Bursting the Filter Bubble

Cyber Safety Lesson Plan (Age 15)

This lesson helps teenage students understand and navigate the concept of filter bubbles in digital spaces, focusing on the role of recommendation algorithms in shaping online experiences.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Illustrate the concept of filter bubbles and their impact on information consumption.
- Analyse how recommendation algorithms on social platforms shape content exposure and user experience.

Duration

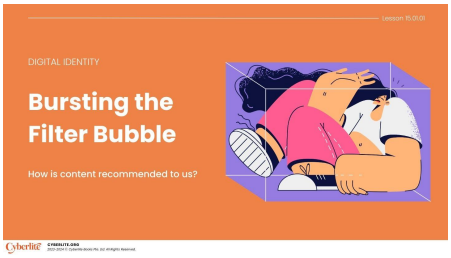
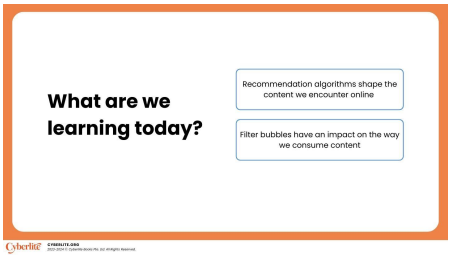
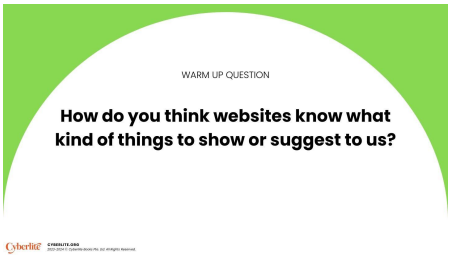
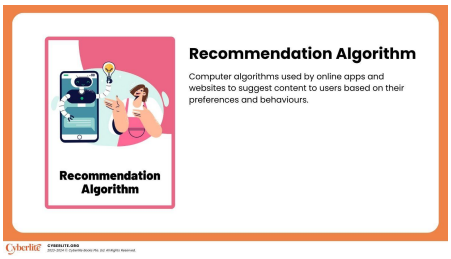
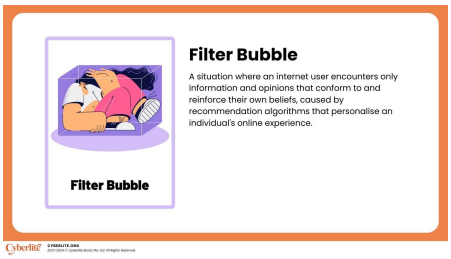
30 minutes

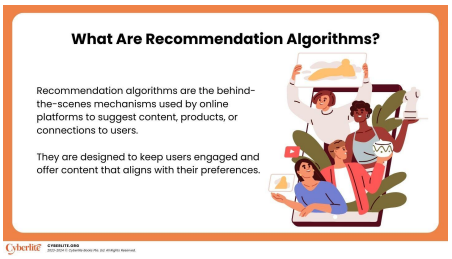
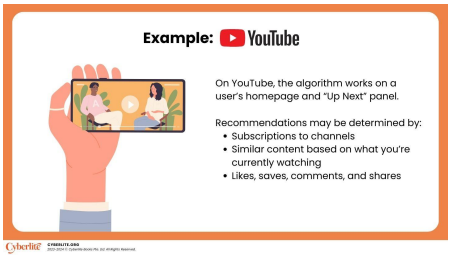
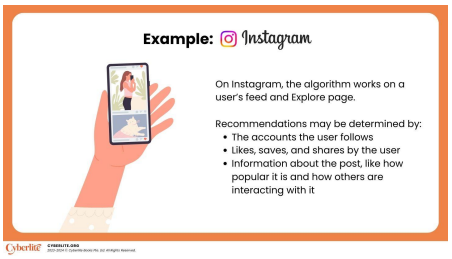
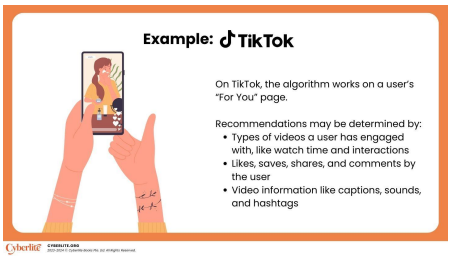
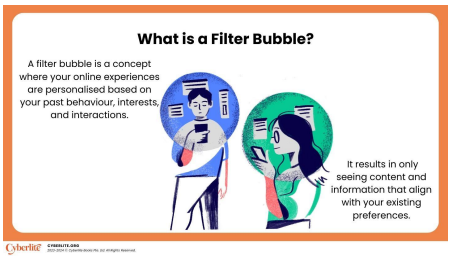
Key Concepts

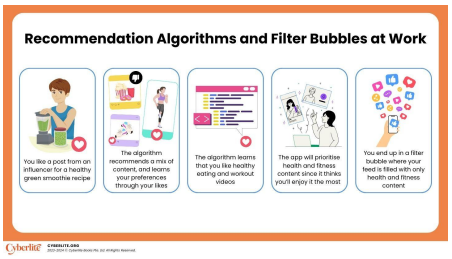
- **Recommendation Algorithm:** Computer algorithms used by online apps and websites to suggest content to users based on their preferences and behaviours.
- **Filter Bubble:** A situation where an internet user encounters only information and opinions that conform to and reinforce their own beliefs, caused by recommendation algorithms that personalise an individual's online experience.

Internet Independent Framework

The learning objectives in this workshop are aligned with the Digital Identity pillar of the Internet Independent Framework. Visit cyberlite.org for more information.

LESSON SLIDE	WHAT TO SAY OR DO
 *Slide 1*	Welcome students to the lesson and briefly explain that today's lesson is about recommendation algorithms and filter bubbles.
 *Slide 2*	Share the lesson objectives of what students will be learning today.
 *Slide 3*	Initiate a conversation about how websites might predict and suggest content for users, encouraging students to think about their online interactions and the data they generate.
 *Slide 4*	Define recommendation algorithms, and encourage students to share experiences of personalised social media feeds.
 *Slide 5*	Introduce the concept of a filter bubble and how it can impact our information consumption.

 *Slide 6*	Explain why technology companies build recommendation algorithms to keep users engaged on their platforms. Discuss how these algorithms function on different social media platforms, highlighting how user interactions shape the content they see.
 *Slide 7*	Explore and discuss the user interactions that may shape YouTube's recommendation algorithm.
 *Slide 8*	Explore and discuss the user interactions that may shape Instagram's recommendation algorithm.
 *Slide 9*	Explore and discuss the user interactions that may shape TikTok's recommendation algorithm.
 *Slide 10*	Introduce the concept of filter bubbles, explaining how personalised experiences online can limit exposure to diverse perspectives.

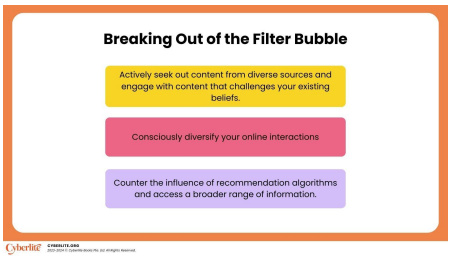


Slide 11

Discuss real-life examples of filter bubbles and their implications on information diversity and personal viewpoints.

Slide 12

Explore the potential effects of filter bubbles on users, including the reinforcement of existing beliefs and limited exposure to differing opinions.

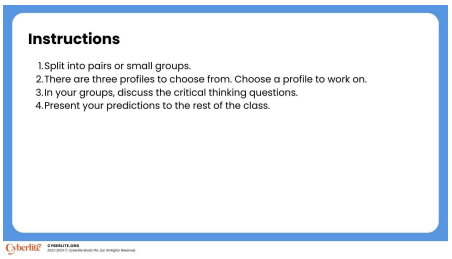


Slide 13

Offer strategies for escaping filter bubbles, such as actively seeking diverse content and engaging with challenging perspectives.

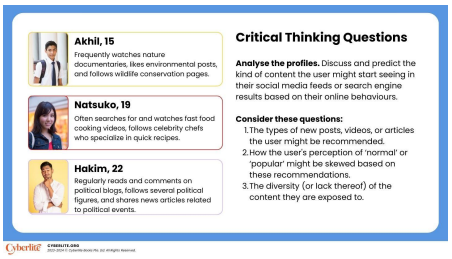
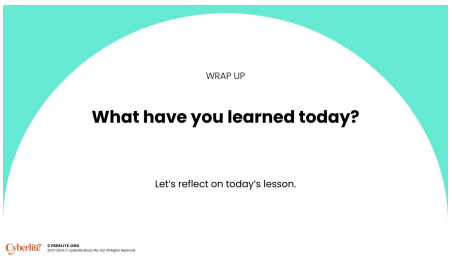
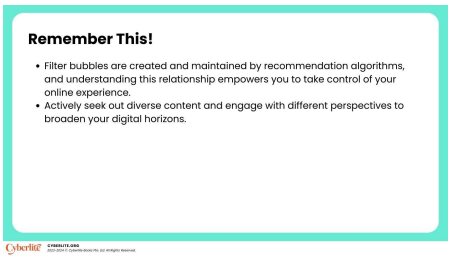
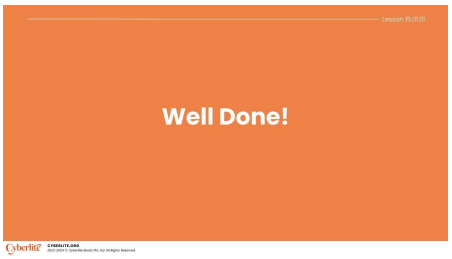
Slide 14

For this activity, separate students into pairs or small groups.



Slide 15

Instruct students on the activity to identify potential filter bubbles based on different user profiles, encouraging critical thinking about online behaviour and its consequences.

 *Slide 16*	Students must read each profile carefully and analyse each character's online content consumption. Then in the pairs or small groups, they should predict what kind of filter bubble each character might fall into.
 *Slide 17*	Facilitate a discussion on the activity, prompting students to share their insights and the potential impacts of filter bubbles they identified. Discuss the importance of exploring a wide range of content and perspectives online, fostering a balanced and informed digital presence.
 *Slide 18*	Guide students in a reflective discussion on how their online behaviours might contribute to or break filter bubbles, encouraging personal insights and sharing.
 *Slide 19*	Summarise the lesson's key points, reinforcing the importance of understanding and managing filter bubbles for a well-rounded online experience. Emphasise the role of critical thinking in navigating online spaces, especially in discerning the nature and intent of content within filter bubbles.
 *Slide 20*	Conclude with a reminder about the power of recommendation algorithms and the significance of actively seeking diverse viewpoints to expand digital horizons.