Social Media Personas

Cyber Safety Lesson Plan (Age 13)

This lesson encourages students to critically examine social media personas, understanding the distinction between online personas and real life, and the effects of curated social media feeds.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyse the influence of social media on digital identity
- Evaluate how curated feeds on social media platforms influence users' perceptions and digital identities.
- Explain the concept of online personas and their impact on self-perception.
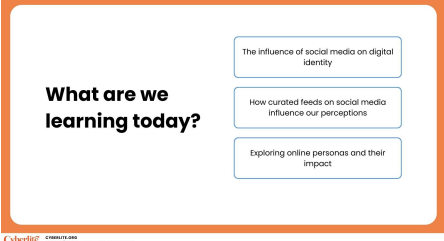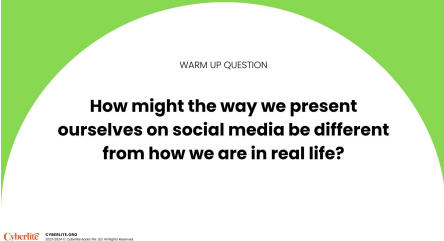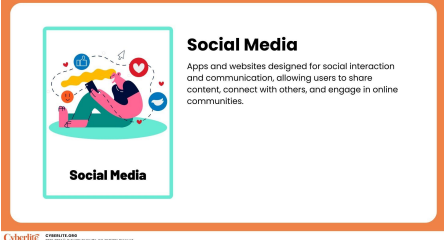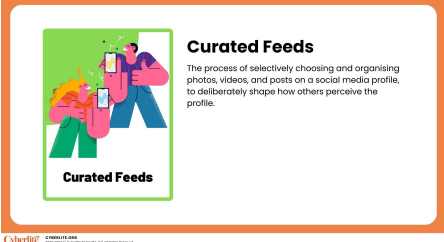
Duration

30 minutes

What You'll Need

- A smart phone with a camera
- Photo editing app like Canva

Key Concepts

- **Social Media:** Apps and websites designed for social interaction and communication, allowing users to share content, connect with others, and engage in online communities.
- **Curated Feed:** The deliberate selection and arrangement of content posted on social media to shape how others perceive one's profile.
- **Online Persona:** The identity or personality that an individual presents in online communities and interactions.

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 social media and the way personas are curated online.
Slide 2	Share the lesson objectives of what students will be learning today.
Slide 3	Initiate a discussion on how the way people present themselves on social media might differ from real life. This encourages students to think critically about online identities.
Slide 4	Define social media and ask your students if they use any social media apps.
Slide 5	Explain what curated feeds are and how they are used to create a specific online image or persona.

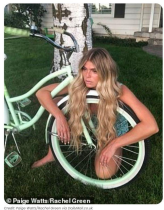|	
Online Persona The identity or personality that an individual presents in online communities and interactions. **Online Persona** *Slide 6*	Define 'online personas' and explore the reasons why people might present themselves differently online.
Why do people use social media? People use social media to connect with friends, express themselves, and share their interests. It's a way to showcase highlights of their lives and engage with a broader audience. *Slide 7*	Explore reasons why people use social media, like connecting with friends, expressing themselves, and sharing interests.
Social Media Motivations There are many different motivations for individuals to post on social media. Gain popularity Document memories with friends and family Creative expression What other reasons can you think of? *Slide 8*	Discuss different motivations for posting on social media, such as gaining popularity, documenting memories, and creative expression.
Invention of Online Personas An online persona is the version of yourself that you present to the world on social media. It's the image and message you want others to see and engage with. *Slide 9*	Explain how online personas are created on social media, focusing on the image and message people want others to see and engage with.
Understanding Curated Feeds Because anyone can choose what they want to upload on social media, they can invent an online persona however they want. This is called a **curated feed**. It is when people carefully choose and organise what they post on their social media profiles to shape how others perceive them. *Slide 10*	Delve deeper into curated feeds, highlighting how they allow individuals to shape their online persona.

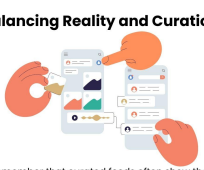|	
Slide 11	Discuss the curated nature of social media platforms, for example Instagram, and how users deliberately select what they want to show the public.
Slide 12	Contrast idealised Instagram photos with the reality behind them, emphasising that social media often shows a polished, edited version of life.
Slide 13	Highlight the importance of understanding that social media often shows only the best parts of someone's life, not the full picture.
Slide 14	Discuss how to be a savvy social media user, including not comparing one's life to online portrayals and understanding that likes and comments do not define self-worth.
Slide 15	For this activity, students can choose to work in small groups, pairs, or individually.

What You'll Need • A smart phone with a camera • Photo editing app like Canva *Slide 16*	Ensure all students have access to a device with a camera, as well as a photo editing app like Canva.
Instructions Your task is to create a "Instagram-worthy" image that is heavily edited or filtered. 1. Work in pairs or small groups. 2. Take some photos! You can take photos of each other, your environment, or any object of your choice. 3. Upload your photos to a photo editing app like Canva. 4. Apply filters to make your photo Instagram-worthy. For example, you can add colour filters, remove backgrounds, or add objects to your photo. 5. Share the edited photo side by side with the original one and see the difference! *Slide 17*	Conduct an activity where students create 'Instagram-worthy' images and compare them with their original versions, highlighting the editing and filtering involved in curated content.
Example This example has been created in Canva. Edits to the photo include: two kinds of filters, colour-correction, and a cut-out of a surfer from another photo! Original photo Edited photo *Slide 18*	Demonstrate the expected outcome of the activity with this example.
Group Sharing! Share and desscribe your work with the class. *Slide 19*	Facilitate a session for students to share and discuss their edited and original photos, promoting an understanding of the difference between curated content and reality.
WRAP UP **What have you learned today?** Let's reflect on today's lesson. *Slide 20*	Summarise the lesson, encouraging students to reflect on what they've learned about social media personas and curated feeds.

Remember This! • Don't believe everything you see on social media, because it's often curated to reflect someone's online persona. • What you see on social media is often edited with intention and may not always represent the genuine, unfiltered reality. • It's important to take breaks from social media and spend time with friends, family, and outdoor activities. • Finding a balance between your online and offline life is key to your well-being. *Slide 21*	Emphasise that not everything seen on social media is true to life, it's often curated, and the importance of balancing online and offline life for wellbeing.
Well Done! *Slide 22*	Congratulate students on completing the lesson and encourage them to continue exploring their online identities with a critical and informed perspective.