

Oops! I Broadcast It on the Internet

Essential Question

What are the consequences of oversharing online?

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Lesson Overview

Students are introduced to the benefits of sharing information online and the potential risks of sharing inappropriate information. Students view one of two student vignette videos. Students then discuss, role-play, and offer solutions to an online privacy dilemma from the corresponding video discussion guide to demonstrate their understanding of the possible consequences of inappropriate sharing (oversharing).

Standards Alignment –

Common Core:

grades 9-10: RL.1, RL.2, RL.4, RL.10, RI.1, RI.2, RI.4, RI.8, RI.10, W.2a-f, W.4, W.6, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.2, SL.3, SL.4, SL.6, L.4a, L.6

grades 11-12: RL.1, RL.2, RL.4, RL.10, RI.1, RI.2, RI.4, RI.8, RI.10, W.2a-f, W.4, W.6, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.2, SL.3, SL.4, SL.6, L.4a, L.6

NETS•S: 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a-c

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- identify some of the benefits of sharing information online.
- reflect on the risks of sharing inappropriate information (oversharing) online.
- think critically about what they choose to post and share about themselves online.

Key Vocabulary –

consequence: the effect of something that happened earlier

Materials and Preparation

-  Preview the videos “**Eva’s Story – When Messages Spread**” and “**Brittney’s Story – Posting Something You Regret**,” and select which one you would like to use in the lesson. Prepare to show the video to students.
- Copy the **Eva’s Story Discussion Guide**, one for each student, if you are showing students the “**Eva’s Story**” video.
- Copy the **Brittney’s Story Discussion Guide**, one for each student, if you are showing students the “**Brittney’s Story**” video.
- Review the corresponding **Video Discussion Guide – Teacher Version**.

Family Resources

- Send home the **Privacy and Digital Footprints Family Tip Sheet (High School)**.

introduction

Warm-up (5 minutes)

EXPLAIN to students that:

- Though there are many benefits to sharing information online, the Internet should generally be considered public because: (1) “private” information can become public if passed on, and (2) posts in many online communities are public by default.
- Most information posted online: (1) can be searched, (2) can be seen by HUGE, invisible audiences, (3) can be copied, altered, and sent to others, and (4) is persistent – it’s almost impossible to take down, as it can start to spread the minute it is posted.
- Information that people post can get out of their control fast, so it is important to consider the consequences beforehand.

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **consequence**.

teach 1

Explore the Benefits of Sharing (10 minutes)

POINT OUT to students that there are many ways in which sharing information with others online can be fun and rewarding. For instance, chatting over IM with friends or sending photos to grandparents can be two positive ways of sharing information.

ASK:

How do you share information for fun with others online?

Sample responses:

- Make online photo albums for friends
- Make mash-ups or remixes and share them online
- Message friends who have moved away from school

SHOW one or two brief examples of websites where students share their work with others. Have students give names and short descriptions of websites where they know kids share their work. If you have Internet access, bring up one or two of the websites that they list.

teach 2

Examine the Risks of Oversharing (25 minutes)

▶ SHOW one of the following videos: “Eva’s Story – When Messages Spread” or “Brittney’s Story – Posting Something You Regret.”

TELL students that the video is about a real girl who shared something online that she later regretted.

ARRANGE students in groups of four or five.

DISTRIBUTE copies of the corresponding **Video Discussion Guide** to each student.

HAVE each group discuss the questions on the handout. Then regroup everyone for an all-class discussion. Refer to the corresponding **Video Discussion Guide – Teacher Version** for guidance on leading the discussion.

DISCUSS with students their ideas about some benefits of sharing information and some of the risks of oversharing. You can use the following ideas to lead the discussion:

- *Sharing information with others online can be fun and rewarding. People showcase their work and ask others for feedback online.*
- *But sharing online can sometimes go too far. For example, sharing information such as one's address can put one's safety at risk, as well as sharing information that can come back to embarrass. Given the public nature of the Internet, the impact of information online is usually greater than offline.*
- *The consequences of oversharing (i.e., inappropriate sharing) can range from being just a little embarrassing to being really devastating to one's reputation. Students can be denied entrance to college, lose jobs, or have their reputations tarnished.*
- *It is important to think before posting information online and to put only information there that you are proud of. Ultimately, one wants to be able to shape his or her digital footprint as much as possible.*

closing

Wrap-up (5 minutes)

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives. You may want to ask students to reflect in writing on one of the questions, using a journal or an online blog/wiki.

ASK:

What are some examples of people sharing in a rewarding way?

Sample responses:

- Create and share online photo albums with friends and family.
- Produce multimedia works like music, videos, or mash-ups.
- Email or video chat with friends who have moved away or with family that live elsewhere.

What things can you do to minimize oversharing in your own life?

Sample responses:

- Don't share secrets, embarrassing stories, or damaging information about self or others.
- Set privacy controls.
- Thoughtfully manage a positive digital footprint.

How can you create a positive digital footprint?

Answers will vary. Students should acknowledge the importance of thinking ahead before posting online. Will they be proud of the things they share in 5 years? What about in 15 years?

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Brittney's Story

1. *Why do you think Brittney and her friends wanted to broadcast themselves in the first place?*
2. *Brittney regrets posting the photos, but are there situations when you think it would be okay, even helpful, to get comments from others online? What are those situations?*
3. *In what ways did Brittney's actions impact her later? Can you imagine how the posts may impact Brittney in the future, even beyond college?*
4. *Is there anything that you learned from Brittney's story that made you think about incidents in your own life or your friends' lives? If so, can you share those stories (leaving out personal details)?*

Case Studies

case study 1

Emma's Secret Crush Goes Viral

Over the past few weeks, Emma has developed a huge crush on José. She thinks he might like her, too. She knows gossip travels like lightning at school, so she tells only her best friend, Chantal, by texting her after school: "Do you think José likes me? I kinda have a little crush on him." Emma also swears Chantal to secrecy over the phone later that night. Though Chantal vows to keep her secret, she forwards Emma's text to Zeke, who forwards it to a friend, who ... you know the rest! The next day at school, one of the soccer players, Ted, texts Emma: "Emma+José=so adorable." Emma is shocked and embarrassed because she told only her best friend, and then swore her to secrecy.

1. *If you were Emma, what would you do when you got Ted's text? Who, if anyone, is most at fault for spreading Emma's secret?*
2. *How would this situation be different if Emma had told her friends about the crush in person instead of by sending a text message?*
3. *How could Emma resolve or fix the situation herself? Is there a way she could make the situation better?*
4. *Has anyone ever shared information about you or someone you know over IM, text, the Internet, etc. that you wanted to keep private? If so, what did you do?*

Tommy has been writing a blog about his life that he thought was pretty private because he used a username that wasn't his real name. But when his parents ask him why he decided not to try out for the basketball team, Tommy figures out that they have been reading his blog, because it's the only place he describes being picked on for being so short. Tommy is annoyed and surprised because he never told his parents about the blog and certainly didn't give them his username to access it. His blog is technically public, but he didn't think anyone could connect his blog with the "real" him. Tommy later finds out that his best friend's parents told his parents about the blog.

- 1. What would you say, if anything, to your parents if you were Tommy?*
- 2. How is Tommy's parents' reading his blog similar to or different from reading a diary that he's written in a notebook or paper journal?*
- 3. Do you think it's fair for Tommy's parents to read the things he posts on the Internet, given that his blog is technically public? Why or why not?*
- 4. Why might Tommy's parents want to read his blog? Given these reasons, how would you react if your parents asked to read your email or text messages?*
- 5. Have you ever been in a situation where your parents or someone else has asked to read something that you felt was private? If so, how did you feel? What did you do?*

Oops! I Broadcast It on the Internet

Eva's Story

1. What kinds of things do you think Eva and her friend were IMing to one another?
2. Do you think it was fair of Eva's friend's dad to look at the chat transcript?
3. What might be the consequences for Eva of her mom knowing about the IM chat?
4. Why might Eva have said things on chat that she wouldn't say in person?

Case Studies

case study 1

Emma's Secret Crush Goes Viral

Over the past few weeks, Emma has developed a huge crush on José. She thinks he might like her, too. She knows gossip travels like lightning at school, so she tells only her best friend, Chantal, by texting her after school: "Do you think José likes me? I kinda have a little crush on him." Emma also swears Chantal to secrecy over the phone later that night. Though Chantal vows to keep her secret, she forwards Emma's text to Zeke, who forwards it to a friend, who ... you know the rest! The next day at school, one of the soccer players, Ted, texts Emma: "Emma+José=so adorable." Emma is shocked and embarrassed because she told only her best friend, and then swore her to secrecy.

1. If you were Emma, what would you do when you got Ted's text? Who, if anyone, is most at fault for spreading Emma's secret?
2. How would this situation be different if Emma had told her friends about the crush in person instead of by sending a text message?
3. How could Emma resolve or fix the situation herself? Is there a way she could make the situation better?
4. Has anyone ever shared information about you or someone you know over IM, text, the Internet, etc. that you wanted to keep private? If so, what did you do?

Tommy has been writing a blog about his life that he thought was pretty private because he used a username that wasn't his real name. But when his parents ask him why he decided not to try out for the basketball team, Tommy figures out that they have been reading his blog, because it's the only place he describes being picked on for being so short. Tommy is annoyed and surprised because he never told his parents about the blog and certainly didn't give them his username to access it. His blog is technically public, but he didn't think anyone could connect his blog with the "real" him. Tommy later finds out that his best friend's parents told his parents about the blog.

- 1. What would you say, if anything, to your parents if you were Tommy?*
- 2. How is Tommy's parents' reading his blog similar to or different from reading a diary that he's written in a notebook or paper journal?*
- 3. Do you think it's fair for Tommy's parents to read the things he posts on the Internet, given that his blog is technically public? Why or why not?*
- 4. Why might Tommy's parents want to read his blog? Given these reasons, how would you react if your parents asked to read your email or text messages?*
- 5. Have you ever been in a situation where your parents or someone else has asked to read something that you felt was private? If so, how did you feel? What did you do?*

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Directions

The following video discussion questions are for the video “**Brittney’s Story – Posting Something You Regret,**” which is about a girl who posts revealing photos of herself on the Internet without considering the consequences. These questions can be discussed in groups or as a whole class. The goals of these questions are for students to: 1) learn that privacy settings are not infallible, and 2) consider the consequences of posting provocative photos online.

Brittney’s Story

1. *Why do you think Brittney and her friends wanted to broadcast themselves in the first place?*

Guide students to think of the social pressures that may have led Brittney to post the photos. Sample responses:

- Maybe she wasn’t thinking very carefully about taking the photos, and she thought it would be fun to post them.
- To seem cool. Maybe she thought others would like her more if she appeared “edgier” or rebellious.
- Peer pressure. She thought she would fit in better if she posted the photos.
- To get attention.

2. *Brittney regrets posting the photos, but are there situations when you think it would be okay, even helpful, to get comments from others online? What are those situations?*

Guide students to think about how they might be able to get feedback on their work quickly from a group of trusted friends online. Point out that there are many examples of good, useful postings and exchanges of ideas over the Internet. Sample responses:

- If you write a short story or make a remix/mash-up and want to get constructive feedback from others.
- If you want to share photos from a trip or share experiences with others. If you are doing a group project and you want to be sure you all have the same information.

3. *In what ways did Brittney’s actions impact her later? Can you imagine how the posts may impact Brittney in the future, even beyond college?*

Guide students to identify the possible long-term consequences of Brittney’s actions, and talk about the regret that she feels. Sample responses:

- She had trouble taking the photos down once they were up.
- Her dad implies that the photos could be a factor in her application being rejected from college.
- People that Brittney didn’t know and whom she didn’t want to see the photos of her commented on them.

4. *Is there anything that you learned from Brittney’s story that made you think about incidents in your own life, or your friends’ lives? If so, can you share those stories (leaving out personal details)?*

Answers will vary.

Case Studies

case study 1

Emma’s Secret Crush Goes Viral

Directions

“Emma’s Secret Crush Goes Viral” case study is about what happens when personal information becomes embarrassing because it is made public. Divide students into groups of five. Have them read the case study, answer the questions, and take five to seven minutes to act it out, playing the roles of Emma, José, Chantal, Zeke, and Ted. Ask students to act out an alternative ending that illustrates a positive outcome. Sample role-play endings include: 1) Chantal and Zeke apologizing to Emma for spreading information they know is sensitive to her, and 2) Emma talking directly to José about the text so that she clarifies what she meant and he understands what actually happened. If there is time, you might ask students to interview their peers who did the role-playing one by one about why they chose the endings that they did.

Over the past few weeks, Emma has developed a huge crush on José. She thinks he might like her, too. She knows gossip travels like lightning at school, so she tells only her best friend, Chantal, by texting her after school: “Do you think José likes me? I kinda have a little crush on him.” Emma also swears Chantal to secrecy over the phone later that night. Though Chantal vows to keep her secret, she forwards Emma’s text to Zeke, who forwards it to a friend, who ... you know the rest! The next day at school, one of the soccer players, Ted, texts Emma: “Emma+José=so adorable.” Emma is shocked and embarrassed because she told only her best friend, and then swore her to secrecy.

Discussion Questions

1. *If you were Emma, what would you do when you got Ted’s text? Who, if anyone, is most at fault for spreading Emma’s secret?*

Sample responses:

- Emma would be very embarrassed because José and others have now seen information that she intended to be private.
- Emma feels mad and betrayed by Chantal and others for spreading her information when she asked that it be kept secret.
- Emma feels at fault for texting the information in the first place; maybe Chantal is at fault for spreading the information since it was supposed to be secret; maybe Zeke and friends are at fault because they spread something that was obviously pretty personal.

2. *How would this situation be different if Emma had told her friends about the crush in person instead of by sending a text message?*

Sample responses:

- The information probably would not have spread so fast and to so many people.
- Maybe her friend would have taken the request to not spread the news more seriously.

3. *How could Emma resolve or fix the situation herself? Is there a way she could make the situation better?*

Sample responses:

- Emma could decide not to send information that could be personally embarrassing over the Internet.
- Emma could talk to Chantal and ask her to clear up the rumor.
- Emma could talk to José directly and let him know how the rumor got out of hand.

4. *Has anyone ever shared information about you or someone you know over IM, text, the Internet, etc. that you wanted to keep private? If so, what did you do?*

Students' answers will vary.

case study 2

My Secret Diary ... Sort Of

Directions

“My Secret Diary ... Sort Of” is about the ethics of parents reading a kid’s blog. As with Case Study 1, ask students to answer the questions and act out alternative endings. Sample role-play endings include: 1) Tommy changing the privacy settings on his blog so that he can better control who views it, and 2) Tommy’s parents having a thoughtful discussion with him about the content of the blog or about the importance of setting his privacy settings correctly.

Tommy has been writing a blog about his life that he thought was pretty private because he used a username that wasn’t his real name. But when his parents ask him why he decided not to try out for the basketball team, Tommy figures out that they have been reading his blog, because it’s the only place he describes being picked on for being so short. Tommy is annoyed and surprised because he never told his parents about the blog and certainly didn’t give them his username to access it. His blog is technically public, but he didn’t think anyone could connect his blog with the “real” him. Tommy later finds out that his best friend’s parents told his parents about the blog.

Discussion Questions

1. *What would you say, if anything, to your parents if you were Tommy?*

Guide students to consider the various consequences of making information public. Specifically, students should know that such information can be searched; copied and passed on; seen by a large, invisible audience; and can be persistent or even permanent.

Students' answers will vary.

2. *How is Tommy’s parents’ reading his blog similar to or different from reading a diary that he’s written in a notebook or paper journal?*

Sample responses:

- It's different, in that the private diary is not meant for anyone else's eyes. It would probably be in a drawer or somewhere that's hidden. A public online diary, on the other hand, is meant for the public to see.
- It's the same, in that parents should know that their kids' personal thoughts – whether online or offline – should be kept secret. It's an invasion of privacy for parents to read the journal in either place.

3. *Do you think it's fair for Tommy's parents to read the things he posts on the Internet, given that his blog is technically public? Why or why not?*

Sample responses:

- It's unfair. Everyone knows that parents' reading your journal is an absolute no-no.
- It's fair if they had asked. Tommy would no doubt have preferred if his parents had asked him about the blog before reading it.
- It's fair. Tommy's parents were not snooping any more than anyone else who may have stumbled upon the journal.

4. *Why might Tommy's parents want to read his blog? Given these reasons, how would you react if your parents asked to read your email or text messages?*

Sample responses:

- Maybe they were curious about his life.
- Maybe they wanted to make sure that he wasn't posting information that would compromise his safety.
- They probably looked because they care about him.

5. *Have you ever been in a situation where your parents or someone else has asked to read something that you felt was private? If so, how did you feel? What did you do?*

Students' answers will vary.

Oops! I Broadcast It on the Internet

Directions

The following video discussion questions are for the video “**Eva’s Story – When Messages Spread**,” which is about a girl whose “inappropriate” IM chat is discovered by her friend’s dad. These questions can be discussed in small groups or as a whole class. The goals of these questions are for students to: (1) realize that online communication that seems private may not stay private, and (2) consider the role and responsibility of parents as they relate to their kids’ online privacy.

Eva’s Story

1. *What kinds of things do you think Eva and her friend were IMing to one another?*

Guide students to take the parents’ point of view. What would make parents upset? Sample responses:

- Plotting to do something mean to another student
- Using inappropriate language
- Saying mean things about their parents or teachers

2. *Do you think it was fair of Eva’s friend’s dad to look at the chat transcript?*

Guide students to think about reasons that parents might want to keep an eye on their kids. For example, they might be curious about their lives, want to keep their kids out of danger, or want to step in if something inappropriate or hurtful is happening. Sample responses:

- Yes. Parents want to know what’s going on in their kids’ lives.
- Maybe. He could have asked first, considering that the girls thought their communication was just between them.
- No. He is invading their privacy.

3. *What might be the consequences for Eva of her dad knowing about the IM chat?*

Guide students to consider how their online actions could influence their parents’ view of them and the technology.

Sample responses:

- He may discuss with Eva the types of chats that are appropriate and inappropriate on the Internet.
- He may not trust her as much, and he may give her less freedom.
- He may ban her from going online.
- He may not want Eva to hang out with the other girl as much.
- Eva may no longer trust her dad, and she may not tell him other things.

4. *Why might Eva have said things on chat that she wouldn't say in person?*

Guide students to think about how people often feel bolder online. This means they could be more open and honest – for the better – but it can also mean that people can hide behind their identities and say things they might later regret. Sample responses:

- She feels bolder on the Internet because she's not saying the words to someone's face. It's like wearing a mask.
- She didn't think that anyone would find out, because she thought no one could ever eavesdrop or see the chat.

5. *What does Eva mean when she says, "Stuff online is not private"?*

Guide students to think about how information online that people assume is private can spread to huge audiences, and that there is an online record of most online exchanges

Sample responses:

- There is a record of the conversation between Eva and her friend that anyone can get their hands on.
- Her friend could forward Eva's words to other people, making their conversation public.

Case Studies

case study 1

Emma's Secret Crush Goes Viral

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Students' answers will vary.

case study 2

My Secret Diary ... Sort Of

Directions

“My Secret Diary ... Sort Of” is about the ethics of parents reading a kid’s blog. As with Case Study 1, ask students to answer the questions and act out alternative endings. Sample role-play endings include: (1) Tommy changing the privacy settings on his blog so that he can better control who views it, and (2) Tommy’s parents having a thoughtful discussion with him about the content of the blog or about the importance of setting his privacy settings correctly.

Tommy has been writing an online blog about his life that he thought was pretty private because he used a username that wasn’t his real name. But when his parents ask him why he decided not to try out for the basketball team, Tommy figures out that they have been reading his blog, because it’s the only place he describes being picked on for being so short. Tommy is annoyed and surprised because he never told his parents about the blog and certainly didn’t give them his username to access it. His blog is technically public, but he didn’t think anyone could connect his blog with the “real” him. Tommy later finds out that his best friend’s parents told his parents about the blog.

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1. *What would you say, if anything, to your parents if you were Tommy?*

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Students' answers will vary.

2. *How is Tommy's parents' reading his blog similar to or different from reading a diary that he's written in a notebook or paper journal?*

Sample responses:

- It's different, in that the private diary is not meant for anyone else's eyes. It would probably be in a drawer or somewhere that's hidden. A public online diary, on the other hand, is meant for the public to see.
- It's the same, in that parents should know that their kids' personal thoughts – whether online or offline – should be kept secret. It's an invasion of privacy for parents to read the journal in either place.

3. *Do you think it's fair for Tommy's parents to read the things he posts on the Internet, given that his blog is technically public? Why or why not?*

Sample responses:

- It's unfair. Everyone knows that parents' reading your journal is an absolute no-no.
- It's fair if they had asked. Tommy would no doubt have preferred if his parents had asked him about the blog before reading it.
- It's fair. Tommy's parents were not snooping any more than anyone else who may have stumbled upon the journal.

4. *Why might Tommy's parents want to read his blog? Given these reasons, how would you react if your parents asked to read your email or text messages?*

Sample responses:

- Maybe they were curious about his life.
- Maybe they wanted to make sure that he wasn't posting information that would compromise his safety.
- They probably looked because they care about him.

5. *Have you ever been in a situation where your parents or someone else has asked to read something that you felt was private? If so, how did you feel? What did you do?*

Students' answers will vary.

Oops! I Broadcast It on the Internet

1. Using the example below, determine what the word *consequence* means.

Ivan emails his friend about something secret that happened at school. Later, Ivan notices that the email has been posted online. A consequence of Ivan sharing the information through email is that the information was shared publicly online.

A consequence is:

- a) Someone you met online
- b) The effect of something that happened earlier
- c) An Internet post

2. True or false: If you send a text message, you can control what happens to the message after you send it.

- a) True
- b) False

3. Which of the following is an example of oversharing online?

- a) Posting a message on your friend's wall that says you dislike your basketball coach
- b) Posting a photo of you playing basketball
- c) Inviting your friends and family to your next basketball game by email

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ASSESSMENT
TEACHER VERSION

1. Using the example below, determine what the word *consequence* means.

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A consequence is:

- a) Someone you met online
- b) The effect of something that happened earlier**
- c) An Internet post

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **b**. A consequence is the result of something someone does.

2. True or false: If you send a text message, you can control what happens to the message after you send it.

- a) True
- b) False**

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **b**, False. After you send a text message, you don't have control over who sees the message and what people do with it.

3. Which of the following is an example of oversharing online?

- a) Posting a message on your friend's wall that says you dislike your basketball coach**
- b) Posting a photo of you playing basketball
- c) Inviting your friends and family to your next basketball game by email

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **a**. You should only post something online if you're okay with anybody seeing it.