

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

- Know where the class charter is and have it ready to bring up on screen or on the wall for the pair task in step 4.
- If no charter exists, be ready to spend one minute at the start of the lesson capturing three quick norms on the board (for example: check before you share, no forwarding private stuff, disagree without pile-ons) and to use those as today's reference for the pair task.

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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 parking something in the grey area and moving it again later are both real options. The intended leans: artwork feedback, Opportunity; the moderated club chat, Opportunity unless strangers push for personal details; the fundraiser chat, Opportunity unless people are shamed for not joining; the instant-reply, forwarded-photo and health-claim cards, Risk.
- Model balanced thinking by acknowledging both sides before students contribute, and treat disagreement on the grey cards as thinking rather than error.
- Leave the placed cards visible so pairs can pick from them in the next step.
- Circulate during pair work and prompt students to tie their habit suggestions to the charter or to the board norms.
- Keep the closing reflection brief so the class finishes on what they can do rather than on a long discussion.
- On the photo card (stretch): stay in the third person, and if anyone is upset or discloses, pause and follow the school safeguarding route one-to-one.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students may want every card in two buckets; redirect them to the main effect first, then ask them to name the condition that would tip a grey card.
- Pairs may suggest habits unrelated to the charter; prompt them to point to a specific line in the agreements on display.
- Some may focus only on risks; ask them for one concrete benefit worth protecting as well.

DIFFERENTIATION

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