

Online Communities: Where Creators and Interest Groups Actually Hang Out

60 minutes

ICT Specialism 4: The internet and digital literacy

Outcome M4.U1.2

Outcome M4.U1.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Explore where people with shared interests gather online including Discord servers, Reddit, and Facebook groups. Learn to identify safe communities, follow participation rules, and record one approved space linked to your project.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
M4.U1.2	Understand the concepts and functions of online communities and applications.
M4.U1.1	Understand concepts and safety considerations relating to the effective and ethical uses of digital technologies and the internet.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Identify modern community spaces such as Discord, Reddit, LinkedIn, Facebook groups, and creator platforms
- Apply lurk-first and read-the-rules participation habits
- Document one teacher-approved community relevant to the project

BEFORE THE BELL

- Check that the starter sm4_community_profile is in place in each student's 09_specialism/sm4/ folder, so that nobody loses time building headings during the step-by-step task.
- Prepare a shortlist of 3-4 teacher-vetted public community examples by project type (club, enterprise, career/apprenticeship, creator). Rules must be visible on the landing page.
- Have a class list or shared comment method ready for a fast tick when you approve each choice.
- Prepare 3-4 teacher-approved public community examples on the board screen. Pre-place starter sm4_community_profile files in each student's sm4 folder.
- No prep needed beyond the board examples already planned
- Starter files pre-placed; display one sample community with visible rules during the walkthrough.
- Shortlist grouped by project type on the board; one deliberate reject example ready.
- Approve each student's chosen community with a fast tick or doc comment before they finalise the page. In-class only.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Introduction
6 min	content	Key concepts
12 min	activity	Step-by-step task
3 min	content	Common issues
4 min	content	How we pick a safe community
20 min	activity	Guided practice: your project community
5 min	content	Reflection
5 min	summary	Lesson summary

TEACHING MOVES

- Stay on the board for Key concepts; students follow, they do not work ahead.
- Model the community profile on the sample during the tour.
- In How we pick a safe community, give two minutes to grouping your examples by project type and two to modelling the four-check pick once, including the one you turn down.
- Approve with a quick tick on the class list or a short comment in the doc; avoid 18 sequential desk conversations.
- Community choice and write-up stay in class only so approval is real. Do not set the live community pick as homework.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students browsing freely: redirect them to the examples on the board; any new URL needs your OK first.
- Private or age-restricted spaces: reject and offer a public alternative from your examples.
- Vague praise under every heading: push for platform, size band, purpose, and one real rule.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: assign a pre-approved example matched to their project type.
- Extension: add an Observe-only plan heading (see Lesson summary).
- Support: allow pair talk while each student still owns their own file.