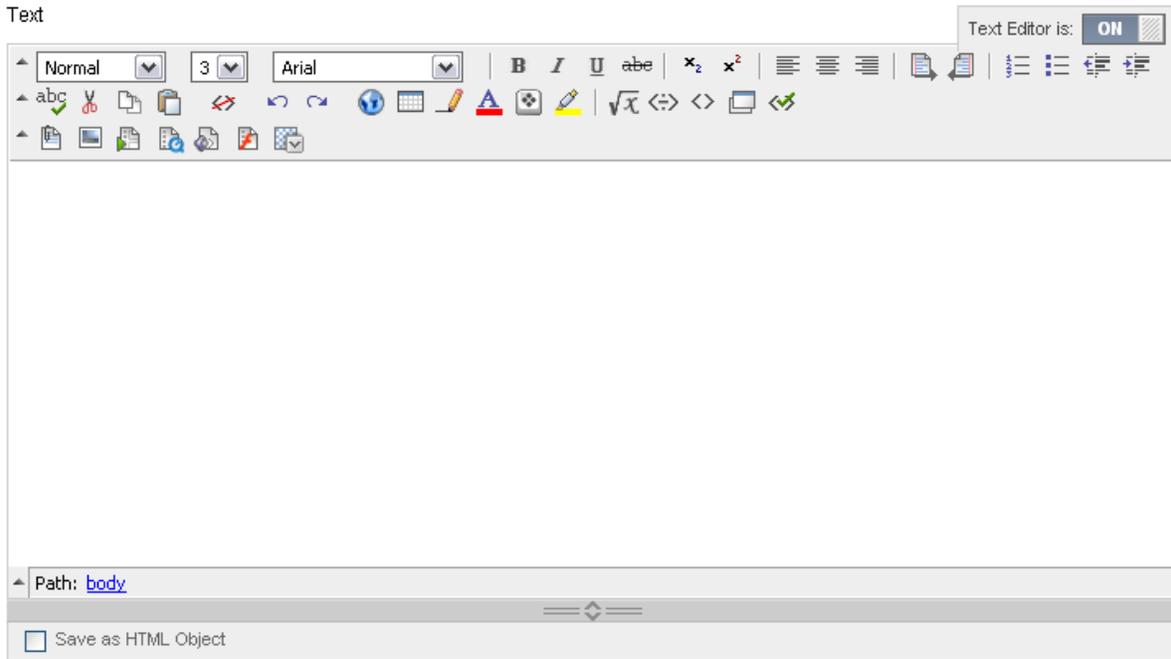# How to Use the Text Editor in Blackboard

The image below is the text editor in Blackboard. No matter you add an item or discussion forum for your course as an instructor, post threads and replies on a forum as a student or an instructor, write a blog post or wiki page, the text box for all of these has the same user interface.
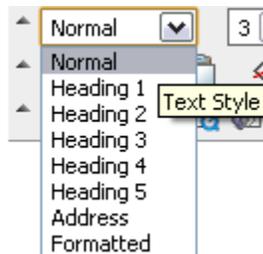

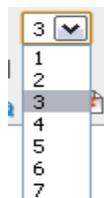The first row of options on the text box toolbar is for basic editing purposes.

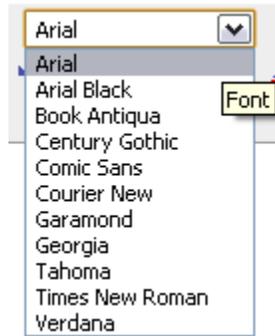This is the **Formatting** toolbar.

1. **Style**: Select an appropriate text style from this drop-down menu.

2. **Font Size**: Select the size you want your font to be. ("**3**" is the standard size – this is akin to your standard 12pt font).

3. **Font family**: From this drop-down menu, you can select a type of font. ***Arial*** is the default font, but there are others to choose from.


4. **Font Style**: From these selections, you can **bold**, *italicize*, or <u>underline</u> your text. You can also ~~strike through~~ your text.

5. **Additional Font Styling**: From these selections you can add subscript or superscript. **Subscript** allows you to create small text below the text baseline. For example: X_2. **Superscript** allows you to create small letters above the line of the text. For example: X^2.

6. **Paragraph Alignment**: These selections allow you to align the paragraph from the left, align it to the center, or to align it to the right.

7. **Paragraph Direction**: This allows you to move the text from either left to right or right to left.

8. **Paragraph Editor**: These selections allow you to either add numbered list or bullets to your paragraph. It also allows you to either indent left or right.

The second row of options is for additional editing and structuring of your text.
This is the **Utilities** toolbar.

1. **Text Editing**: The first four options allow you to edit the overall text. In the order from left to right: Spell Check, Cut text, Copy text, & Paste text. Please note: the Paste button here is used to paste plain text. If you want to paste text from Word, use the Mash-up tool explained later in this tutorial. The next option is the Clear Formatting tool. If you were to copy and paste text from a Word program into the text box, you could use this option to clear all of the formatting that was used in the Word program. But sometimes it may not work, so the Mash-up tool would work better. The last two options are the **Undo** and **Redo** buttons.

2. **Drawing Options**: These six options are explained as follows.
   - *Hyperlink (the globe icon)*: it is used to make a piece of your text a direct link to a website. Select the text you would like to use, click the globe icon and the Insert Link box will appear. Type the website address (or the URL) in the URL field. You can add a title which will only appear when the mouse is hovered over the link. You should check the "Open link in another window" checkbox. This is because Blackboard uses secure socket (https) and encrypt everything in the course site. If you try to open an external website inside of your Bb course site, it will not allow you and your students to open. Once completed, click the Submit button, the box will disappear and your link will be visible.
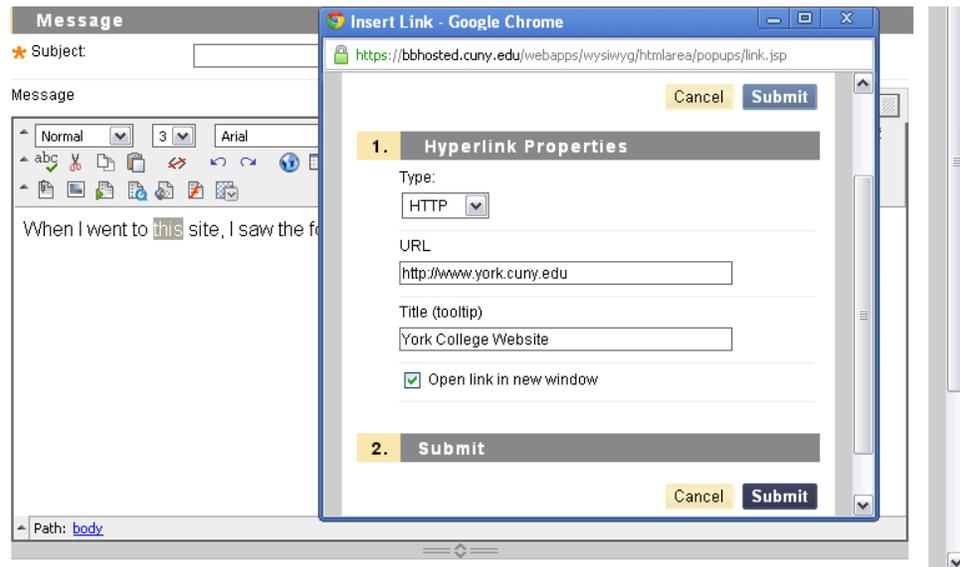
- *Create Table*: In order to create a table in the text box, click on the table icon and the Enter Table Information box will appear. From here, you will choose the properties to the table you will be creating. You will select the number of rows, columns, width of the table, border thickness, cell padding, and cell spacing. You can also choose whether or not your table has a caption.
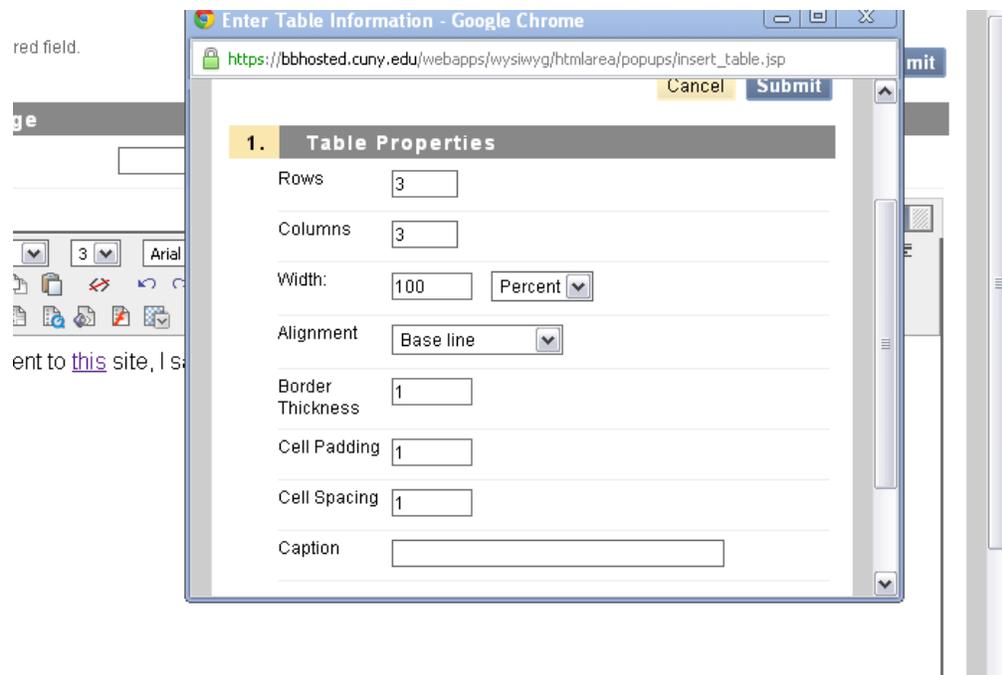

- *Line*: You can also draw a line that will go across the text box horizontally. The line is usually used for creating a break in the text.
- *Font Color Selection*: You can also change the color of your text by clicking this button. When you click the font color button, a color box will appear with a host of colors for you to choose. You can also add a 6-digit color value for a more customized color selection.
- *Symbol Picker*: In order to add a symbol into the text, click on the symbol picker button. Once you do this, a pop-up box of symbols will appear. Once you click the symbol you choose to use, the symbol will automatically be inserted into your text where the cursor is, and the pop-up box will disappear.

- *Highlight Text*: You can also highlight your text in any color. You can either select the text you choose to highlight, click the icon and choose a color. Or you can select the highlight color first and everything typed after will be highlighted in the color you chose.

3. **Mathematical equations, html editor & Finalizing**: The last five options (group 3) on the 2nd row of the toolbar allow you to insert mathematical formulas/equations, use html editors, etc.

- WebEQ equation editor : is a general purpose equation editor. It enables you to use mathematical and scientific notation. You can add equations, edit existing equations, and move equations within the Equation Editor.
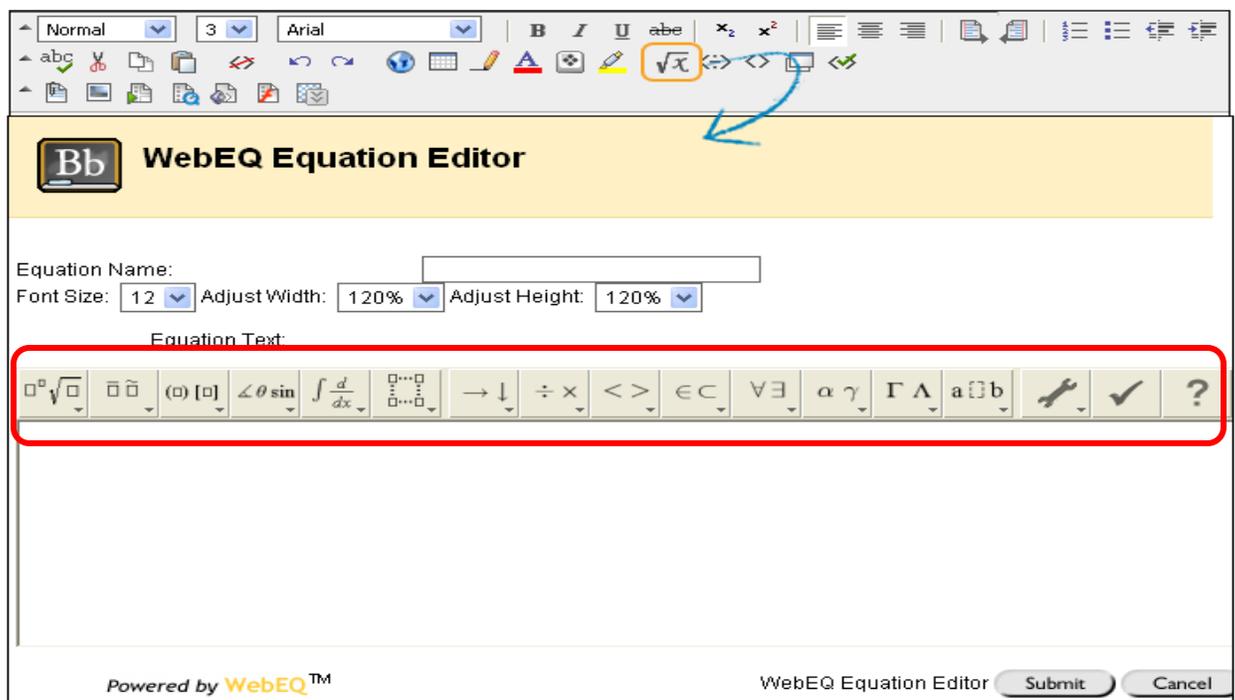
- MathML equation editor : The **MathML Equation Editor** functions in the same way as the **WebEQ Equation Editor** does. Instead of opening with the symbol buttons, a blank text box will appear where users can enter XML. In order to utilize this function, students must be knowledgeable in mark-up language and coding.
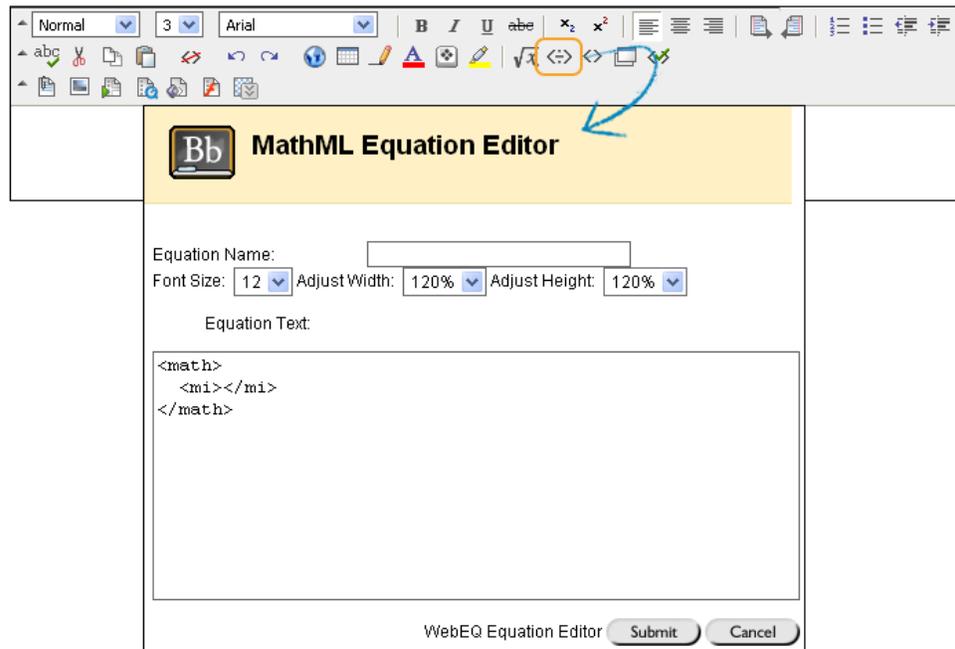
- HTML editor: if you know HTML, toggle the opposing chevrons icon (< >) to view and edit the text in HTML source code. You will have better control of the text formatting, and you can fix the problem that cannot be fixed with the graphic text editor.
- You can also preview the page with the Preview button, and validate mark-ups of your text with last button in this group.

The last row on the toolbar is for attaching files and adding multimedia to your text. This is the **Attachment** toolbar.

1. The first six options of this toolbar are as follows: Insert File, Insert Image, Insert MPEG/AVI media content, Insert QuickTime media, Insert Audio File such as mp3, .midi or .wav, and Insert Adobe Flash or Shockwave media. When clicking these options, a pop-up box will appear allowing to browse your computer or type in a URL for the file. Once the file is selected, click the submit button and the file will appear right in the text box.
2. The last option is the Mash-Up option.
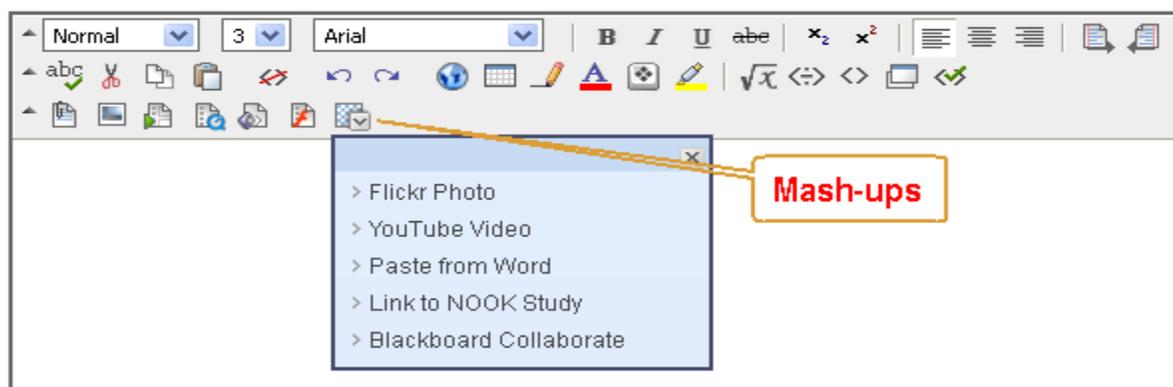
This selection is used to insert a Flickr Photo, YouTube video, allows you to copy directly from Microsoft Word, allows you to insert a link to a Barnes and Noble e-Textbook resources, and lastly, it allows you to add a link to a Blackboard Collaborate Session.

Utilizing the Mash-Up Option

The Mash-Up option allows you to quickly and effectively insert Flickr photos, YouTube videos, text in Microsoft Word documents, NOOK Study links, and Blackboard Collaborate Session.

1. **Flickr Photo Inserts**: After clicking on the mash-up button, [icon], click on the button aptly titled "Insert Flickr Photo". A pop-up window will appear (please ensure that you have disabled your pop-up blocker).
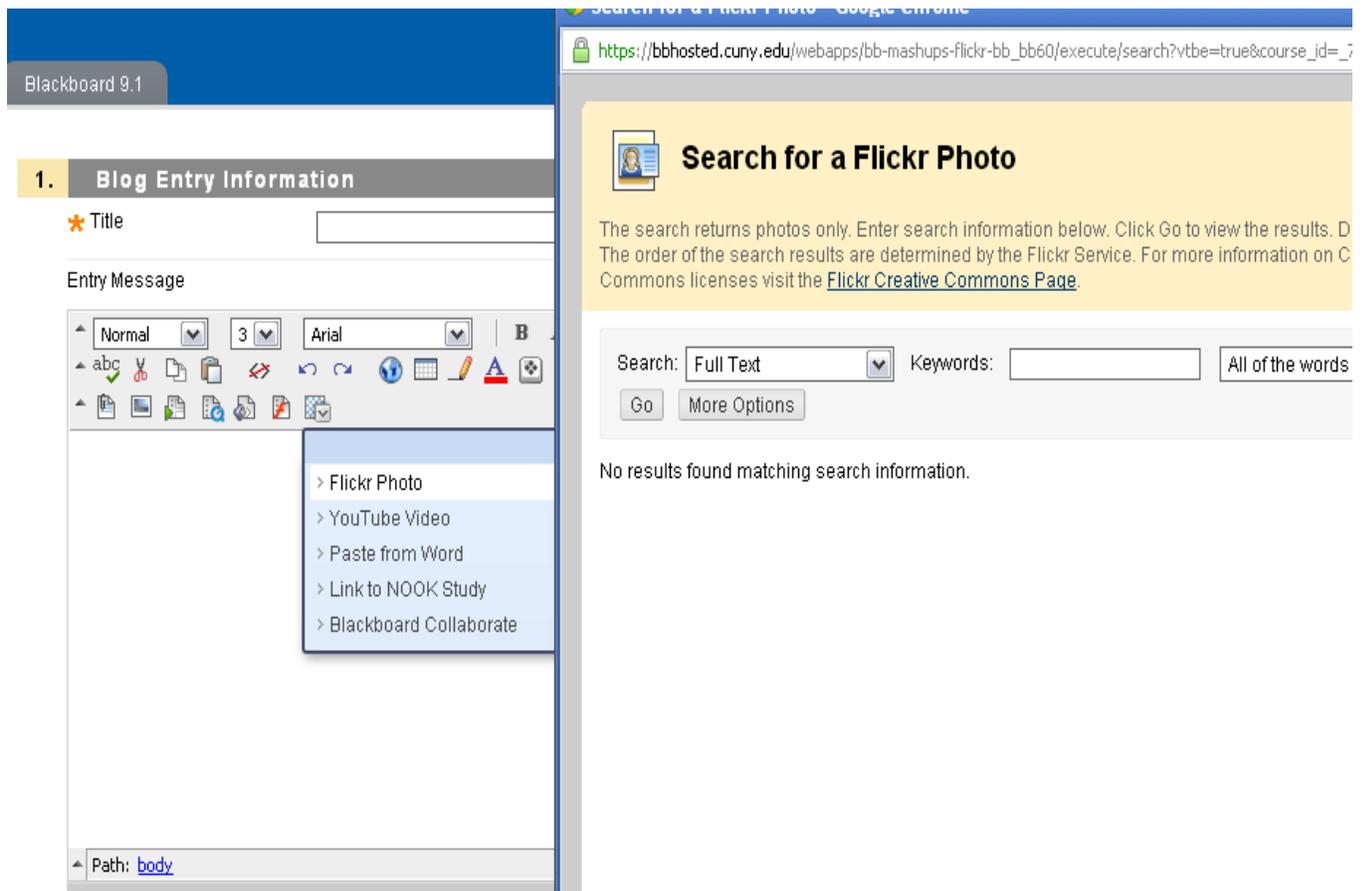
Once the pop-up has appeared, you will then search for the photo you choose to use using a key word. Click the "Go button after inputting the key word(s). The results will appear.

Once you have the photo or image you are looking for, you can preview it before you decide to use the image. Once you have made your decision, you then click on the "Select" button underneath the photo. Once you have selected the image, you will be then prompted to the "Create Mashup Item" page.

Here you can rename the image, you can decide whether or not you choose to use the photo as a thumbnail or as an embedded image, you can decide what size the image should be, you can decide whether or not you would like to show the URL to the image and whether or not you want to reveal the picture's information. Once you have done so, click submit and depending on whether or not you choose the image to be embedded or a thumbnail, the picture or the picture's link will appear in your text box.
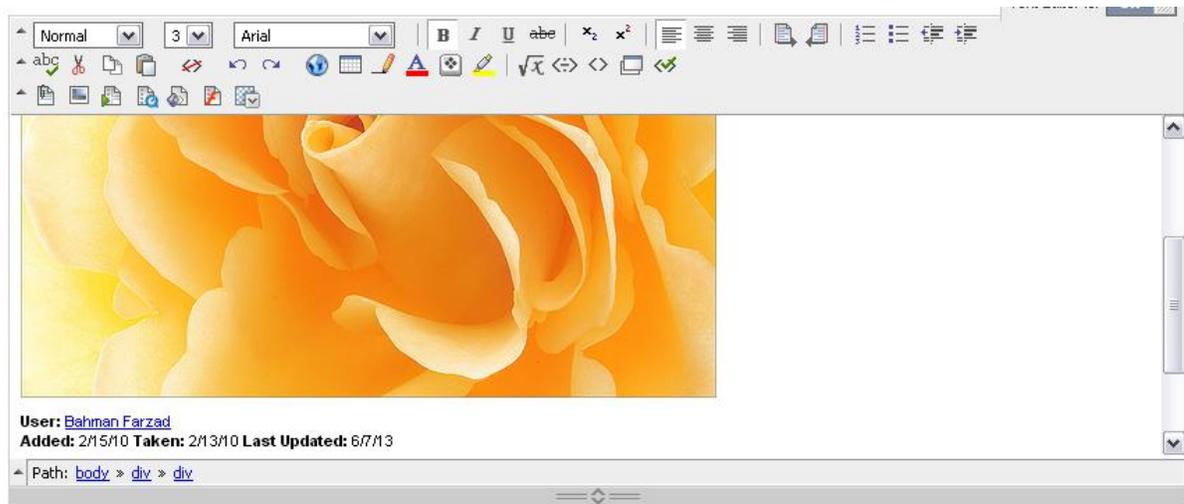
2. Insert a YouTube Video: The same steps for inserting a Flickr photo apply for inserting a YouTube Video. When you choose to insert a YouTube Video, a pop-up with the YouTube search box will appear. You will have the ability to search for a video from YouTube inside of the Blackboard browser using a key word or key words.

Insert your search words and click "go".

Once you have found the video you want, you can preview it first or you can simply select it. Again, you will be directed to an editing page. Here is where you will decide whether or not the video will be a thumbnail that will open in another page or whether or not the video will be embedded right into the text box.

Once you have made your decision, click on "Submit" and you will be redirected back to the text box page.
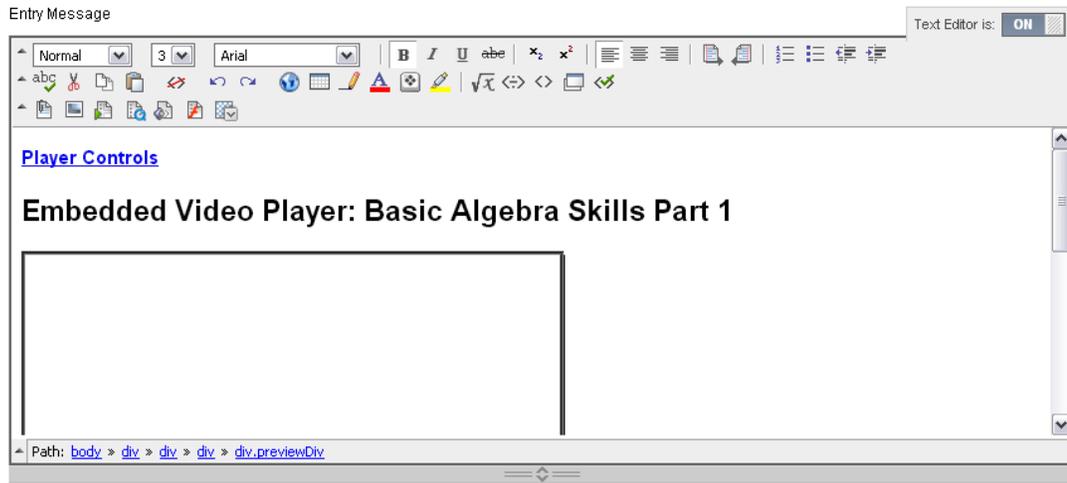
3. Inserting a copy from Microsoft Word: To insert a copy of a word document into your text box, it is best that you use the mash-up tool because it prevents the text box from distorting your document or from changing any formatting you may have used. In order to do this, you simply click on the paste from Microsoft Word button. A pop-up will appear with a clipboard for you to paste directly into.
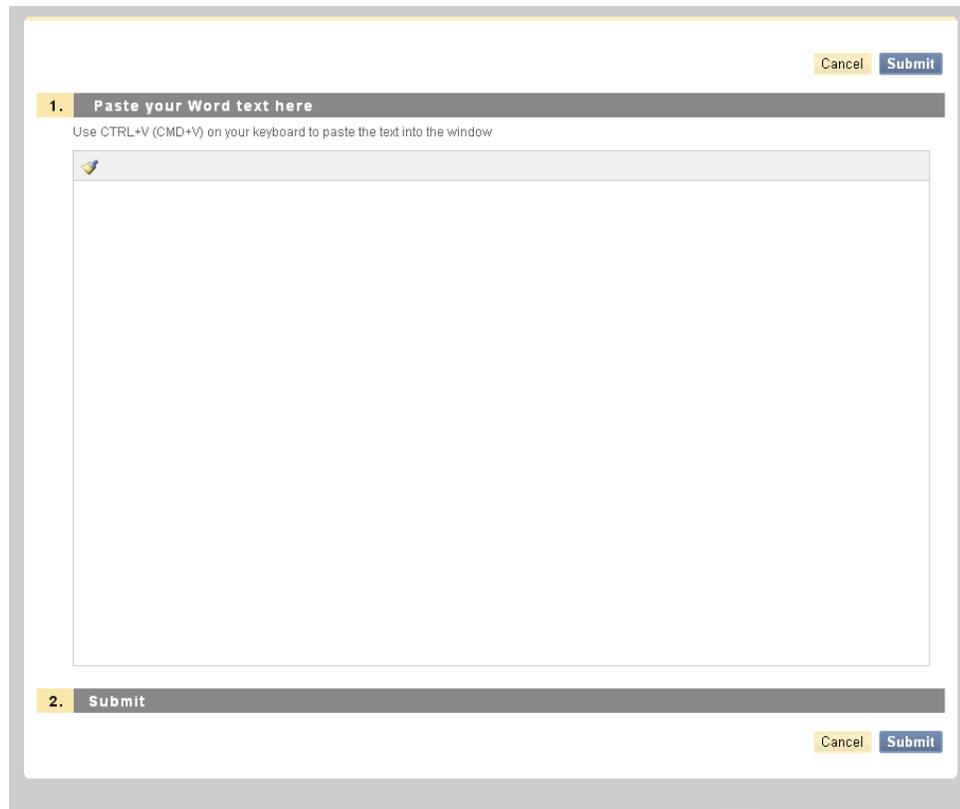
Once you have pasted your document into the box, click the "Submit" button.
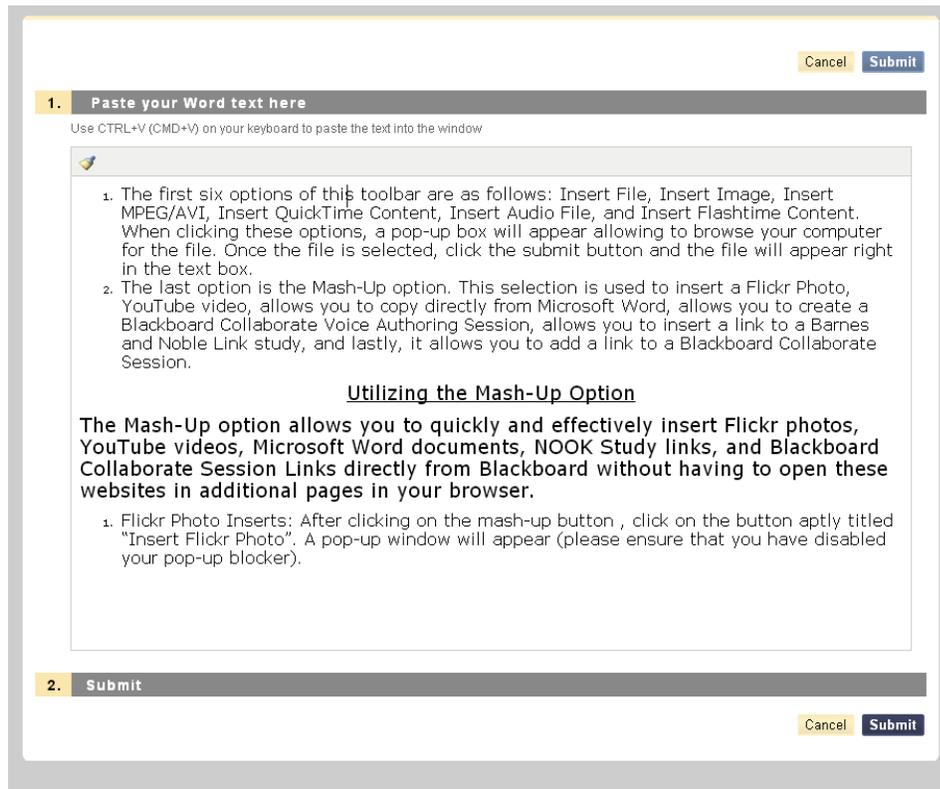
Once you have clicked the "Submit" button, your Microsoft Word document that you have copied and pasted will appear as is in your text box.
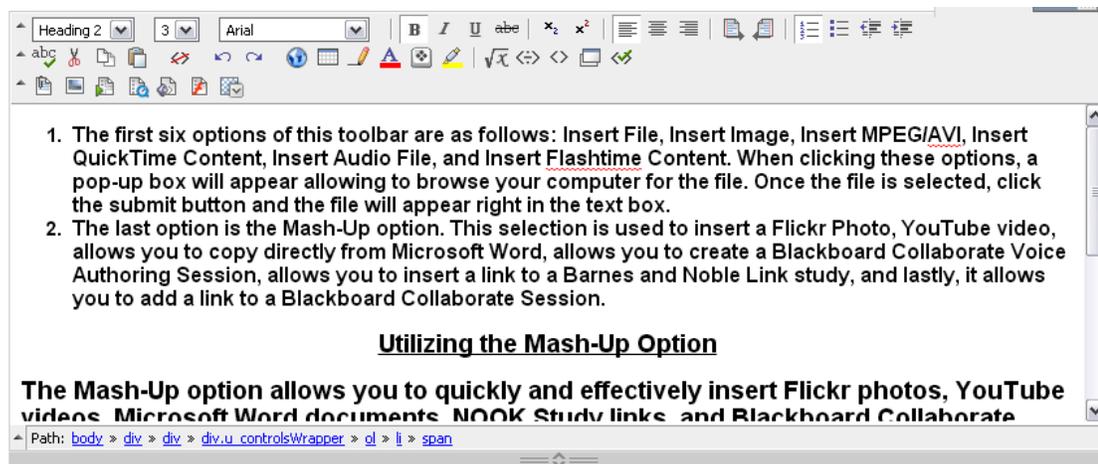
4. If your professor utilizes Barnes & Nobles' publisher for his or her electronic textbooks, you can link the content in the e-Textbook. This is where the NOOK Study Link comes into play.

5. If your professor utilizes Blackboard Collaborate, you can also add a link to a session or his or her previous recordings to your text box.

Once you have completed inserting images, videos, and links using the mashup tool, as with other tasks using the text box, scroll down and click the "Submit" button.