

Step 3: Write your first posts

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Welcome to the third step in our free professional learning series on **class and student blogging!**

The aim of this step is to:

1. Help you understand how posts are used on class blog.
2. Provide tips of writing effective posts.
3. Teach you how to publish your first posts.

Click on a link below to go to the section of this activity you want to work on:

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2. [Who writes posts on the class blog](#)
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INTRODUCTION TO POSTS

Your posts are where you'll publish your main content such as what's been happening in class, assignment information, documents, and more. They are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order with the most recent post at the top of the page.

By default, your home page is your blog post page and this is where you'll see your new posts published.

If you look closely at a post you will see it is normally made up of:

1. **Post Title** – tells the reader what the post is about. A great post title grabs readers attention and is more likely to encourage them to read your post.
2. **Date published** – all post display the date a post was published. You'll normally see this displayed at the top of the post.
3. **Written by** - most themes display the name of the post author. Your username is automatically displayed unless you've [changed your display name](#).
4. **Your post content** – this is the main information that you want to share or reflect on with your readers
5. **Comments** - all themes have a link to comments. This is where your readers can click to write a comment in response to your post. Comments allow students, and other readers, to engage in discussions, share their thoughts and connect with your class blog.
6. **Tags** - are used to help readers locate posts on your blog. Tags are more like the index at the back of the book and explode the topic into a million bits.
7. **Categories** - are used to help readers locate posts on your blog. Categories are often used like chapters of a book; they provide a general overview of the topics you blog about.

The image shows a screenshot of a blog post with several red lines and labels pointing to specific features. The labels are: 1. Title, 2. Date published, 3. Written by, 4. Post content, 5. Comments (top right), 6. Tags (bottom right), and 7. Category (bottom left).

1. Title: Don't Miss Out! Student Blogging Challenge Starts Soon

2. Date published: Modified on [February 29, 2012](#) by [Ronnie Burt](#)

3. Written by: [Ronnie Burt](#)

4. Post content: The [Student Blogging Challenge](#) is a free and open collaborative project that runs for 10 weeks twice each year. **And the next series starts next week, so now is your chance to register and get involved!**

- [Classes register here](#)
- [Students register here](#)
- [Mentors register here](#)

Students and classes that participate work through a set of challenge activities that build blogging skills and foster collaboration by all involved.

Quick facts:

- Anyone can participate using any blogging platform
- All levels of blogging skills welcome – complete beginners encouraged to join
- Teachers can tailor the challenges or incorporate them however needed to fit in your time frame and curriculum

This post wouldn't be complete without recognizing the tireless efforts of the volunteer coordinator of the challenges, Sue Wyatt. From everyone involved, **we can't thank you enough!**

Posted in [Using Blogs With Students](#) | Tagged [student blogging](#), [student blogging challenge](#) | [8 Replies](#)

5. Comments: 8

6. Tags: [student blogging](#), [student blogging challenge](#)

7. Category: [Using Blogs With Students](#)

Watch the following video to learn more about the difference between pages and posts.

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WHO WRITES POSTS ON THE CLASS BLOG

If you look closely at class blogs you'll see on some blogs only the teacher publishes posts while on others both the teacher and students publish posts or the students publish posts on their own student blogs.

Here are example of the different approaches:

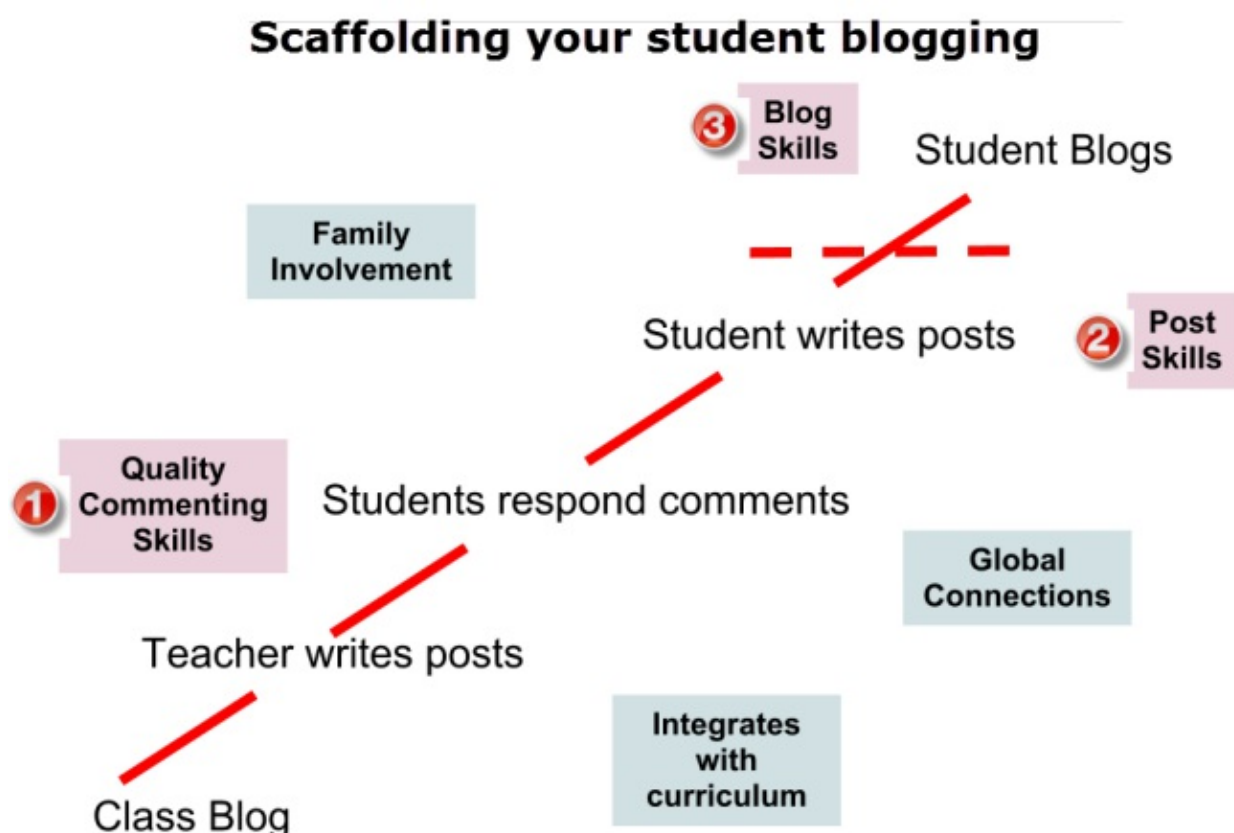
- [Mr Baldock's class blog](#) (Teacher and students publish posts on class blog)
- [Ms Cassidy's Classroom blog, Huzzah, 4KJ @ Leopold Primary School](#) (Class blog with individual student blogs. Student blogs are listed under Class blog list in sidebar)

It's really up to you which approach you use.

If you do decide you want your students to publish posts we recommend the best approach, regardless of student age, is to introduce blogging slowly in the following order:

1. You write posts on the class blog.
2. Students write comments in response to your posts (you focus on teaching them quality commenting skills).
3. Students write posts on class blog or their own student blog.

Almost all educators who blog well with their students use the following scaffolding approach:



As [Jan Smith](#) says:

The big idea is to go slow to go fast.

If you don't lay the groundwork by building a community of trust, risk, support with your kids they fail big.

Reading and commenting have to be the core, or else a blog is just a digital bulletin board.

We'll show you how to teach quality commenting skills and how to add students to blogs so they can publish posts later in this professional learning series on class and student blogging.

For now we'll focus on teaching you how to write your first posts.

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EXAMPLES OF POSTS ON CLASS BLOGS

So what do you publish as posts on your class blog? Pretty much anything you want to share with students, families and other educators you'll publish as a post. What's been happening in class. student work, assignments. homework information, documents — there's so much you can share!

Here's some examples of first posts, or posts for the new school year, to check out for ideas:

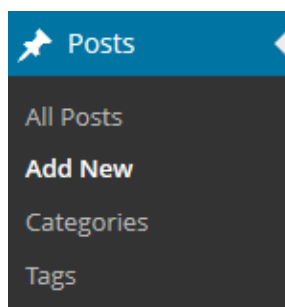
- Kinder Kids [You Matter](#)
- Kindergarten Daises [Welcome to a new year and a new class](#)
- Mrs Rosenquist's Classroom Blog [Welcome to Second Grade! It's going to be a great year!](#)
- Mrs K Class [Room 4 at Craighburn Primary School](#)
- Mrs Hamman's Class blog [Welcome to our blog](#)
- Mr Baldock's Class Blog [What to expect in 2013 series](#)
- Mr Bradford's Class Blog [Welcome to Room 12!](#)
- Hey, Kids! [Welcome Back to School](#)

Check out [The Edublogger's Class Blog list](#) for ideas on what they post about!

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TO WRITE A POST ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS:

1. Go to **Posts > Add New**.



2. Give your post a title and add your content.

Post Title

Post Content

Welcome to our learning journey

Permalink: <http://mrswaters.edublogs.org/2014/01/03/welcome/> Edit Get Shortlink

Add Media Visual Text

B *I* ABC [List Icons] [Quote Icon] [Link Icon] [Unlink Icon] [ABC Icon] [More Icon]

Welcome to our new class blog!

Our blogs are a great way to share our learning with the rest of the World. Through blogging we connect with the global community and learn about each others' culture.

Path: p

Word count: 36 Draft saved at 2:01:17 pm. Last edited by mrswaters on January 3, 2014 at 2:00 pm

3. Add your tags and categories (learn about [categories and tags here](#)).

Categories

All Categories Most Used

Uncategorized

Class News

[+ Add New Category](#)

Tags

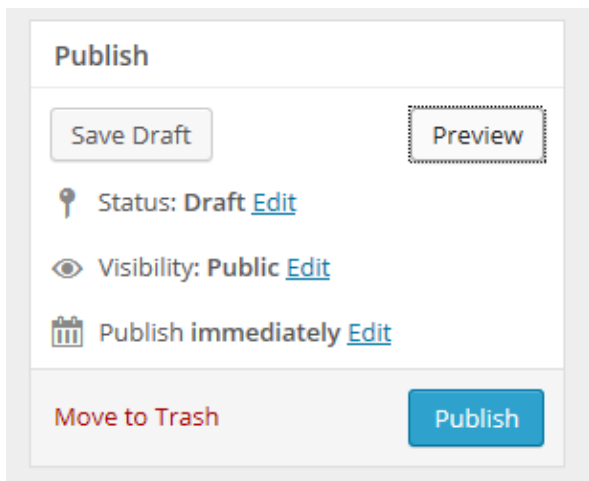
Add

Separate tags with commas

Blogging

[Choose from the most used tags](#)

4. When finished writing click **Publish**.



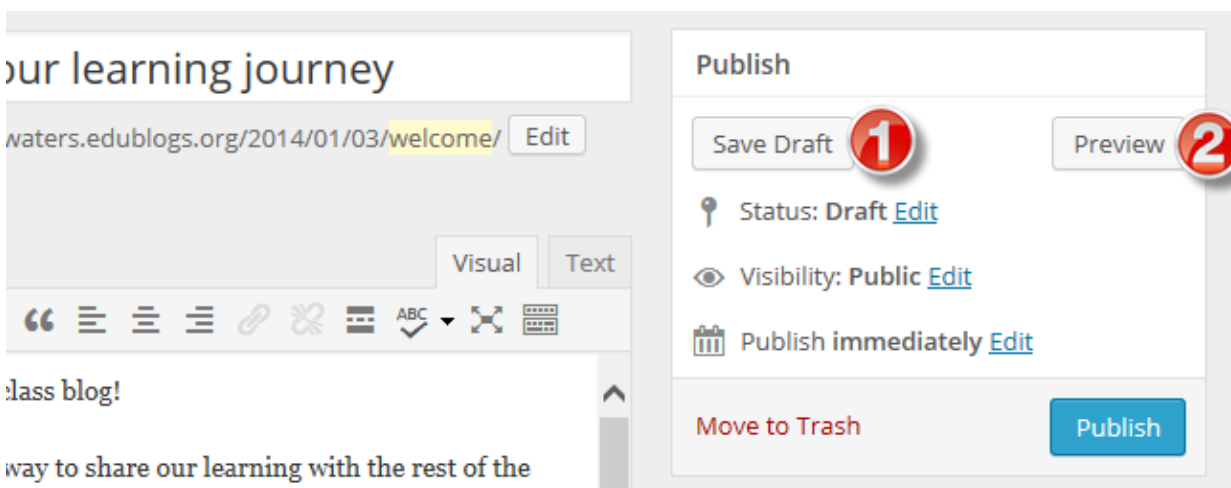
3. Presto! Your post will now display on your blog so others can read!

Below is a quick video tutorial on publishing a new post:

Previewing your Draft

Before you publish your post it is a good idea to use the Preview option to see what it looks like to your readers.

You preview a post by clicking on **Save Draft** and then click **Preview**. This opens up a draft version of your post in a new tab.



Then just go back to your draft and make any changes you want!

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INTRODUCTION TO YOUR VISUAL EDITOR

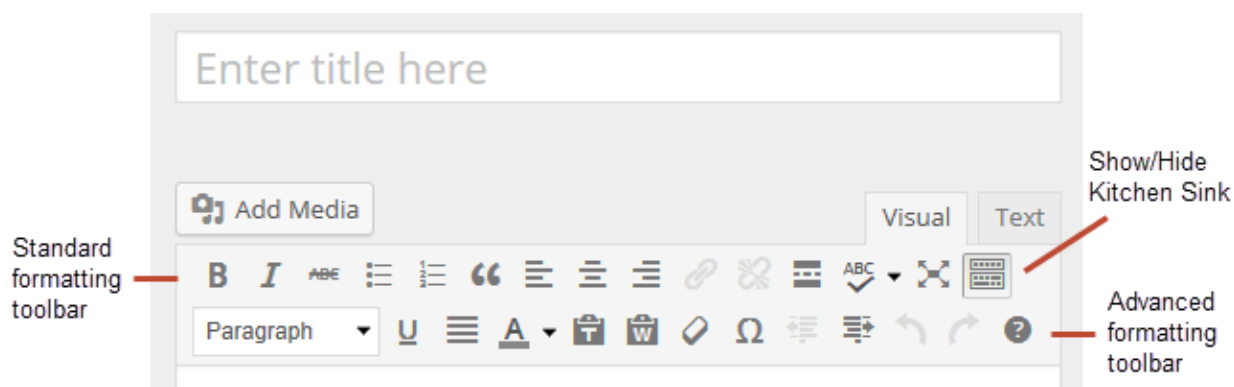
The area where you write your post is by default in Visual Editing mode which uses WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) option for formatting.

It works similar to any Word processing software.

Simply write your post, highlight any text you want to format and then click the appropriate button in the toolbar to add formatting such as bold, italics, number list.

The **Show/Hide Kitchen Sink** button is used to view the advanced formatting options including heading styles, underlining, font color, custom characters, undo, redo.

You switch between Visual Editing mode and HTML editing mode by clicking on the Visual or Text tab.



Below is a quick video tutorial on the visual editor:

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TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER BLOG POSTS

Reading online is different from reading in a text book.

The easier to read and more engaging your posts are the more likely they'll be read and the better your message will be conveyed.

Here's some tips to help you write better posts on class blogs:

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1. Use short paragraphs

Posts with really long paragraphs are harder to read online.

Best options are:

- Break your posts up with paragraphs.
- The more paragraphs the better.
- Short paragraphs are better than long.
- If you need to make some paragraphs one or two sentences long so they are visually easier to read online then do it if needed!
- Make the first sentence of each paragraph make your readers want to read the rest of the paragraph.

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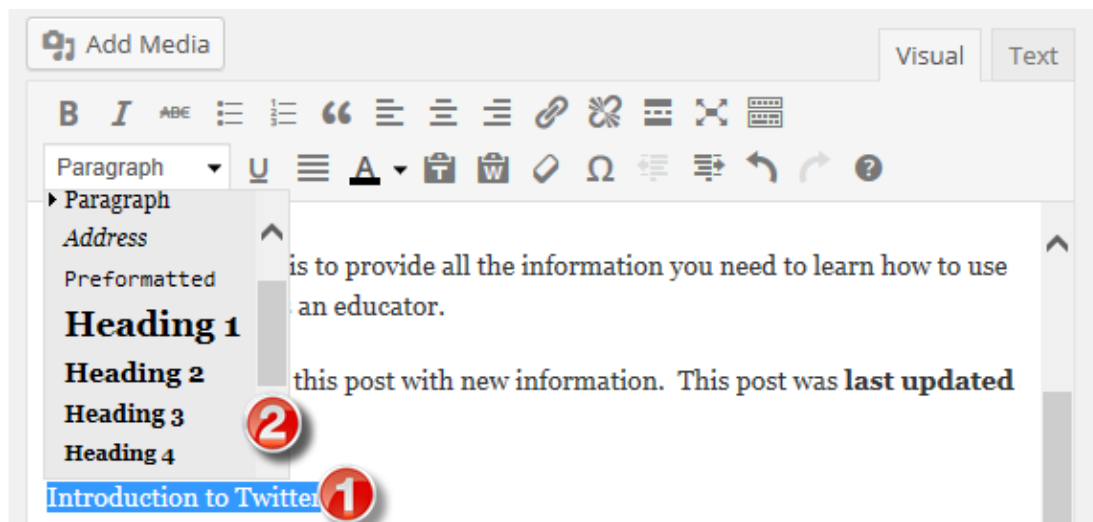
2. Use Headings

Use headings, and where appropriate bullet points and number lists, to break up the post into manageable bit size chunks.

Creating a heading is as simple as:

1. Highlight the text you want to change into a heading
2. Select the Heading Style you want to apply from the advanced formatting toolbar (you access the advanced formatting toolbar by clicking on the **Show/Hide Kitchen sink icon**) – for most themes your best option is Heading 3

3. Preview your post to make sure that headings you've used has broken your post into manageable chunks



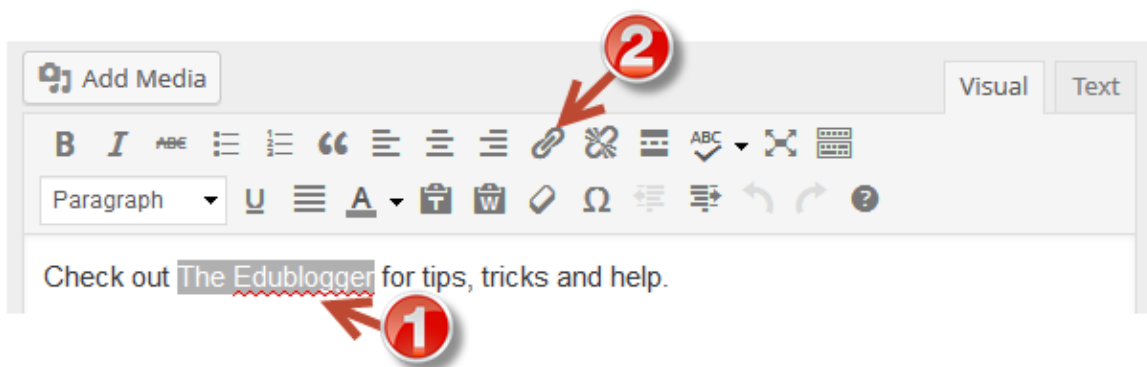
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3. Remember to Link

When you write about a website you should link to it as your readers often want to check it out in more detail.

Creating a link is as simple as:

1. Highlight the text you want to link to a website, blog or post
2. Click on the **Insert/Edit Link icon** in the standard formatting toolbar
3. Paste the link URL
4. Then click **Add Link**



Below is a quick video tutorial on how to add links:

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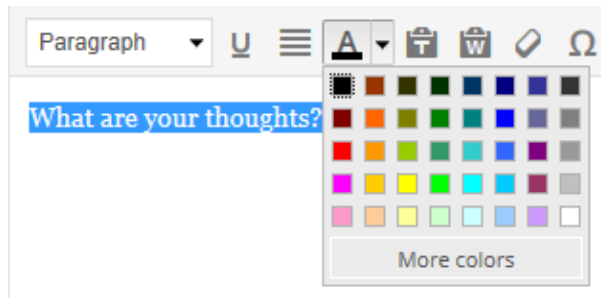
4. Using colored text

While you're less likely to use colored text in posts on a personal / professional blog it can engage students and draw attention to specific information on posts on a class blog.

You'll see examples of it used in posts on [4KJ @ Leopold Primary School](#) and the [Student Challenge blog](#).

Changing the color of text is as simple as:

1. Highlight the text you want to change
2. Select the text color you want to apply from the advanced formatting toolbar (you access the advanced formatting toolbar by clicking on the **Show/Hide Kitchen sink icon**)
3. Preview your post to make sure the text is readable and you like the color



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5. Enhancing posts with images and media

When you look at class blog you'll notice they enhance their posts with images and other types of media including videos and by embedding online tools.

We'll show you how this is done later in this professional learning series on class and student blogging.

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COMMON QUESTIONS WE'RE ASKED ABOUT POSTS

Here's answers to commonly asked questions we receive into Edublogs Support:

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1. What does the "Not found" message on my homepage mean?

By default, the front page of your blog is set to display your latest posts.

If you delete the default "Hello World" post before you publish a new post then your front page will display 'Nothing Found', '404 – Not Found Error' or something similar depending on the theme you are using.

This message is displayed because there is nothing to display on your front page.

Nothing Found

Apologies, but no results were found for the requested archive. Perhaps searching will help find a related post.

All you need to do is go to **Posts > Add New** and publish a new post.

Once the new post is published you'll see it displayed on your homepage.

You'll find more detailed step by step instructions on [how to fix a Not Found message here](#) .

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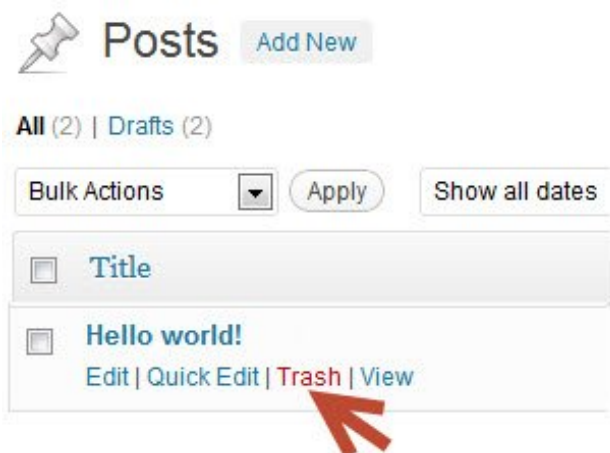
2. How do you delete the Hello World Post?

Every newly created blog is the same default lay out with posts displayed on its home page with a 'Hello World' post and an 'Sample' page.

You can delete this post at any time by going to **Posts > All Posts**.

Hovering your mouse over the title of the Hello post brings up four action links.

Now just click on Trash. This sends it to your Trash folder where it is permanently deleted within 30 days of when you trashed it.



Remember if you delete all posts, and your homepage is your blog post page, you will see a "Not Found" message.

To remove that message you just need to publish a new post by going to **Posts > Add New**.

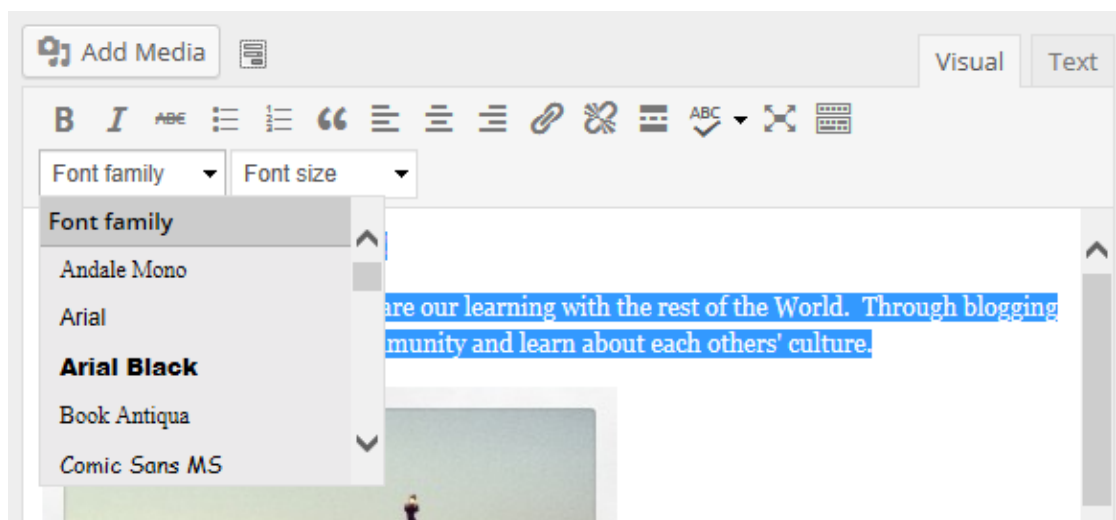
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3. How do I change font type and size?

We're often asked how to change the font type and size in post. This is really easy to do.

Just go to plugins and activate the **Supreme Google Webfonts plugin**.

Now when write your post you just highlight the text you want to change and then select the Front family or font size from the drop down menu that has been added to your advanced formatting toolbar in your visual editor.



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4. Is it possible to publish posts to different pages on my blog?

We're often asked if it is possible to add posts to other pages, rather than just the front page of the blog. This is commonly asked by educators who want to use one blog for multiple classes or subjects.

And yes you can! But it does involve slightly advanced blogging skills.

You do it by sending posts to different pages on your blog by assigning different categories to posts, based on the class or subject, and using a custom menu to create link to the categories from your top navigation. When students and parents click on their category they're taken to all the posts for that class or subject.

We've set up a [demo blog](#) to show you it in action. When you click on the Geography link in the top navigation of our [demo blog](#) you are taken to [all posts assigned the category Geography](#).

You'll find step by step instructions on [using categories to organize multiple classes or subjects on your blog here](#).

It does involve slightly advanced blogging skills — so leave a comment or [email us at Edublogs Support](#) if you need our assistance.

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WHAT NOW?

How did you go? We hope this has helped get your posts started and the information has helped!

Leave a comment below with a link to your blog and let us all take a look!

Also feel free to leave any questions you are having (or tips/advice) as well.

Or go to [Step 4: Teaching commenting skills!](#)