

What is a Feed? What is RSS?

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A feed is simply a stream of data that delivers updated content from blogs and websites to users that seek it. A user can subscribe to a feed- like they would subscribe to a newspaper- and new content is delivered to them on a regular basis, just as a newspaper is delivered whenever a new issue is ready.

What is RSS?

RSS, also known as Really Simple Syndication, is simply a type of feed that is highly compatible with most feed readers. You can also think of it as “I’m Ready for Some Staories”:



Graphic from “How to explain RSS the Oprah way,” http://cravingideas.blogs.com/backinskinnyjeans/2006/09/how_to_explain_.html

What is an Aggregator?

To read content from all of your feeds in one place, you need an aggregator- a program or web service that aggregates all your feeds into one place for easy viewing. You can use an aggregator to subscribe to and read content from feeds from all over the web.

Popular (and free!) aggregators include:

- NetVibes (netvibes.com)
- MyYahoo (personalized version of yahoo.com)

Why Are Feeds Important to Teaching with Blogs?

Mainly, using feeds makes life easier. Almost all blogs generate their own feed, including Blogger.com, so you can subscribe to just about any blog out there. That means you can subscribe to your students' blogs, and they can subscribe to yours- so you can request all of their updated entries delivered right to one place, instead of visiting each individual student blog. But feeds are also an essential part of podcasting.