

Cyberbullying Lesson Plan • EDCI 338

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PREFACE

This lesson was adapted from the *Introduction to Cyberbullying: Avatars and Identity* - lesson plan (MediaSmarts, 2015) available on www.mediasmarts.ca

TOPIC

Title: *Introduction to Cyberbullying - Avatars, Identity and Digital Bystanders.*

Proposed Duration: 60 - 90 minutes.

Grade Level/s: 4-6

OVERVIEW

“Because of the ways that digital media leave out many of the cues that prompt us to feel empathy, it is easy for young people to sometimes forget that real people - with real feelings - are at the heart of online conversations. In this lesson, students are provided with opportunities to explore this concept and discuss the importance of using empathy and common sense when talking to others online” (MediaSmarts, n.d.)

The above content in this section is taken from:

<https://mediasmarts.ca/lessonplan/introduction-cyberbullying-avatars-and-identity-lesson>

These skills are also useful when we are witnessing cyberbullying as a digital bystander. By understanding how these lost cues can cause serious harm digital bystanders can navigate these situations with positive results. However they need ways of intervening without escalating the situation making it worse for the target or themselves.

The content in the lower portion of this section was added by [Carla Scott](#)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

"Students will demonstrate:

- Understanding of how online communication differs from face-to-face conversations
- Awareness of how the distinct attributes of online communication may contribute to inappropriate or bullying behaviour
- Recognition of cyberbullying behaviour
- Understanding of the crucial role played by bystanders, including themselves, in fuelling or stopping bullying behaviour - online and offline
- Awareness of the impact of cyberbullying on targeted individuals
- Knowledge of appropriate action to take when cyberbullying occurs
- Awareness of rules for good digital citizenship" (MediaSmarts, n.d.)

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- Developing script writing skills
- Creative use of audio/video recording, using [Flipgrid](#)

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PREPARATION AND MATERIALS

- "Read the *Cyberbullying Backgrounder*
- Distribute to parents or caregivers (via email or hand delivery by students) the *Parents' Guide to Cyberbullying and Advice for Avoiding Online Conflict* backgrounders
- Print and cut out the *Mask Template*" (MediaSmarts, 2015)

The above content in this section is taken from:

https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/default/files/lesson-plans/lesson_introduction_cyberbullying_avatars_identity.pdf

- Read the Bystanders are Essential to Bullying Prevention and Intervention PDF (Stopbullying, 2018) ([found here](#))
- Print out class set of the handout *Positive Bystander Tips* (eSafetyCommissioner, n.d.) to hand out to students ([found here](#))
- Have a [Google Classroom](#) account set up with [Flipgrid](#)
- Class set of tables (or similar devices) available for video recording

The content in the lower portion of this section was added by [Carla Scott](#)

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- **Big Ideas.**

“Developing healthy relationships helps us feel connected, supported, and valued.” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.c). “Texts can be understood from different perspectives.” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.b). “Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and communicating.” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.a)

- **Content.**

“strategies for responding to bullying, discrimination, and violence” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.c). “Strategies and processes: oral language strategies, metacognitive strategies, writing processes” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.b). “Personal and collective responsibility associated with creating, experiencing, or presenting in a safe learning environment” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.a).

- **Curricular Competencies.**

“Describe and assess strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying”, “Describe and apply strategies for developing and maintaining positive relationships”, “Describe and apply strategies that promote a safe and

caring environment" (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.c). "Exchange ideas and perspectives to build shared understanding", "Use oral storytelling processes" (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.b). "Explore identity, place, culture, and belonging through arts experiences", "Experience, document and present creative works in a variety of ways" (British Columbia Ministry of Education, n.d.a).

The content in this section was taken from:

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>

STRATEGY

"Recognizing Emotional Cues"

Begin the class by telling the students you are going to play a drama game. Students will take turns coming to the front of the class: each student will be given a word which they must give as the answer to any question - without smiling or laughing. The rest of the class (with prompting from the teacher if necessary) then asks that student any question they want in hopes of making them smile or laugh.

For the game to work, the words and questions must be as funny as possible. Here are some suggested words and questions:

Funny Words: Wallaby, karaoke, lickety-split, bumbershoot, duckwalk, shenanigan, kerfuffle

Funny questions: What is your mothers middle name? What did you have for breakfast this morning? What do you want to be when you grow up? What size

shoe do you wear? What do you like to put on pancakes? What do you shout to call your dog?

After two or three students have had a turn, pause the game and ask those students how it felt to try not to laugh or smile. What were they thinking or doing to stop it? What muscles were they using? How did they have to speak differently (did they talk more slowly, more quietly, take a breath before talking, etc.)? Then ask the rest of the class how they knew when someone was about to laugh or smile. What were the hints on their face or voice? Did they do anything differently with the way they were standing or moving?

Now give the student who is currently at the front of the class the mask you cut out from the mask template and have them play the game a bit longer while holding the mask up in front of their face. After a few more questions, ask them, and the rest of the class, how that changed the game. Was it easier to keep from laughing if nobody could see you smiling? Was it harder for the class to get them to laugh when they couldn't see their face?

Now tell the students at the front of the class that instead of saying the word, they can write it on the board. After a few more questions, ask them, and the rest of the class, how that changed the game. Most likely it took all of the challenge out of it for the student trying to keep a straight face by slowing down the process, keeping them from having to say the funny words and letting them turn their back to the rest of the class.

Online Avatars

Now write the word "Avatar" on the board.

Ask students:

- Does anyone know the meaning of this word? (in online environments, an avatar is a virtual digital image that represents a person - an online identity)
- Do any of you use avatars when you are communicating online? (Many students will have used avatars on games and virtual worlds like Fantage, Moshimonsters, or Club Penguin.)
- Do we have avatars in other online environments too? (Many young students are also active on social networks: one-third of students in this grade range have a Facebook account. Point out that even though you don't have a three-dimensional avatar, as in the games above, a social networking profile is a kind of avatar because it's how you talk to other people online, and how they see you online.)

Read the following quote from a 10-year-old boy:

[With] the Internet, you can really get away with a lot more because I don't think a lot of people would have enough confidence to walk up to someone and be like, "I hate you, you're ugly." But over the Internet you don't really see their face and they don't see yours and you don't have to look in their eyes and see they're hurt.

Ask students if it's possible to hurt someone's feelings without knowing it when you're interacting online. (Just like it became harder to tell when the student in the game was about to laugh, it's hard when you're interacting online to tell if you've hurt someone's feelings.) Explain that this doesn't mean that their feelings aren't hurt - there is still a person at the other end of the screen. And

sometimes the speed at which we send messages to people online means that we may not be thinking about the consequences of what we are saying.

Managing Online Conflict

Remind students how the improv game changed when the student was allowed to hold up the mask and write their answer on the board. Keeping that experience in mind, what are the differences between interacting offline and interacting through avatars? (You can't hear someone's tone of voice or see the look on their face or their "body language.")" (MediaSmarts, 2015)

"Tell students that people sometimes are mean to others online on purpose, partly because they can't hear or see the person they're being mean to."
(MediaSmarts, 2015)

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https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/default/files/lesson-plans/lesson_introduction_cyberbullying_avatars_identity.pdf

Have a class conversation about how when we see cyberbullying we are digital bystanders in the situation. Being a bystander does not mean that all we do is sit back and watch, or read, what is happening. We can choose to intervene in the situation in a number of ways.

List the Bystander Roles on the board

- **"Outsiders:** witness the bullying situation, but stay out of it and do not get involved.

- **Defenders:** help by intervening when bullying occurs or extend support to the person being bullied – privately or in the moment – or take other actions to address the bullying.
- **Reinforcers:** support the youth who bullies or bullying behavior and may laugh, encourage, or cheer during or after the bullying incident.
- **Assistants:** help the individual doing the bullying and join in.” (Stopbullying, n.d.)

Talk about the reasons people take on these different roles in a situation with the class. Include discussion about why or why not digital bystanders intervene, and speak to the different methods of prevention and intervention. Have students give examples of what it means to be a powerful/positive digital bystander to check for understanding. Pass out the *Positive Bystander Tips* (eSafetyCommissioner, n.d.)handout to the class and see if they have any more questions before starting the next activity.

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ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Now instruct students to form groups of four (or have preassigned groups if that works better for your class) to make a video using [Flipgrid](#) that is connected to the classes [Google Classroom](#). Students will plan out a scenario where there is a digital bystander(s) confronted with cyberbullying and use what they learned during the class activities and the *Positive Bystander Tips* (eSafetyCommissioner, n.d.) to find a solution to the online conflict.

Groups will write out a script for their video on being a powerful/positive bystander.

One copy of the script will be handed in but suggest that students make multiple copies so each group member has one during filming, the teacher can approve these before students start filming to make sure they are on the right track. Tell students that

their group's video should be 3-6 minutes in length, encouraging them to use the "Part 1", "Part 2" style of TikTok. They can also use different special effects (stickers, borders, filters, ect.) in their videos to add interest.

Once the videos have been added to [Google Classroom](#), encourage students to view and leave positive comments on other groups' videos.

If time allows, or nextclass block, have students come back together as a class and reflect on the experience of writing and filming their sanario.

The content in this section was added by [Carla Scott](#)

SOURCE / REFERENCE

*Note this lesson plan template was adapted from a template provided by Rachel Hellner in EDCI 307 at the University of Victoria

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