LESSON PLAN

Level:	Grades 4 to 6
About the Author:	This lesson was written for MediaSmarts by Ethan Anderson
Duration:	1 hour

This lesson is part of the Understanding the Internet *lesson series.*

Understanding the Internet Lesson 4: Communication and Social Media

This lesson is part of USE, UNDERSTAND & ENGAGE: A Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools: http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-framework.

Overview

In this lesson, students will compare and contrast a variety of online social networking platforms and build an understanding of how they work to share messages. They will reflect on basic online rules and explore concepts of safety and privacy when accessing and sharing information online.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will continue to develop their understanding of internet-related vocabulary.
- Students will be able to explain how to use the internet safely for a variety of purposes with a focus on communication and social media.

Preparation and Materials

- Provide chart paper and markers.
- Photocopy the *Looking at Online Communication* organizer.

Procedure

Ask the students to begin this lesson by sharing their mind maps from Lesson 3 in groups of three. They will be asked to share their general thoughts and understandings about the internet with a special focus on how they communicate and whom they communicate with.

Return to a whole class discussion and have the class work together to brainstorm a list of HOW people communicate online. Keep track of students' suggestions on the board.

Communicating Online

Provide students with a copy of the *Looking at Online Communication* organizer. Ask them to read back through their mind maps and look at the sites/programs they could use to populate the first column of the chart. Allow them to work in groups of three to come up with possible entries.

After about five minutes, bring the class together to co-create a master list so that all graphic organizers share the same ideas. Ensure that within the column a variety of different options are included, such as TikTok, YouTube, video chat, Instagram, email, texting, virtual reality, and co-operative gaming platforms (Minecraft, Roblox, Fortnite, etc.)

Review the list together and then ask students to work in partners for five minutes to fill in the chart. After five minutes, they will switch partners and work for another five minutes. They will switch one more time and after a final five minutes of working they will return with their partners to a whole class discussion. Ask students to share the charts they developed with their partners to create a master list.

Now have each student complete a journal entry in which they reflect on the questions or concerns relating to **two** of their favourite platforms or activities and what they do to ensure that they have a safe and happy experience while using them. (You may choose to have students submit their journals for assessment.)

Risks and Concerns

Write the header "Critical Questions and Concerns" on the board and write down the ideas shared by the Black Perspective group during the Six Perspectives activity in Lesson 3. Then have students add the concerns and questions that they raised in their journal entries.

Now have students work in groups to produce a list of rules for online behaviour that cover how to use online platforms *safely* and *responsibly*: make sure that they include not just steps for keeping *themselves* safe but ways that they can avoid harming other people, intentionally or accidentally. Have the groups share their lists with the whole class and then have the class rank the rules according to how important they believe they are. Make sure that students agree on the wording of the rules.

Use this list to create a final *Online Code of Conduct.* Give a copy to each student and post one in the classroom next to the other charts created through these lessons. Have students sign the large copy (you may sign it as well) and take copies to be shared with their parents.

Looking at Online Communication

Name of Platform	How People are Identified : *Usernames and Avatars*	How People Communicate	Specialized Vocabulary	Things you need to know to use this platform safely and effectively