

Dance Gone Viral

EXERCISE-IN-A-BOX LESSON PLAN (13-15 years old)

OVERVIEW

This lesson teaches students about negative online behaviours like betrayal, flaming, and herd mentality, equipping them to navigate the online world safely. By understanding these concepts, students will learn to be upstanders in the face of negativity and foster a safe, inclusive online environment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Understand how betrayal can be used as a tool to harm others and the impact it can have on the victim.
 - Identify what flaming looks like in online contexts, which includes the use of hurtful or aggressive language in online interactions.
 - Examine how the concept of herd mentality relates to cyberbullying and its negative effects in escalating a situation.
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DURATION

60 minutes

KEYWORDS

- **Herd Mentality:** This refers to the tendency of people to go along with what the group is doing, without thinking for themselves. Herd mentality can make it more likely for people to join in and bully someone just because everyone else is doing it, even if they don't actually believe it's the right thing to do.
 - **Flaming:** When someone uses angry, mean, and insulting language to another person online. It can feel like a scary argument because the messages are meant to be hurtful and intimidating.
 - **Betrayal:** Betrayal can refer to a friend or trusted peer sharing private or sensitive information, or joining in with others to bully someone. Betrayal can be especially hurtful because it often comes from someone the victim thought was a friend.
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INTERNET INDEPENDENT FRAMEWORK

The learning objectives in this workshop are aligned with the **Cyberbullying & Abuse** pillar of the Internet Independent Framework. Visit cyberlite.org for more information.

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WARM-UP 5 MINUTES

Slide 1

Say: Today, we will be diving into the topic of cyberbullying. There are many nuances when it comes to cyberbullying, because it doesn't always present itself in the same format every time. It can look very different to different people.

Slide 2

Ask: Have you ever agreed to go along with something you didn't quite believe in, just because everyone else is doing it?

Students of this age group are likely to conform with the crowd in fear of being picked on as the odd one out. Ask students if they have participated in a challenge or agreed on an opinion out of this fear.



DEFINE THE KEYWORDS 15 MINUTES

Slide 3

Ask: Does anyone know what herd mentality, flaming, or betrayal mean?

Allow students to guess or extrapolate meanings. Guide them to think about it in the lesson's context of cyberbullying.

Slide 4

Read the contents of the slide aloud.

Discuss: Why do you think people fall into herd mentality?

Herd mentality can also be called peer pressure or groupthink. It is a form of conformity driven by social pressure, which makes individuals rely on what the crowd thinks rather than thinking for themselves. Encourage students in their early teens to share their experiences with peer pressure.

Slide 5

Read the contents of the slide aloud.

Discuss: How do you think flaming can escalate and lead to cyberbullying?

When two people engage in flaming online by sending unkind messages back and forth, it has a tendency to escalate into a more serious cyberbullying situation as it may spiral out of control.

Slide 6

Read the contents of the slide aloud.

Discuss: Why can online betrayal feel especially hurtful to someone?

Betrayal can be hurtful because it violates trust and can lead to feelings of embarrassment, shame, or social isolation. It can have long-lasting effects on a person's reputations or relationships. Have students imagine if their closest friends told everyone their secrets and ask them to share how they might feel.



INVESTIGATE THE SCENARIO

30 MINUTES

Slide 7

Say: In this next section, we will explore a scenario that involves two boys called Ahmad and Lloyd. Remember to keep the keywords we've just learned in mind. I will be showing you five pieces of evidence which we'll investigate together. Think critically about the information we're examining and consider the discussion questions.

(Optional) Select six students to read as these characters: Ahmad, Lloyd, Jude, Tony, Scarlet, and Jack.

Slide 8

Read the text messages between Ahmad and Jude.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Discuss what you think happened at the party on Friday.

Ahmad went to a party with friends from his new school. Lloyd made him dance in a video which ended up going viral on the social media app "PikPok".

2. Why do you think Ahmad decided to do the dance even though he wasn't very good at it?

Ahmad admits he didn't know the dance moves but still agreed to participate in the video. It can be deduced that Ahmad did it because he probably felt pressure to fit into the new school.

Slide 9

Read the social media comments made under the viral "PikPok" video.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Tony, Scarlet, and Jack are leaving negative comments about Ahmad on Lloyd's video. What are the negative consequences of herd mentality?

Their negative comments make it seem like it's acceptable to openly insult and bully Ahmad through social media. These comments can have a long-lasting negative impact on Ahmad's mental health.

2. Which keyword would describe what Ahmad is doing? What are the potential downsides of his actions?

Flaming. By responding to Tony, Scarlet, and Jack's comments in an equally

unkind and negative way, Ahmad is displaying cyberbullying behaviours in response to being hurt. This is not the right way to deal with such situations as it is destructive and can escalate the situation.

3. What are some alternative positive replies Ahmad could have posted? Consider language and tone.

Ask students to consider all the choices Ahmad has in this instance, such as blocking the bullies' accounts or ignoring them completely. You may also have students rewrite Ahmad's comments in a different manner that isn't flaming.

Slide 10

Read the text messages between Ahmad and Lloyd.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Discuss why it is important to get consent from someone before posting a photo or video of them.

Sharing a photo or video without someone's consent is a violation of their privacy, and can have negative consequences, such as embarrassment, harassment, or damage to their reputation.

2. How did Ahmad stand up for himself in this conversation? Is he right to do so?

Ahmad stood up for himself by telling Lloyd that the video was embarrassing and humiliating and asking him to take it down. Ahmad has the right to do so as the video was uploaded to social media without his consent.

3. How do you perceive Lloyd's intention at this moment? Did he try to humiliate Ahmad on purpose, or did he not realise how it might affect Ahmad?

The text messages can be interpreted in different ways. Have students debate whether or not they believe Lloyd's messages were truthful and trustworthy, or he may be betraying Ahmad's trust by posting the video to intentionally hurt him.

Slide 11

Read this call transcript between Tony, Scarlet, Jack, and Lloyd.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Identify which behaviours can be labelled as betrayal.

Lloyd's decision to share the video after Ahmad asked him to take it down is considered a form of betrayal. Jack, Scarlet, and Tony's laughter and enjoyment at Ahmad's expense can also be seen as a form of betrayal as they are disregarding Ahmad's feelings for their own entertainment.

2. How do you think Jack, Scarlet, and Tony contribute to the herd mentality that has taken place in this situation? Do you think they have critically thought about how their actions and comments might hurt Ahmad's feelings?

Jack, Scarlet, and Tony all contributed to the herd mentality by leaving mean comments on social media and laughing about it behind Ahmad's back. It is unlikely they have critically thought about how their actions might hurt Ahmad's

feelings, as they are more focused on the social status they might gain from being part of the group.

Slide 12

Read Lloyd's social media post.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Why do you think Lloyd has escalated this situation by posting this screenshot on social media?

It is likely Lloyd has escalated this situation because he enjoyed the attention he was getting online. He told Ahmad the video had led to many new followers, so it is possible Lloyd is looking for more followers by posting this screenshot.

2. If you came across a post like this online, what would you do? Discuss what you think your online responsibilities are as a good digital citizen.

Guide students to think about the options available to them in the social media apps they use. Suggestions include reporting the post to the platform, or taking a screenshot and bringing it to the attention of the school principal.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

10 MINUTES

Slide 13

Say: Here are some things we've learned from this lesson.

1. Don't mindlessly follow the crowd. Use critical thinking and good judgement before you fall for herd mentality.
2. Flaming is never the answer, as fighting fire with fire can result in an escalation of a situation.
3. Betrayal can be humiliating and embarrassing to someone, and apply empathy by putting yourself in other people's shoes.
4. Always ask for permission or consent from others before posting online.

Ask: What are some key takeaways you've learned from this lesson?

Call on volunteers to share what they've learned.