



Below you will find quick activities to accompany our in-depth lesson plan to support the theme of **'Free to be me: exploring identity online'**. The activities are designed to draw out a range of themes which are touched on in both the lesson plan and assembly including: representation online, what forms our online identity and diversity and inclusivity online.



1. Safer Internet Day Films

Watch the Safer Internet Day film for 11-18-year-olds. Discuss the themes mentioned in the film about identity and representation online.

www.saferinternet.org.uk/sid-films



2. Online Identity Snapshot

Provide every learner with a copy of **Appendix 1**. Explain that they have just two minutes to fill in as many of the details listed on the sheet as possible. You may wish to display a timer to build suspense and give them a countdown when it reaches 10 seconds.

Ask the learners to look over their completed sheets. Ask how they would feel if you collected all the sheets up and gave them out randomly to other people in the group.

Key Questions

- Do you think your peers could guess who you are from the details you've given on the sheet?
- Do the details on the sheet reflect who you are and how you behave offline?
- Is there anything on the sheets that you wouldn't want to share with the rest of the group?

Reassure the group that you do not plan on sharing their sheets with the rest of the group, but explain that the details they have listed give a snapshot of their 'online identity': who they are and how they express themselves online.

Ask them to imagine a second scenario where we gave this sheet, and only this sheet, to a complete stranger.

Key Questions

- What kind of impression would someone get of you from the details you listed?
- What assumptions might they make?
- Would they learn anything about you and your identity that you wouldn't be comfortable with?
- What parts of you and your identity would they not get to see?



3. Hidden Identities

This activity is designed to explore why some individuals may choose to hide part, or all, of their identity online. It can be run as either a whole group activity or a task for learners to work on in pairs.

Print the moral compass points shown in [Appendix 2](#) and display in different places around the room.

One-by-one, read aloud or display the scenarios from Column A in [Appendix 3](#). After each scenario has been read, ask learners to move around the room and stand at the compass point which best describes their feelings about it.

Key Questions

- Why do you feel this is/isn't acceptable?
- What might this person's motivations be?
- Will their hidden identity change the way people interact with them?
- Why do some people feel they have to hide their identity online?

Some of the scenarios open discussions around discrimination, diversity, representation and equality. To explore these topics further, you may also like to use additional information given in Column B. Read the scenario from Column A, give learners time to choose their compass point, then read the scenario from Column B.

Key Questions

- Does this change how they feel?
- Would they like to change the compass point they are standing at?
- Why? Why not?



4. Felt cute... might delete later

It's natural that our identities, who we are and how we behave will change slightly over time, for example as we get older or move to a new school. Invite learners to use this as an opportunity to reflect on what their online identity currently looks like. They could start by searching their name online to see what results come up, or by looking through their online gaming and social media accounts.

Encourage them to deactivate old accounts which they no longer use, remove contacts who they no longer wish to keep, and even delete old posts which may no longer be relevant, appropriate or represent who they are!

They can find out more on how to control settings and keep information safe by visiting: www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/young-people/resources-11-19s.



5. Representative Emojis

Provide all learners with a copy of [Appendix 4](#). Ask them to complete the wheels by drawing the most relevant emoji in each section – they may wish to use their devices to look through the different variations of emojis available, alternatively they could also visit a website like emojipedia.org.

Once they've finished their wheels, have a discussion about representation and diversity using the following questions as prompts.

Key Questions

- Which sections were the easiest to find a relevant emoji for? Which were the hardest?
- Did anyone struggle to find an emoji which represented them or their experiences?
- Do you think it matters if people cannot find emojis to represent them and their experiences?
- Emojis showing different skin tones were introduced in 2015. Emojis showing disabilities including wheelchairs, artificial limbs and hearing aids were introduced in 2019. Can you think of any other symbols or images which would help make emojis more inclusive?
- What new emoji would you like to see?



6. Is this online identity?

Distribute the sets of cards shown in [Appendix 5](#) to pairs or small groups of learners. Explain that this activity is going to involve thinking about 'online identity' – who we are, and how we show this to the world. In their pairs, ask learners to sort the cards into two piles – those which represent or form part of a person's online identity and those which do not. Finish with a group discussion and reflection led by the questions below.

Key Questions

- Which cards were the easiest/trickiest to sort?
- Did you agree on the placement of all the cards?
- Do you think what we like and comment on online is part of our identity? Or only the things we share?
- Are the things we say and do in private part of our identity? Or only the things we do in public?
- Are our online and offline identities the same? Why or why not?
- If everything we do and say online shapes people's perceptions of us, how can we manage our online identities?



7. Think you understand me?

Show learners the following video from Childline: youtu.be/G6RzZ4KzsEs

Watch the video once and discuss immediate reactions. Watch the video a second time and ask learners to jot down the assumptions they think the producers of the video are expecting them to make about each person as they appear on screen.

Discuss further using the following questions as prompts.

Key Questions

- What stereotypes and assumptions are highlighted in the video?
- Where do you think stereotypes come from?
- Do you think the internet reinforces or breaks down stereotypes? How?
- Are there any stereotypes which exist specifically online?
- Can you think of any times online when something someone has shared or posted might lead to people making assumptions about them and their lives?

To challenge learners further, you could encourage them to make their own video, specifically focussing on aspects of online identity.

This video, as well as further guidance about stereotypes and discrimination can also be found at:

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/your-rights/understand-me/



8. Online Identity Debate

Use one of the following prompts to hold a debate with learners in your setting. You may like to set some Ground Rules using the '**Establishing a safe and supportive learning environment**' document to establish how learners should communicate positively and respectfully.

- "It's impossible to be entirely real online." – Agree or disagree?
- "The internet is a force for good – it allows difference to be celebrated." – Agree or disagree?
- "It's right and fair for employers to judge prospective employees on what they share online." – Agree or disagree?



Ages

11-14

Exploring identity online

Quick activities

Appendix 1

You have 2 minutes to answer as many of the questions below as possible!

Circle all the services you have an account with:



What is your most frequently...

...used emoji?
(Draw it!)

...played song?

...opened app?

...used hashtag?



Do you have a games console at home? YES NO

What's your favourite online game?

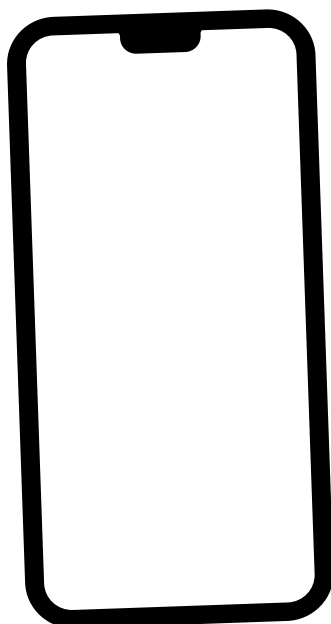
Describe your profile
pic in three words:

What was the last ...

...YouTube video you
watched?...time you set an alarm
for?

...message you sent?

...filter you used?



Sketch your phone background

List five things you'd find in
your recently liked posts:

Who do you...

...message
the most?...always like
posts from?...admire
most online?If you could only follow the accounts of one celebrity online for the rest of
your life, who would you choose?



Appendix 2

That's okay.

That's not okay.



Appendix 2

I don't know.

What's the big deal?



Appendix 2

As long as
you don't get
caught.

It depends on...



Appendix 3

Column A

A 12-year-old posts an anonymous blog about their life online.

A 16-year-old shares anonymously on social media and participates in online communities.

A 14-year-old poses as someone else online using photos they found on Instagram.

A 14-year-old has an anonymous social media account where they pretend to be much older than they are.

A teenager dealing with mental health problems posts anonymously about their journey.

A teenager heavily edits every image they post online.

A 15-year-old chooses to hide their gender on their gaming profile.

A 13-year-old hosts an anonymous gossip page on social media where people can share rumours from their year group at school.

A 43-year-old uses only their first name on social media.

A teenager anonymously reports their friend's social media posts.

Column B

A 12-year-old posts an anonymous blog about their life online. They are from a strict religious background with many relatives who would not approve of the content they share.

A 16-year-old shares anonymously on social media and participates in online communities. They are exploring their sexuality and trying to learn more about what it means to be LGBTQ+.

A 14-year-old poses as someone else online using photos they found on Instagram. They have been bullied in the past and want to make new friends.

A 14-year-old has a social media account where they pretend to be much older than they are. They are interested in politics but have found that people are less likely to listen to their thoughts if they know their age.

A teenager dealing with mental health problems posts anonymously about their journey. They've just started applying for jobs and are worried that employers may be put off by the content they're sharing.

A teenager heavily edits every image they post online. They have a skin condition and use filters and editing to cover it up.

A 15-year-old chooses to hide their gender on their gaming profile. They are female and often receive sexist comments when playing, despite being very good at the games they play.

A 13-year-old hosts an anonymous gossip page on social media where people can share rumours from their year group at school. It started as a way for their whole year group to stay in touch, but soon became negative. They are worried that if they delete it, people in their year will not want to talk to them anymore.

A 43-year-old uses only their first name on social media. They are a teacher who wants to keep their profile private and prevent students from finding them online.

A teenager anonymously reports their friend's social media posts. The posts are jokes which include racist content which the teenager is upset by, but they're worried about raising this with their friend.



Appendix 4





Appendix 5

An individual's most used emojis	A profile picture on social media	The background on someone's phone	A bio on social media
Everything someone 'likes' on social media	The YouTube channels someone subscribes to or watches the most	The filters and effects someone chooses to apply to their photos	The online communities someone participates in
The most listened to tracks on someone's phone	The hashtags someone uses	A gaming username	The websites someone visits
Someone's stories and posts on social media	The character and skins someone uses on a game	The slang someone uses when they message their friends	The online campaigns and causes someone supports
The articles and content someone reads	The way someone treats other people online	The other accounts and people someone interacts with online	The different accounts someone has online