

LESSON 3

For and against: a digital technology debate

40 minutes

Understanding Myself When Engaging Online

Outcome 1.3

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Debate whether social media does more good than harm for people your age. Present the strongest arguments on both sides, place yourself on an opinion line, and notice if hearing both views shifts your position.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
1.3	debate the advantages and disadvantages of using digital technologies, communication tools and the internet

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Debate the advantages and disadvantages of using digital technologies, communication tools and the internet (LO 1.3)
- Steelman the other side and weigh both cases fairly
- Notice whether hearing both sides shifts your own view

BEFORE THE BELL

- Arrange seating to allow for two debate groups and an opinion line space.
- Have the opinion-line interactive ready on the teacher device for the starting map and the second placement after the debate.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

4 min	introduction	Start
5 min	content	Examine and discuss
6 min	activity	Hands-on: take your stand
16 min	activity	Hands-on: argue both sides
6 min	activity	Make sense
2 min	content	Reflect
1 min	summary	What you covered

TEACHING MOVES

- Model steelmanning with one example sentence of your own before the class places itself on the line.
- Put the sentence starters on the board before prep.
- Assign sides and speakers yourself in the first minute of the debate step so grouping does not eat prep time.
- Keep the stage-and-time table from the debate step on screen throughout the debate so both sides can see how long each stage runs.
- Circulate during group work to ensure arguments are presented fairly.
- End the debate on time; the second opinion-line placement is its own step and must not be skipped.
- If the debate runs long, skip open floor rather than cutting Make sense or Reflect.
- On the second placement, reveal Things to think about and sample who moved and who stayed.
- Keep the reflection step focused on specific examples that caused shifts.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Arguing only the side they agree with: Redirect to present the strongest case for the other side.
- Not updating their position: Prompt them to compare initial and final stands explicitly on the second line.
- Treating it as a competition: Stress that fair weighing is the skill being practised.
- Using a real peer incident as evidence: Stop gently, redirect to invented names and the general case, and offer a private follow-up if someone is being hurt online.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Use the sentence starters already listed in the debate step teacher notes.
- Extension: Ask advanced students to incorporate a personal example (invented names) into their case.
- Support: Allow quieter students to contribute in pairs before sharing.