Blog with WordPress for Beginners: creating an online journal

Overview:
- The word “blog” is short for “web log.”
- A blog is an online journal.
- A blog is used as a traditional journal as well as an online forum for sharing insights into personal and professional events.

WordPress:
- WordPress is an online publishing platform that provides a hosted service for blogs and websites.
- WordPress is a good place to start a blog because it is free and relatively easy to use.

Getting Started
- To start a blog with WordPress, create an account at WordPress.com.
- Choose a URL for the site and fill in all of the requested information.
- Choose a theme for the blog. This can easily be changed later.

Blogging:
- Add a post to the blog by clicking on Posts on the left side of the dashboard. Then click on Add New.
- Add a title and the content of the post.
- Pictures can be added to a post as follows.
  - Click on the Insert Media button at the top of the new post.
  - Upload a picture.
    - If you have previously uploaded pictures, first click on the “Upload files” tab.
    - Click on “Select Files.”
    - Locate the picture to upload.
    - Click on “Open” to upload the picture.
  - In the bottom right of the box, select an alignment for the picture (left, center, right, or none).
  - Click on “Insert into post.”
  - Drag the picture to place it in the desired location within the post.
- Tags can be added before publishing a post.
  - Tags briefly describe what a post is about.
  - They help group posts together by topic.
  - They also help readers locate posts on a specific topic.
  - Add tags while writing a post as follows.
    - Scroll down below the text of the post.
    - On the right side of the screen, type tags in the box under the word “Tags.”
    - Separate tags with commas within this box.
    - Click on “Add” to add the tags to the post.
- To publish a post, click on the blue “Publish” button near the top right of the screen.
To view the blog, hover over “My Site” at the top left of the screen then click on “View Site.”
To return to the dashboard, hover over “My Site” at the top left of the screen then click on “WP Admin.”

Appearance:
- Widgets can be added to the blog.
  - These tools allow readers to navigate around the blog more easily and allow you to display information prominently on each page of the blog.
  - Add widgets to the blog as follows.
    - From the dashboard, click on the word “Appearance.”
    - Click on the word “Widgets.”
    - Choose an appropriate widget from the list displayed and click on it.
    - Click on the blue “Add Widget” button that appears below the name of the widget.
    - The widget’s name and attributes are now displayed on the right side of the screen under the word “Sidebar.”
    - Click on the blue “Save” button to add the widget to your blog.
  - I recommend adding two specific widgets to your blog which allow the reader to navigate through your posts more easily.
    - The “Archives” widget creates a menu organizing your posts by month.
    - The “Tag Cloud” widget creates a web of the tags used in your posts.
- The theme of your blog can be changed.
  - Change your blog’s theme as follows.
    - Hover over “My Site” at the top left of the screen.
    - Click on “Themes.”
    - Browse the themes available.
    - Click on the theme in which you are interested. A preview the theme appears.
    - Click on the blue “Try & Customize” button at the top right.
    - Click on the blue “Save & Activate” button at the top left.
    - Close the tab and then click on “Back to themes” to return to the theme selection page.
  - Note that changing the theme of your blog sometimes removes any widgets you had added to the blog.

Logging In and Signing Out
- Log in to your blog as follows.
  - Go to WordPress.com.
  - Click on “Log In” at the top right of the screen.
  - Enter your e-mail and WordPress password and click on the blue “Log In” button.
  - If you have not activated your blog via your e-mail, which is done by opening your e-mail and clicking on the activation link provided, this will be noted at the top of the screen.
- Navigate to your blog as follows.
  - Click on “My Site” in the top left of the screen.
  - Click on “WP Admin” at the bottom left side of the screen.
  - You should now be viewing the dashboard of your blog.
• Sign out of your blog as follows.
  o Hover over the gray and white image of a person in a circle in the top right of the screen.
  o Click on “Sign Out.”

Finding Blogs:
• The blog samples that were viewed in class are listed below.
  o Umpiring: https://amateurumpire.wordpress.com/
  o Starting a Business: http://www.danmartell.com/blog/
  o Marketing: http://www.quicksprout.com/blog/
  o Sharing Experiences: https://jennsaysholler.wordpress.com/
• Locate blogs of interest as follows.
  o Navigate to a search engine such as Google.
  o Type keywords for a topic of interest and the word “blog” in the search box.
  o When the search is completed, think about the results before going to any of the websites.

Tips
• Post things that matter.
• Make your blog visually appealing by using themes.
• Add widgets to help your readers navigate around your blog more easily.
• Don’t be afraid to ask for help.