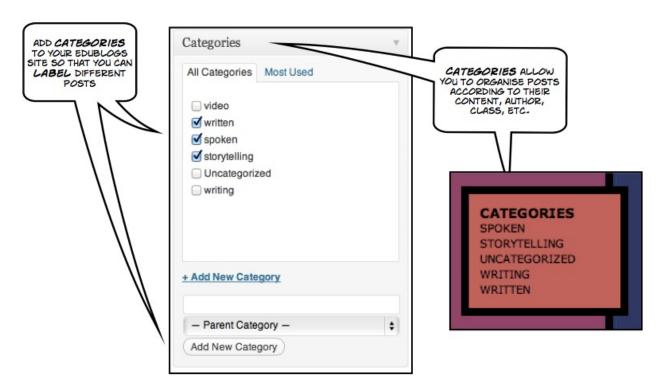
On each page of your Edublog a sidebar of widgets is visible. You are able to manage these widgets via the Appearance menu. These widgets can allow you to display recent posts, categories, comments and tags.



Working with categories

One of the most important features of writing your posts is the ability to add **Categories** to your post. Categories are displayed with your post and also in a sidebar widget.

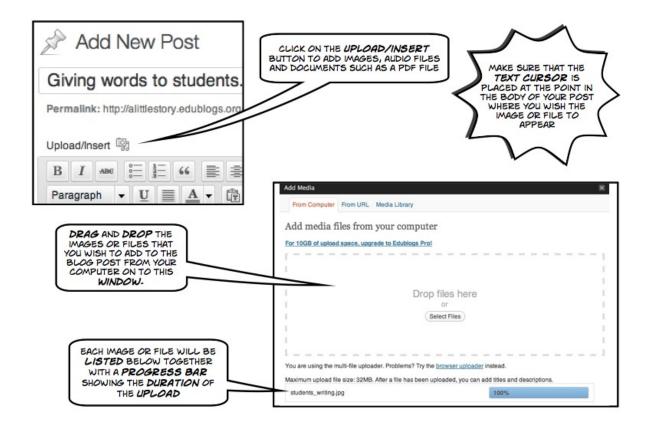
Why are categories important? Well, your blog may cover a variety of topics. Perhaps you will be blogging about different sports so you may have categories such as swimming, hockey, football and scuba diving. Your readers may only be interested in a specific sport and not all sports. If they just wish to read your posts on football they can simply click on the "Football" category link and they will be able to read just those posts. Look at the two images below.



The image on the left illustrates the Categories field on the Post editing page. The image on the right illustrates the categories as they appear on a blog.

Perhaps you are blogging about a variety of topics related to work and research activities. By setting up categories you will be able to empower your readers who simply click on the category that they wish to read.

Adding images

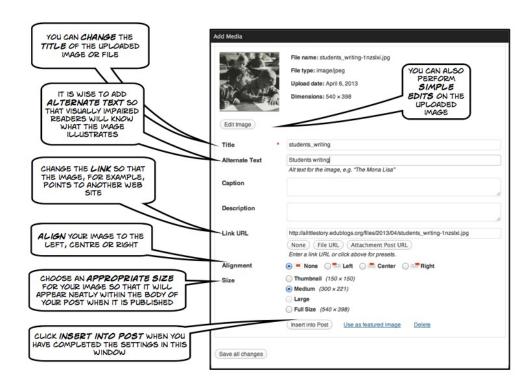


Adding an image to a post is a as easy as drag and drop. Click on the upload/insert button located just above the formatting toolbar. The window illustrated above will appear. Simply drag and drop the image that you wish to add to your post from your computer.

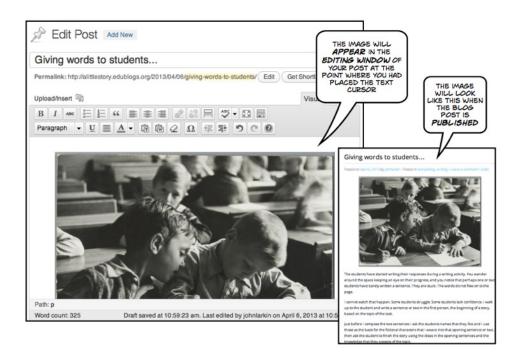
Keep in mind that you may need to **resize the image**, with respect to its dimensions and file size, **prior to upload**. The image below provides an idea regarding how image dimensions can relate to file size.

Name	Size
🖹 00 north_beach original.jpg	1.3 MB
01 north_beach 2048x1536.jpg	404 KB
02 north_beach 1600x1200.jpg	272 KB
03 north_beach 1260x945.jpg	224 KB
04 north_beach 1024x768.jpg	156 KB
05 north_beach 800x600.jpg	104 KB
06 north_beach 640x480.jpg	72 KB
07 north_beach 320x240.jpg	32 KB

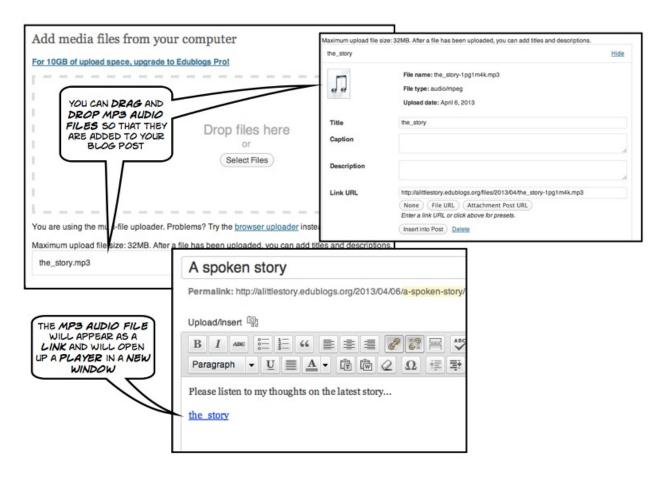
After the image has uploaded a thumbnail of the image will appear below the upload window.



You can use this window to label the image, set the size that it will appear in your post and position it to the left, centre or right. Click "**Insert into Post**" once you have completed your settings. The image will appear in the post box. You can explore more here: http://help.edublogs.org/2009/07/29/inserting-images-into-your-posts/



Adding files



You are also able to upload files such as mp3 audio files to your Edublogs site. As with images keep in mind the file size of the audio file. There are limits to how much file space is available on your site.

Click on the upload/insert button located just above the formatting toolbar. The window illustrated above right will appear. Simply drag and drop the file that you wish to add to your post from your computer.

The file will appear as a thumbnail after upload and you will then be able to label the file.

You can explore other possibilities with audio via the Edublogs web site:

http://help.edublogs.org/2013/02/22/inserting-audio/

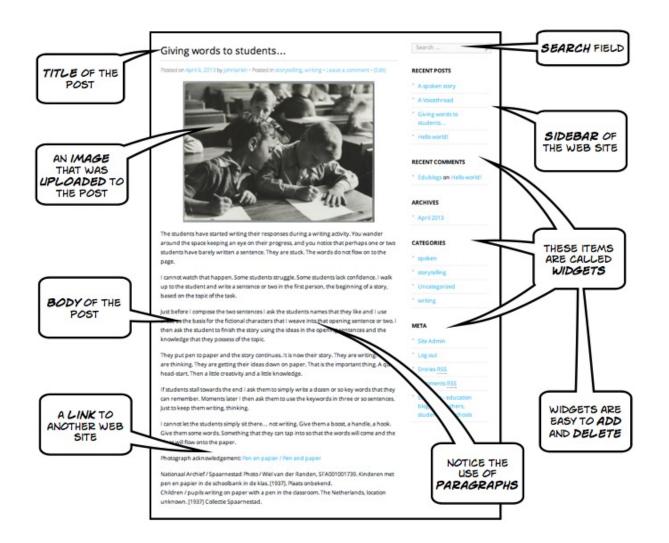
The published post



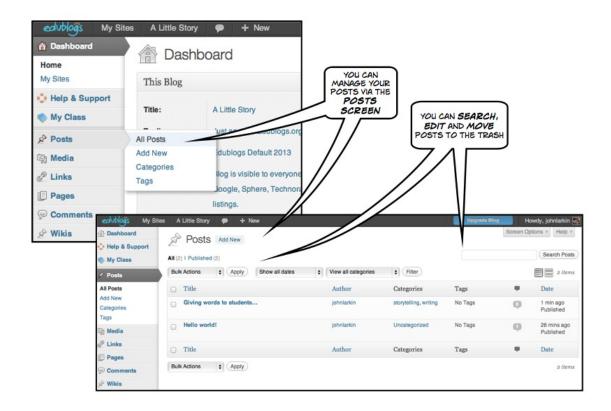
When you have finished writing the post, adding links and inserting images you can then **Publish** the post.

The published post will appear as illustrated below.

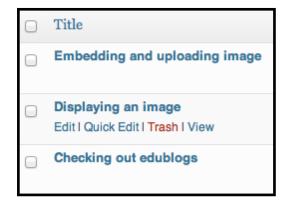
The post will appear along with the sidebar of widgets. The author, date, categories and tags associated with the post will appear beneath the post title. You can always edit and/or update the post at a later date.



Managing posts



You can manage all your posts via the Posts screen. Select the Posts menu item from the Dashboard sidebar. All of your posts, including drafts, will be listed. You are able to edit posts, search for posts and also move posts to the trash.

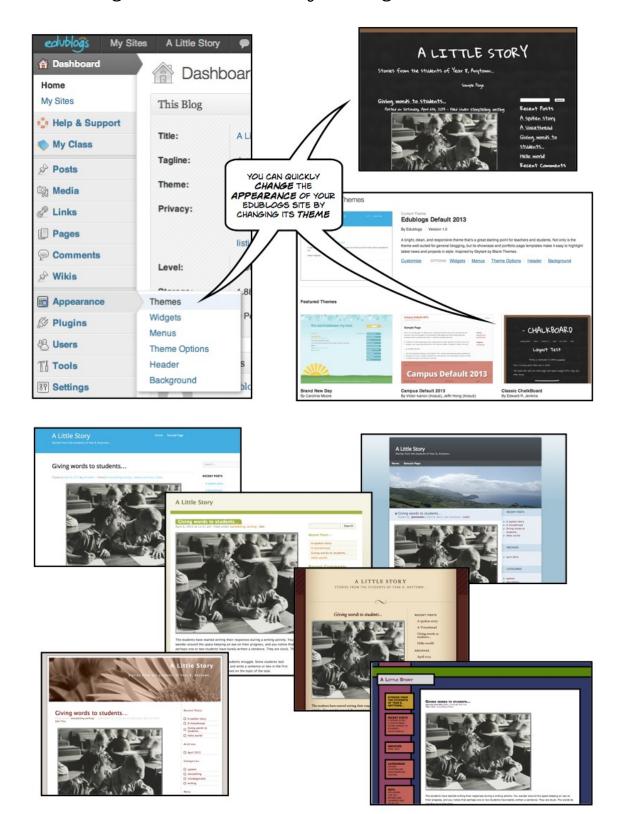


If you roll your mouse over the title of the post **four links** will appear that enable you to edit, trash or view the post. As well, you are able to perform a **Quick Edit** of the post in which you are able to amend key features of the post. They are illustrated below.



Themes

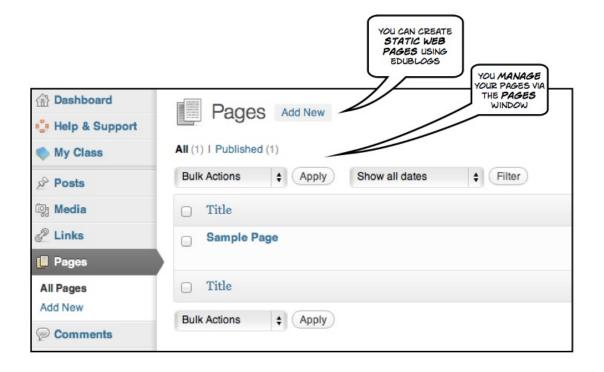
Clicking on the Themes menu item beneath the Appearance menu in the Dashboard sidebar reveals a number of themes that you can select in order to change the look and feel of your blog.



Pages

It is possible to create dedicated web pages in Edublogs. You can use these web pages to share specific information with your readers. You can even set a page to be the opening page for your web site. It is easily one of the best ways to create a professional looking and polished web site.

There are two ways to access the page creation area of WordPress. You can select new page from the drop down menu at the top of each page in WordPress or you can also select Add New from the Pages menu on the left hand side of the page.



The web page will appear in a menu or you can add a widget to the Edublog sidebar that lists all the pages that you have created.

Introduction to Pages: http://help.edublogs.org/2009/08/01/the-differences-between-posts-and-pages/#Introduction_to_Pages

Differences between Posts & Pages: http://help.edublogs.org/2009/08/01/the-differences-between-posts-and-pages/

General Settings



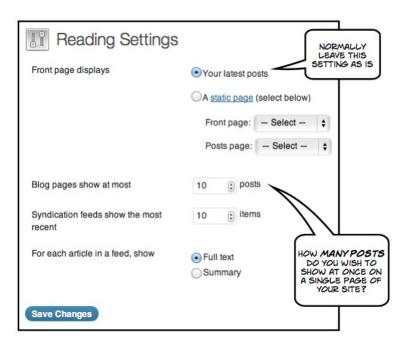
The General Settings allow you to change the title of your Edublog site, ads a Tagline and to list your email address. This email address is important as it is used when you need to reset a forgotten password, moderate comments and to moderate posts.

Writing Settings

Writing Settings		THIS DETERMINES THE DEPTH OF THE EDITING WINDOW WHEN WRITING A POST
Size of the post box	20 lines	
Formatting		and :-P to graphics on display
Default Post Category	storytelling 💠	SET A DEFAULT CATEGORY FOR
Default Post Format	Standard 💠	YOUR POSTS

Simply set the default category for your posts and indicate how deep you would like to set the post box for when you create a post.

Reading Settings

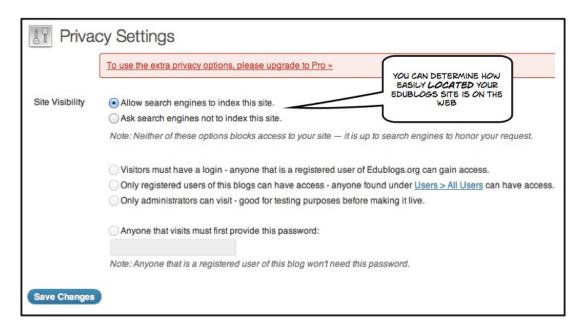


The Reading Settings

determine how your site and blog posts will appear to your readers.

You can ensure that your blog posts appear on your opening page as well as the number of posts that appear per web page of your site.

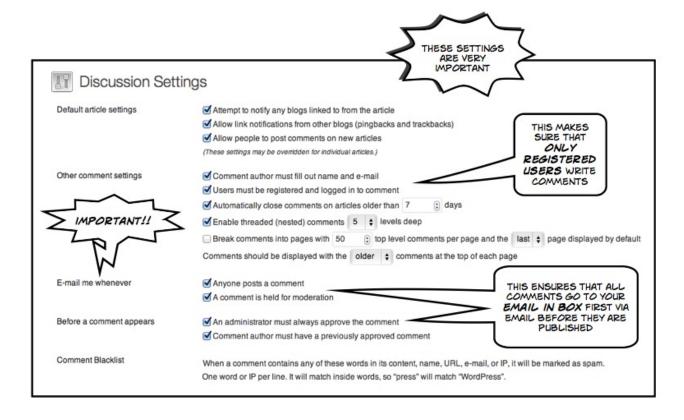
Privacy Settings



You can

determine whether or not your site is easily "visible" to search engines. If you are an Edublogs Pro user additional privacy features are available.

Discussion Settings



The Discussion Settings are most important as they allow you to control the commenting process on your Edublog site. Carefully review the settings displayed above. If you allow comments on your posts it is highly recommended that you **moderate** the comments before they are published. Comments will be sent to your nominated email address for verification prior to publishing. You can approve, disapprove, delete or label a comment as spam.

You can manage comments via the Comments screen, shown below.



Adding Users



You can add additional users to your site. You may add a class of students or fellow colleagues to your Edublogs site. It is most important that you give your new users an appropriate role. For example, you may simply add students as **Authors** or **Contributors**. You may add colleagues as **Editors** or **Administrators**. The specifics of each role is set out below.

- **Administrator** somebody who has access to all the administration features within a single site.
- **Editor** somebody who can publish and manage posts including the posts of other users.
- Author somebody who can publish and manage their own posts.
- **Contributor** somebody who can write and manage their own posts but cannot publish them.
- **Subscriber** somebody who can only manage their profile.

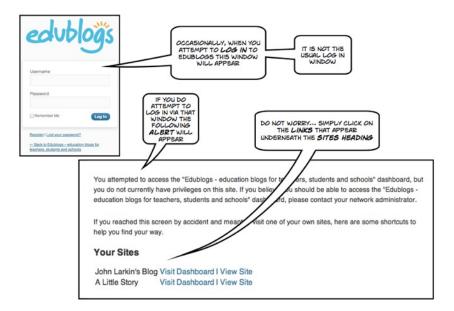
See this **Edublogs** page: http://help.edublogs.org/2009/08/24/what-are-the-different-roles-of-users/

Managing Media



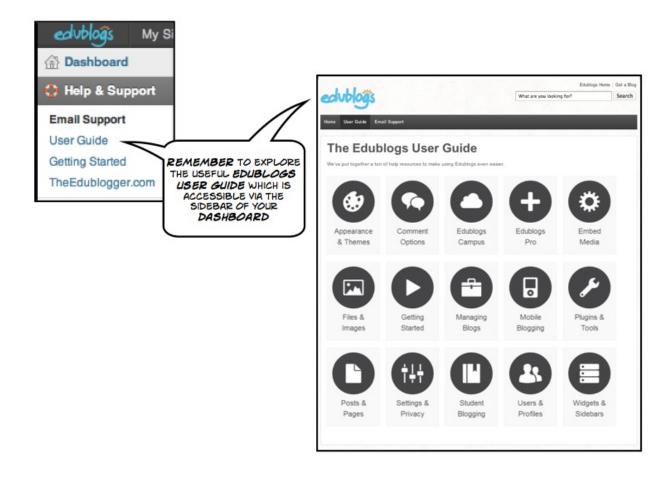
You can manage your media files in much the same way as managing posts and pages. You are able to edit the details for a media file, as well as trashing and permanently deleting files.

Incorrect Log-In



On rare occasions you may log-in to Edublogs using the incorrect Internet address. The window shown above will appear. Do not be concerned. Simply follow the links to your own Edublog sites.

Edublogs Support



Edublogs has an excellent User Guide that is well set out and easy to follow. http://help.edublogs.org/user-guide/

There is also an excellent guide for **beginners**:

http://help.edublogs.org/getting-started-with-edublogs/

Finally there is also the **Edublogger**. Tips and tricks for educators, both new and experienced, in the art and technology of publishing online: http://theedublogger.com