

The opportunities and risks of social media

40 minutes

Publishing Online

Outcome 4.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

You will explore how social media can offer real opportunities like connection and creativity but also bring risks such as pressure and misinformation. Sort examples and discuss habits to keep the good while cutting the harm using your class charter.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
4.1	Outline the opportunities and risks presented by young people's use of social media.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Outline the opportunities and risks of young people's use of social media (LO 4.1)
- Hold genuine good (connection, learning, creativity, voice) and real risks (pressure, privacy, misinformation, wellbeing) at once
- Discuss how to keep opportunities while reducing risks, building on the class charter

BEFORE THE BELL

- Display the class charter prominently where all students can see it during the lesson.
- If no charter is on the wall, plan to spend one minute at the start capturing three quick norms on the board (e.g. check before you share, no forwarding private stuff, disagree without pile-ons) and treat those as today's reference for the pair task.
- Have the class charter ready to display (or plan three quick board norms as fallback)
- Teacher device with the interactive activity ready on the board; leave placed cards visible afterwards
- Class charter or three board norms visible; sorted situations still on the board for pairs

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

4 min	introduction	Start
6 min	content	Examine and discuss
14 min	activity	Hands-on: sort opportunities and risks
10 min	activity	Your turn: keep the good, cut the harm
3 min	content	Make sense
2 min	content	Reflect
1 min	summary	What you covered

TEACHING MOVES

- Run the sorting activity as a whole-class discussion on the board, reading each card aloud first.
- All three buckets accept every card so grey-area parking and rethinks are real; intended leans live only in the step teacher notes.
- Model balanced thinking by acknowledging both sides before students contribute; treat grey-area disagreement as thinking, not error.
- Leave placed cards visible so pairs can pick from them in the next step.
- Circulate during pair work to prompt use of the charter (or board norms) in habit suggestions.
- Keep the closing reflection brief to maintain focus on agency.
- On the photo card (stretch): stay third person; if anyone is upset or discloses, pause and follow school safeguarding one-to-one.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students may want every card in two buckets; redirect to main effect first, then name the tipping condition for grey cards.
- Pairs may suggest habits unrelated to the charter; prompt them to reference the displayed agreements explicitly.
- Some may focus only on risks; encourage equal attention to preserving opportunities in discussions.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Pair students who need help with more confident peers during the sort and pair activity.
- Extension: Challenge students to suggest two habits for their chosen cards instead of one, or place the stretch cards and optional board extras if time allows.
- Support: Provide sentence starters for justifications during the whole-class sort.