Hi, My name is Melissa Braaten and I teach at Project Hope in Roxbury, MA.

My students are adult women aged 18-60+. They are working to pass the HiSet to earn their High School Equivalency.

I chose to explore blogs in my HiSet level reading class for a couple of reasons. First of all, investigating blogs became a nice wrap up for a unit on author’s purpose, since blogs are written for so many different reasons. In addition to supporting the academic content, blogs are accessible: they are fairly easy to navigate, free to access, and come in a variety of reading levels and topics.

My objectives for this project were as follows:

(show objectives)

In my classroom, the level of skill in navigating websites varies. Typing in long URLs is a logistical difficulty in the classroom and slows down the lesson. I addressed this by using a website called delicious.com, which allows you to create a webpage of links.

Here is my delicious.com page.

(show page)

Having all the links in one place makes it easier for students to access the pages I want them to. For the first part of the project, I added links to pages explaining what blogs are and how they work, and the students did a scavenger hunt to answer certain questions. For the second part, I included links to websites containing lists of blogs, so students could find one that interested them.

I like delicious.com because it is much easier for me to set up than a class website, and helps with the momentum of the class because students don’t have to type in URL’s.

The final product and formative assessment for this series of lessons was a paragraph describing the author’s purpose for writing a blog of their choice, citing at least two pieces of evidence from the blog to support their conclusion. I created a template to help them organize their thoughts.

(show template and explain)

Students were highly engaged in reading blogs once they found one that interested them. It was hard to end the class! Verbally, students were able to explain the blog writer’s purpose. We were not able to finish the writing piece due to the weather of Feb 2015! I would definitely use blogs again as a way to engage students in this genre of text and I will continue to use delicious.com to facilitate website use in class.