



Michalea Moore

Blogging

June 2015

Agenda

- What's not on the agenda?
- My credentials
- What is a blog, anyway?
- Why should we blog?
- How do I create a blog?
- Elements of a blog
- Posts: length, diplomacy, what to write about, good habits
- Getting the word out about your blogging through social media

My credentials

- Editor, IBM Corp; part of my job is to edit blogs.
- Owner/maintainer of four blogs:
 - 2 work-related
 - 1 personal
 - 1 author
- Researched blogging best practices; taken and given corporate blogging classes.
- Decent following, but not stellar, on author blog, although it's improving. 😊
- Real world success stories from my blogging efforts.

What's not on the agenda

- Details of how to use a particular blogging tool
- Details of how to use other social media tools
- Specific topics to blog about

Blog: By the dictionary

bläg/

noun

1. A short form of the word we **blog**.
2. A regularly updated website or web page, typically run by an individual or small group, that is written in an informal or conversational style.
3. A means of communication for examining a topic. It can consist of text, video, audio, and graphics.

verb

1. Add new material to or regularly update a blog. "I blogged today."

What's in it for you?

Or, why should writers blog?

- To build an audience for and ultimately to sell our writing. Duh!
- To impress agents and acquiring editors: the dreaded “platform.”

TheySay We won't reject the next JK Rowling if the writer doesn't have a blog or social media presence.

They also say But what are the chances you're the next JK?

As soon as we receive a manuscript we're interested in, we google to find out if the writer has a website, a blog, and a twitter account.

Hmmm!

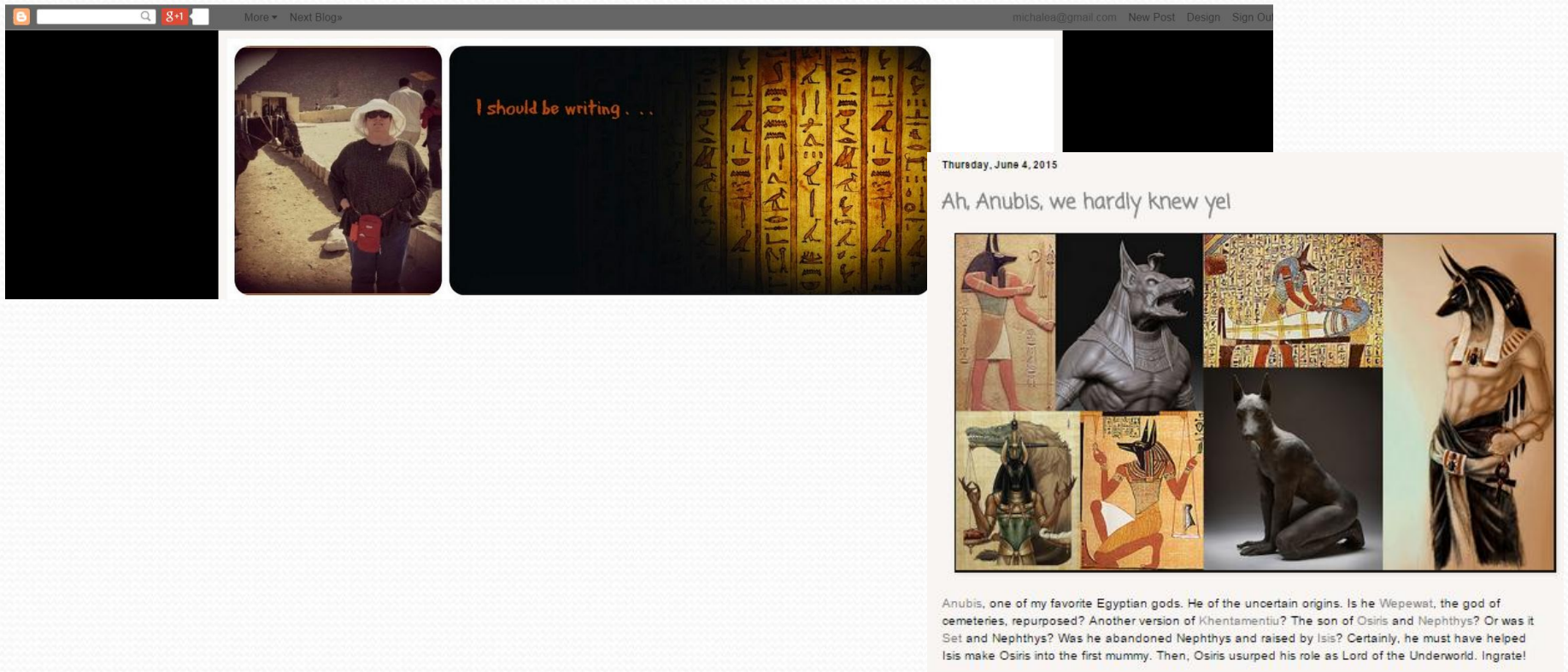
- To build goodwill with fellow writers through book reviews, blog tours, and promotional pieces and hope they reciprocate.
- To practice writing. The more you write, the better you get.
- To learn how to write succinctly.
- To finish something in a short time frame, because if you're a novelist, sometimes it just feels good.

How do I create a blog?

- If you code html, you don't need any tools to create your blog.
 - Many website software packages also provide a blogging tool.
 - Most people use software specifically designed to create and host blogs.
 - The top 15 blogging tools in ranked order. The first two are the ones most people use.
1. [WordPress](#) a “kind of free” tool for creating anything from a simple blog to a website. It will host your blog or embed it in your website. LocalQ uses WordPress, and it's a logical choice if you use WordPress to create your website.
 2. [Blogger](#) a free weblog publishing tool from Google, for sharing text, photos and video. It will host your blog or embed it in your website.
 3. [Tumblr](#)
 4. [Medium](#)
 5. [Svbtte](#)
 6. [Quora](#)
 7. [Postach.io](#)
 8. [Google+](#)
 9. [Facebook Notes](#)
 10. [SETT](#)
 11. [Ghost](#)
 12. [Squarespace](#)
 13. [Typepad](#)
 14. [Posthaven](#)
 15. [LinkedIn Influencers](#)

The main elements of a blog

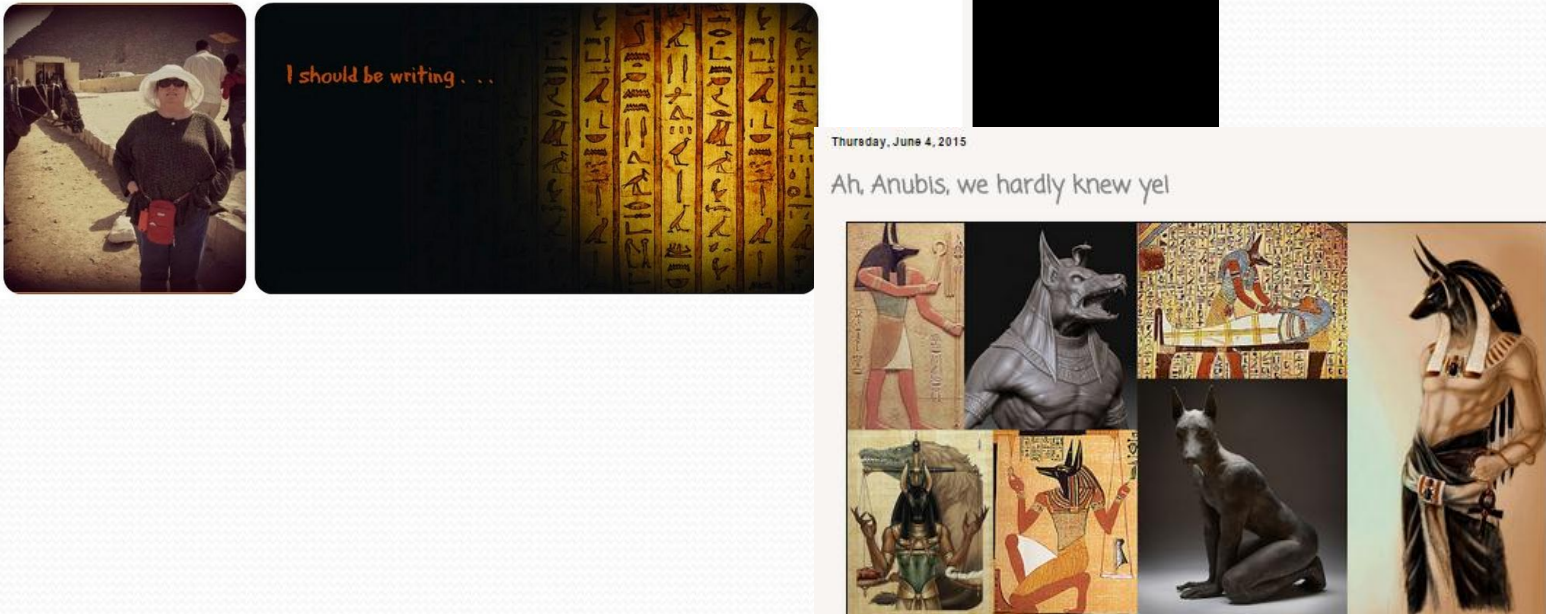
- **Header** – displays the blog name, the main graphic of your blog, search, and top-level navigation.
- **Main Content** – displays your post title, date, and page content.



The screenshot shows a blog interface. The header includes a search bar, a 'g+' button, and navigation links like 'More', 'Next Blog', 'michalea@gmail.com', 'New Post', 'Design', and 'Sign Out'. The main content area features a post from Thursday, June 4, 2015, titled 'Ah, Anubis, we hardly knew yel'. The post content is a collage of images related to Anubis, including a person in a white hood, a blackboard with the text 'I should be writing...', a dog's head, and various depictions of the god Anubis. Below the collage is a paragraph of text discussing the uncertain origins of Anubis.

Thursday, June 4, 2015

Ah, Anubis, we hardly knew yel



Anubis, one of my favorite Egyptian gods. He of the uncertain origins. Is he Wepewat, the god of cemeteries, repurposed? Another version of Khentamenti? The son of Osiris and Nephthys? Or was it Set and Nephthys? Was he abandoned Nephthys and raised by Isis? Certainly, he must have helped Isis make Osiris into the first mummy. Then, Osiris usurped his role as Lord of the Underworld. Ingrate!

The main elements of a blog

- **Sidebar** – displays post archives, social media links and icons, invitation to subscribe to your blog's RSS feed, profile information, etc.

Blog Archive

- 2015 (14)
- June (3)
 - Ancient Egypt this week: Amelia Edwards, Objects r...
 - Ah, Anubis, we hardly knew ye!
 - Ancient Egypt this week: Grave secrets, onions, an...
- May (3)
- April (1)
- February (3)
- January (4)
- 2014 (33)

Follow this blog by Email

Email address...

Follow me all around the internet

- On my website
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Pinterest

Michalea Moore

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Twitter

Tweets

Michalea Moore @MichaleaMoore 9h

#AncientEgypt this week
#Tutankhamun
bit.ly/1KnP5YN
pic.twitter.com/uFeGDGZAA7

Michalea Moore @MichaleaMoore 4 Jun

Removed snippet from my novel in #AncientEgypt & a video about the god, #Anubis #amwriting
bit.ly/1dOAr0l
pic.twitter.com/LyuZiIUQg

Tweet to @MichaleaMoore

About Me

Michalea Moore
 66
[View my complete profile](#)

Writing a post – Length

- LocalQ guidelines 200 to 1200 words.
- If you must choose, shorter might be better.
 - Most people read blogs on mobile devices. If they have to scroll too much, they won't.
 - The Googles give really long, non-mobile optimized posts lower rankings.
 - Hook your reader with the first 50 words. Studies show the average web reader gives a web topic 30 seconds to catch his or her interest before moving on.
- Keep sentences short and paragraphs shorter. Nothing intimidates or outright angers readers faster than huge walls of text.

Writing a post – Diplomacy

NOTE: This advice is for your author blog and LocalQ.

Remember, the goal, ultimately is to **SELL YOUR WRITING**. Don't alienate potential customers, agents, or editors. You can write anything you want on a private blog.

- The internet is **FOREVER!** You may think you deleted something, but it exists in some dark corner of cyberspace. If it's embarrassing or controversial, someone will find it.
- Unless you're a political commentator or write about politics, keep your trap shut. It's a given that whatever opinion you have will offend someone. Save it for your personal blog.
- Don't share overly personal, non-writing information on your author blog. We all want to know what Benedict Cumberbatch sleeps in and eats for breakfast. You, not so much . . . unless you're Benedict Cumberbatch, JK Rowling, or Stephen King.
- Don't provide fodder for **WRITER WARS**. They have ended careers.
 - Don't disrespect fellow writers **EVER**.
 - Unless you're a paid book reviewer, don't write negative reviews of someone else's book.
- Don't rant. About anything. Ever. Express opinions firmly and back them up with facts, but avoid hyperbole.
- Don't tell the world how unhappy you are with publishing in general or your agent, your editor, or the amount of your advance. Remember who might check out your blog.

Writing a post – So what can I write about?


- ✘ Write about something you are passionate about and can't stop talking about when you're around other people. (Hopefully, related to the writing you want to sell.) If you're not interested in a topic, why would anyone else be?
- ✘ If you have a passion, use Google alerts to keep you up-to-date on a daily basis via email. The alerts often provide grist for a blog post. Here's how to create an alert: <https://support.google.com/alerts/answer/4815696?hl=en> . Here's what the alert looks like:

Google Alerts <googlealerts-noreply@google.com> [Unsubscribe](#)
to me ▾

Google Alerts


ancient egypt
Daily update · June 7, 2015

NEWS

Late period tombs uncovered on Aswan's west bank
Ahrām Online
Beside the Aghakhan mausoleum on Aswan's west bank, a collection of six **ancient Egyptian** tombs from the 26th Dynasty was uncovered today by an ...
 Ahrām Online
[R](#) [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) Flag as irrelevant

Watch Egypt's Lost Queens on FilmOn's Live BBC Four Stream
Shockya.com
Egypt lovers can learn more about some little known facts about **ancient Egypt's** royalty in BBC Four's television presentation of "Egypt's Lost Queens," ...
[R](#) [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) Flag as irrelevant

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- Use alerts as a jumping off point for writing a post, or you can do curated blog posts with the alerts.
- Write about a topic about which you are truly an expert, either from research or practice.
- Write something about writing that you learned from experience. For example, it's perfectly fine to blog about mistakes you've made in your query letters and how you fixed them. You can also do a curated post that lists query letter tips from well-known agents, editors, and writers. But, unless you have a six-figure book deal in hand, don't tell other people how to write killer query letters that will sell their work.

Writing a post – Still stuck?

Try these web sites:

Remember: Don't write about a topic you know nothing about unless you're writing to say you know nothing about it; it can ruin your credibility.

- 40 Blog Post Ideas for Writers
<http://www.webdesignrelief.com/40-blog-post-ideas-novelists-poets-creative-writers/>
- 365 Blog Post Ideas for Authors and Writers (The Writing Community section)
<http://darlagdenton.com/2014/08/18/365-blog-post-ideas-for-authors-and-writers/>
- 105 Author Blog Prompts: Banish Your Blank Blog!
<http://selfpublishingteam.com/105-author-blog-prompts/>

Writing a Post – Good habits

- Blog regularly, but don't overcommit. No one has the stamina to blog every day unless they're getting paid. If you can't post at least once a month, it's probably not worth doing.
- Post consistently so your readers know what to expect and when. For example, post on the first day of the month or every Monday.
- Use a scheduling tool like Huitsuite if it keeps you regular. 😊
- Google spiders like links, images, and videos. Use them.
 - Links support your opinion and let people explore a topic more thoroughly.
 - Images help a post flow more effectively, make great visual punchlines, and make complex topics more understandable.
 - People love videos. If you can find an appropriate one, use it.
- ✘ Keep a backlog of posts ready. Some of the most successful bloggers keep a backlog of cartoons or memes that they schedule for busy times, when they're on vacation, or when they have nothing to say.
- ✘ Brand your author blog as your own with distinctive and consistent typography, graphics, and Point of View.
- ✘ Edit, edit, edit. Your post doesn't need to be perfect, but don't make stupid grammatical errors. You're a writer, after all; you're supposed to know these things.

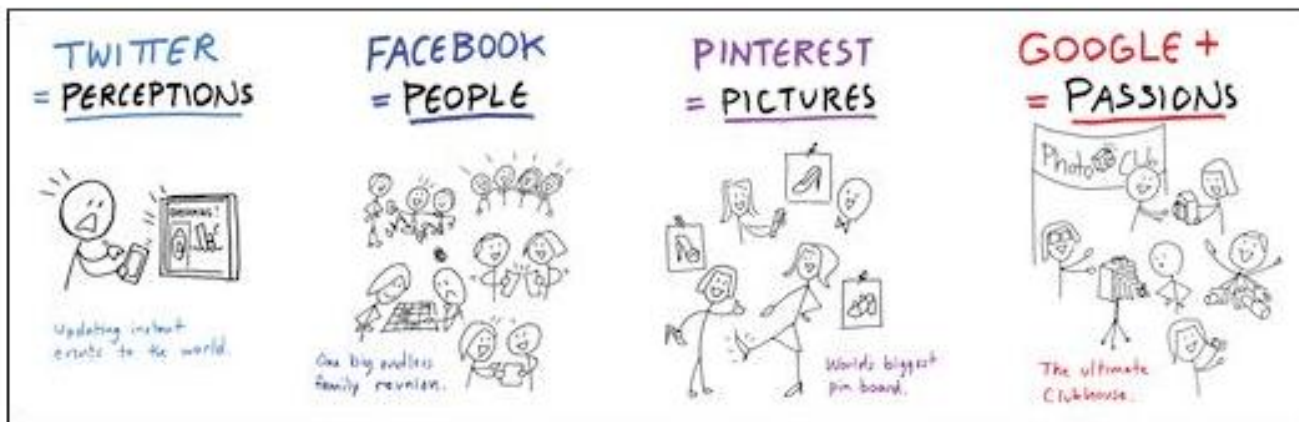
Sharing your brilliance

- There are an estimated 106 million bloggers in the United States alone.
- What are the chances of someone finding your needle in that haystack?
- Don't expect Google to just pick them up.
- **It's up to you** to let people know you're out there.



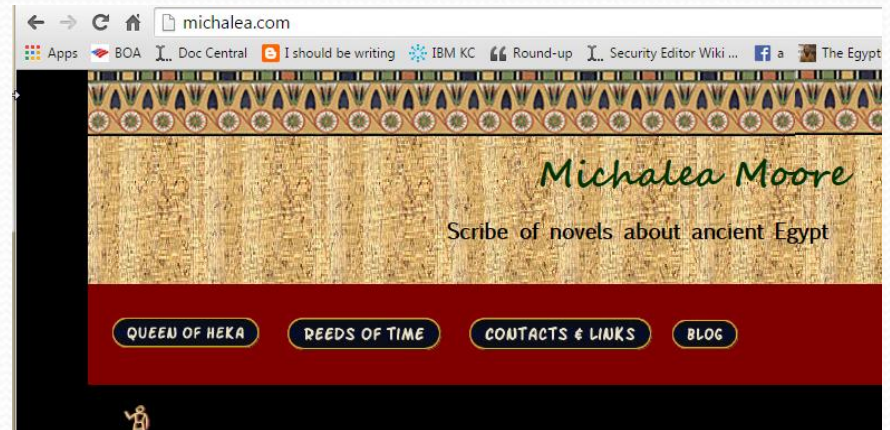
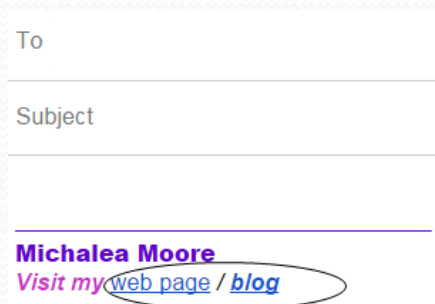
Sharing your brilliance – Strategies

- Know your audience:
 - Who is the target reader for your work?
 - Fellow writers are the beginning point; not the end point.
- Social media is your friend: Facebook, Google +, Twitter, and Pinterest are the big four.
Note: Goodreads is becoming a player, but I'm not up to speed on either using it or the results it's bringing in.
- Obviously, you don't have to do all of them, but you should do at least one.
- Each one has its strengths. Guy Kawasaki — Silicon-Valley based author, speaker, entrepreneur, evangelist, and responsible for marketing the Macintosh — describes the strengths of each platform:
 - Twitter for real time perceptions, as in “Hey, this happened just a few minutes ago.”
 - Facebook is great for learning about what's going on in the lives of people you mostly already know.
 - Pinterest is for people who are more visually oriented.
 - Google is set up for sharing your “passions” with people you haven't yet met.



Sharing your brilliance – Strategies

- If you don't do all of them, figure out which one your target audience uses most. For example, one of my target audiences is people who are interested in Egyptology. Google+ has the best audience for that group. Another target audience is people who read Historical Novels; a Facebook group has a bigger audience for it.
- Don't expect an overnight miracle. Building a following takes time. This year, my blog has about 7,000 hits. Most of them occurred in the last 4 months.
- Make sure your email signature line, your website, and your business cards link to your blog.



Sharing your brilliance – Facebook

- Create an author page if you don't have one.



- Join groups that your target audience belong to.
- When you publish a new post for your own blog or LocalQ, put it on your Facebook author page. You can do this manually or with a tool like Huitsuite.
- Don't count on Facebook to share the post with the people who Like or Follow your author page. The current algorithm only shares each post with about 30% of the people who Like or Follow you.
- Use the Share feature to share your post on your personal page and on the pages of groups that you belong to.
- Optional: Boost your Facebook post with paid advertising. Weigh benefit versus cost.

Sharing your brilliance – Google +

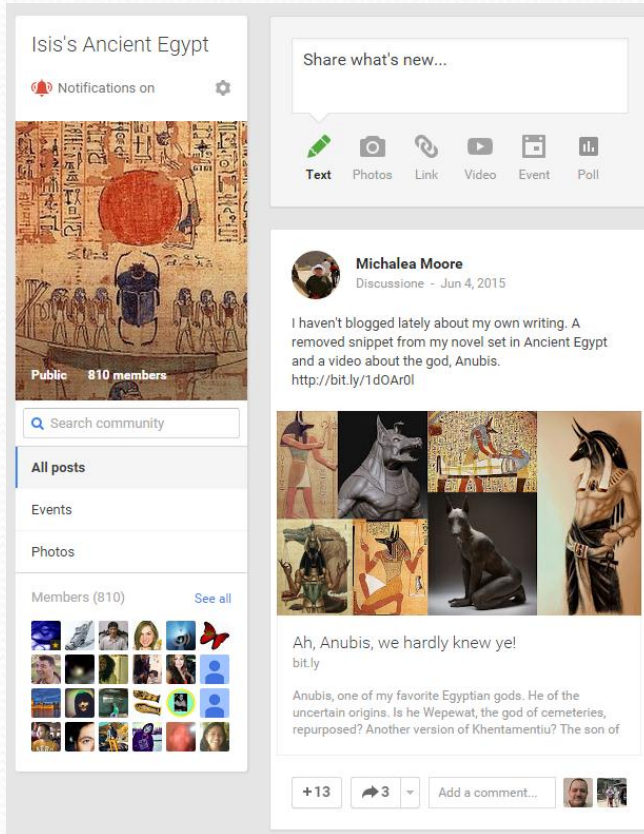
- If you use Gmail, you automatically have a Google+ profile.
- Search for circles that include your target audience.

The screenshot displays a Google+ profile interface. At the top, there's a header with a blue 'Create community' button and a search bar labeled 'Search for communities'. Below this, the page is divided into two main sections: 'Communities you moderate' and 'Communities you've joined'. The 'Communities you moderate' section shows a single card for 'Ancient Egypt' with 1,435 members. The 'Communities you've joined' section features a grid of 14 community cards, each with a representative image, the community name, and the number of members. The communities listed are: Egyptomania Art (1,009 members), Ancient Egypt (846 members), Isis's Ancient Egypt (810 members), ANCIENT EGYPT THROUGH PICTURES (351 members), Egyptology (1,312 members), Reading History (995 members), Fantasy Writers (10,153 members), Egypt Day1 News (2,463 members), Readers and Writers (1,583 members), Rise of Ancient Egypt RP (56 members), Where Writers And Authors Meet (4,519 members), Historical Fiction (211 members), Discover New Historical Fiction (1,030 members), and The Writers Community (27,671 members).

- If Blogger is your blogging tool, your blog automatically posts to your profile when you create a new post. Otherwise, you must share the post either manually or with a tool like Huitsuite.
- People who like your posts will put you in their circles. (Kind of like Facebook Friends and Followers.)

Sharing your brilliance – Google +

- Share the post with all the pertinent circles you joined.



- The followers who put you in their circles get the posts automatically.

Sharing your brilliance – Twitter

- Whenever you blog, tweet about it and **provide the link to the specific post**.
- **Confession:** I'm not a big tweeter or even a good Twitter follower. That being said, Tour Egypt with 2000 followers picked up my blog tweets and started featuring my blog on a regular basis. They also call me out when they send out their daily tweet. This kind of exposure makes it likely that they will also review my book when it comes out.

The screenshot shows the homepage of 'Tour Egypt Daily'. At the top, there's a navigation menu with categories: HEADLINES, SPORTS, SCIENCE, LEISURE, #EGYPTOLOGY, #ANCIENTEGYPT, and ALL ARTICLES. Below the menu, it displays the date 'Tuesday, Jul. 21, 2015' and a note 'Next update in about 18 hours'. The main content area features three article teasers:

- Article 1:** 'I should be writing: Ancient Egypt this week: Artist's rendering, Egyptian Musical in Tokyo, Tut mini-series Reviews'. Shared by Michalea Moore. The article is from michealeam.blogspot.com and discusses an artist's rendering, an Egyptian musical in Tokyo, and Tutankhamun mini-series reviews.
- Article 2:** 'Even ancient Egypt has bad boys in Spike's Tut: review'. Shared by Egyptology News. The article is from ourwindsor.ca and discusses the pharaoh Tutankhamun's health and genetic analysis.
- Article 3:** 'Why Egypt Is the Most Charming Country to Spend Ramadan'. Shared by Melvin. The article is from traveldudes.org and discusses spending Christmas in Egypt.

On the right side of the page, there is a 'Subscribe to the Email Newsletter' section with an input field for an email address and a 'Subscribe' button. Below this is the 'Tour Egypt' logo and a Twitter icon. At the bottom right, there is a section for 'Other interesting papers' featuring a link to 'Cozy Mystery Chronicle' by Dame Agatha.

- A writer friend of mine who has several thousand Twitter followers suggests tweeting your posts twice: once in the morning and once in the evening to account for worldwide time zones. An article on blogging suggests tweeting the link 5-10 times in a week at different hours.

Sharing your brilliance – Twitter

- Find the people in your target audience and start following them. Most will follow you back.
- Figure out which hashtags your target audience might be looking for. For example, one of mine is #AncientEgypt.
- When you tweet about writerly things, use the site 100 Twitter Hashtags Every Writer Should know:
<http://www.aerogrammestudio.com/2013/03/12/100-twitter-hashtags-every-writer-should-know/>
- Use a graphic to make your tweet stand out. (See example on the next page.)
- Since Twitter limits you to 140 characters, use bitly.com or tinyurl.com to compress the link. For example:
This is an actual link to an article on my blog:
<http://michaleam.blogspot.com/2015/06/ancient-egypt-this-week-amelia-edwards.html>
This is the same link condensed by bitly.com:
<http://bit.ly/1KnP5YN>

Sharing your brilliance – Twitter

- Original blog post

Ancient Egypt this week: Grave secrets, onions, and death magic



Technology helps unlock secrets of mummies

Doctors have become accustomed to using magnetic resonance imaging or CT scans to assess a whole range of ailments in living human beings. Now, scientists are increasingly using the same technology to unlock the secrets of dead - in many cases the mummified remains of humans dating back thousands of years.



In Ancient Egypt, Life Wasn't Easy for Elite Pets

For ancient Egyptians, owning a menagerie of exotic animals conveyed power and wealth. But the remains of baboons, hippos, and other elite pets buried more than 5,000 years ago in a graveyard near the Nile reveal the dark side of being a status symbol.



Grilling the onion: an ancient tradition updated

None revered the onion more than the ancient Egyptians did. They worshiped the onions seeing them as symbols of eternal life. Believing that the concentric layers of an onion was an image of existence into eternity and that the healing properties of onions would be helpful in the afterlife, they buried their dead with onions and onion flowers on and around the body, and mummies often were found adorned with onions.

onions.



DEATH BECOMES THEM (DEATH MAGIC REVIEW NICHOLSON MUSEUM, SYDNEY)

The gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt were busier than our modern lot — less bloodthirsty too. History has shown us that gods mutate according to human desires. For the Egyptians, ensuring the fertility of crops was a necessity which the Nile River assisted by the gods, attended to. But making it through to the next world — the afterlife — was an even more pressing matter. Ensuring a safe passage to it accompanied by worldly goods was the job of a complex pantheon of gods and goddesses who evolved to administer the necessary rites and rituals.

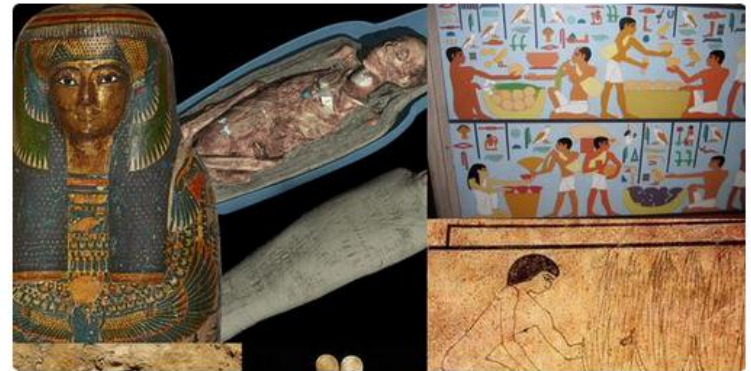


- Tweet



Michalea Moore @MichaleaMoore · Jun 1

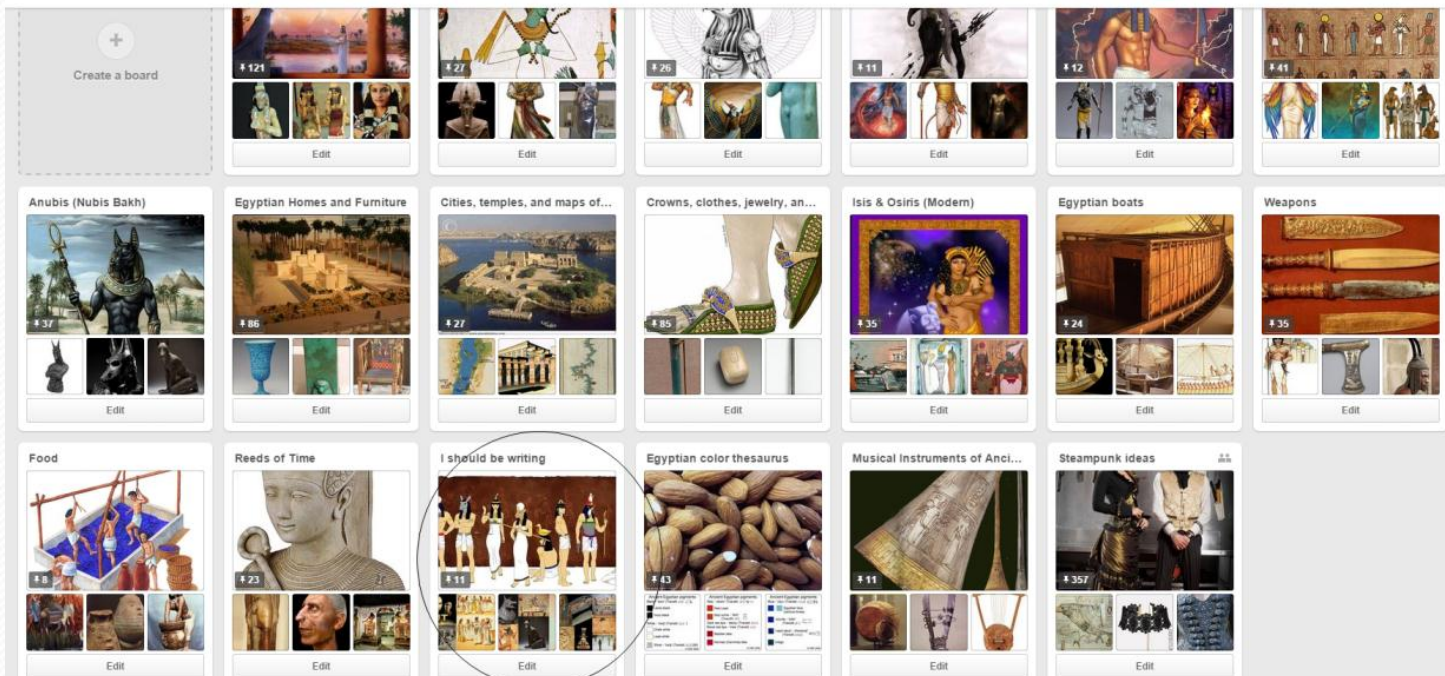
#AncientEgypt this week: Grave Secrets, Onions, & Death Magic #Egyptology
bit.ly/1A1IS8u



View photo

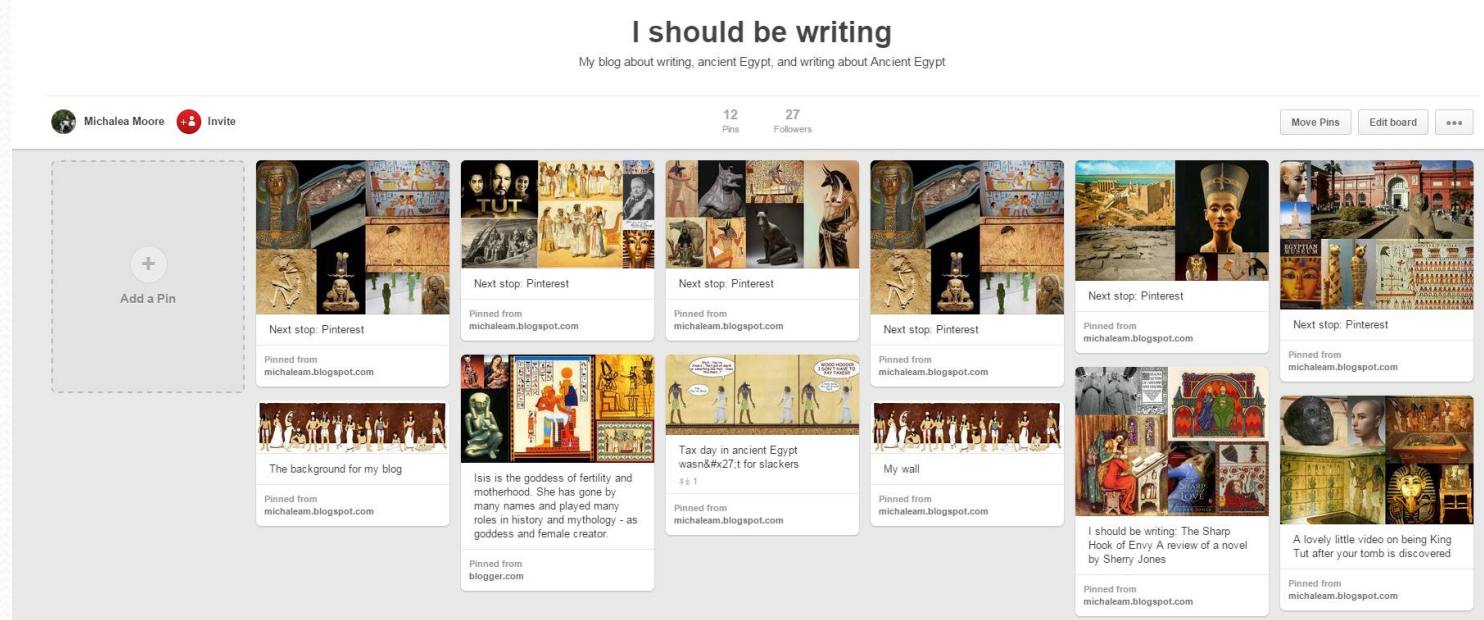
Sharing your brilliance - Pinterest

- I started a Pinterest board to keep track of what my characters looked like and historical details like clothes, housing, food, etc. Then, people started following and sharing my pins.
- I decided to add a board about my blog posts.



Sharing your brilliance - Pinterest

- I use a tool that creates a button in my blog post so that one click posts a link and a photo to my Pinterest board.
- I created the button for my personal use, although readers can use it.
- The tool is available at https://business.pinterest.com/en/widget-builder#do_pin_it_button
- When you click on the image on my Pinterest board, it links to the specific post in my blog.



TIME FOR QUESTIONS



TIME FOR QUESTIONS