Microblogging in education
You don’t always need the power of a full-blown blog.

Any platform that supports blog entries while limiting features is a micro-blog. Tumblr provides a small set of commands making it easy for a user to begin. Twitter allows text, links, images and your location but limits entries to 140 characters.

**STRENGTHS**

Besides an orientation to quick entries with few options, microblogging tools may:

- Make it easier to post to your blog very quickly
- Provide formats for common kinds of entries (videos, pictures, quotations, etc.)
- Allow users to post from and read content on mobile devices, including cell phones
- Allow your students to learn the interface without difficulty

**A LOOK INTO TWO OPTIONS**

Tumblr retains the look of a traditional blog. Log in and choose a post type: text, photo, quote, link, chat, audio, or video. Clicking a choice takes you to a quick window to compose and save your post.

Twitter is the most streamlined microblogging platform; it allows for shared conversations with a 140 character limit. This limit was set to the longest text message allowed by many cell phone systems. In Twitter there are two areas to create your tweet (post). One is in the top navigation, the other is in the left panel. Twitter allows for images and location data in posts.

Before you consider using either tool to increase interaction with students, lurk. Many users wait weeks or months to post. One of the amazing strengths of Twitter is viewing current discussion in a particular industry or on a particular topic.

**EXAMPLES**

Use Twitter to unearth areas for future reading; you’ll be amazed at where your research leads! Other uses: student collaboration on a project, student link sharing towards research papers, or broadcasting your own links.

Get students sharing with Tumblr; it is a quick method to allow them to show you something they create.

**LEARN MORE**

http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/10_micro-blogging_tools_compared.php


1 Posts are blog entries. See the Teaching Tip on Blogging.

2 Lurking is the act of hanging out in a space and reading or watching others interaction before participating.