What is blog?
A blog is like a web page but it is much easier to start and add things to. You can do many of the things for which you would use a website. Most people use blogs as a journal. These journals can be about travel, life, love, politics, religion – in fact almost anything.

The name comes from “web log” → weblog

What will we use it for?
In this five weeks, we are going to use the blog for journal writing in English. It will be the place for you to publish your journal. Because it is on the web, you need to be happy that anyone can read what you have written. In fact people can comment on what you have written and on the comments others make.

As part of your journal, you will need to read and comment on some of your classmates’ blogs or journals.

We may try some other things also.

In some ways this can be part of your regular communication with your family and friends. You will be able to email them with the address so they can read your blog and make comments about it.

Protect yourself
Although blogging gives you a wonderful opportunity to write about almost anything, anyone can read it. If you include personal information in your journal or in your profile, people will be able to contact you. Some people are not people you want to know, so you need to protect yourself. However, because you are learning English, you probably want to give some ideas about who you are.

Before you create your blog, read through the guidelines below. We have recommended steps for setting up a profile. If you follow these guides, readers can understand why you are writing and that your English may have errors.

Getting started
Use the web address below to create your own blog

http://www.blogger.com/start

Setting up an account
On the first page you can learn a little about blogs, visit some of them and start to create your own blog.

You will need to sign up before you can do anything else. Decide on a suitable name and choose or make a password. It needs to be at least six (6) characters long. You will find that many common names have been used already and you may need to add numbers or choose different names. You may need to do this a few times before you get a name you are happy with.
Using Blog sites for English practice

Use your 'vu' email for the email address. It is a safer email account than Hotmail, Yahoo and so on.

Once you have been successful, make sure you write down your username and your password.

Creating your blog

Select the Create your own blog and complete the form as shown below.

Make sure you write down the Blog address and keep it with your username and password. Then click 'continue'.

The next screen will ask you to choose a template. Here is what this screen looks like.

Click on the template you like and then 'continue'. After a few seconds, your blog will be ready for you to start writing.
Click on ‘Start Posting’ and you are now ready to give this entry or posting a title and start writing. You can also go back to ‘the dashboard’ – a place a bit like a homepage. You can choose to do a few different things here.

Creating a profile
Before you start writing, you are going to complete some details in your profile. Click on

Back to dashboard

Which is in the top, right corner.

You can now edit your profile.

Click

You can now change names or email addresses. We suggest you complete this page carefully.

Privacy
Make sure you select Share profile but leave the other choices unselected.

Identity
Complete the boxes marked ‘required’, but don’t include ‘First’ and ‘Last’ names.

Photograph and Audio Clip
Leave these for now. We recommend you do not put a photograph of yourself in your profile.

General
Select one of the three choices for ‘Gender’ and leave the other boxes blank, although you may want to show which country you come from.

Extended Info
A suggestion for completing ‘About Me’.

I am studying English in Australia before I study a [name of your main course]. I come form [country]. You may want to include some other information about yourself on topics such as previous study or travel experience. We recommend you keep this section short.

You can complete the other sections as you like. However, avoid giving any information which can identify you such as names of your family members.

When you have finished, click Share profile

You are now ready to go back to writing.
Edited your blog
Even though you haven’t written anything yet, you will need to ‘edit your blog. In the dashboard, you can see the name of your blog on the left. This blogger has three blogs. Click on the ‘new post’ image for your blog.

You will now be able to give your post a title and wrote your entry. When you have finished writing, make sure you click on

Publish Post

You have now completed your first blog and can add to it, modify the way it looks and details in your profile, or create new blogs (each blog will have it own name and web address and can have a different theme or focus – for example your trip to Queensland or New Zealand).

You can now view you blog or try it by typing in the blog address into you browser address bar. Ask others in your class for their blog address visit and read their blogs.