ADL.

LESSON PLAN

Teens and their Social Media Lives

Compelling Question: How are teenagers using social media and how are those behaviors different among certain identity groups?

Grade Level		Time	Common Core Standards
K-1	2-5	**60-90 minutes**	**Reading, Speaking and Listening, Language**
4-7	**8-12**		

LESSON OVERVIEW

In December 2023, the Pew Research Center published results of a national survey about teens and their social media use. The survey addresses top social media platforms among teens, how often young people visit specific social media platforms, the ways in which gender, race, age and household income (socioeconomic status) are differentiated among platforms and time spent on these platforms. Pew says in the report, "Despite negative headlines and growing concerns about social media's impact on youth, teens continue to use these platforms at high rates – with some describing their social media use as 'almost constant."

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own social media use, compare that information with the data in the Pew Research Center survey, consider their responses and ideas based on the results and explore how race, gender and socioeconomic status impact online use.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will reflect on their own social media use and analyze their findings as a class or school.
- Students will examine the results of the 2023 Pew Research Center survey on teens and social media and compare those results to their class or school results.
- Students will consider how teens use of social media differs based on gender, race and socioeconomic status.
- Students will explore their thoughts and feelings about the data they learn about.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- **Student Survey** (one copy for each student) or you can create/use a digital survey tool (e.g., Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere, Google Forms, Survey Monkey) **(En Español - Encuesta Para Estudiantes)**
- **Teens, Social Media and Technology 2023** (one copy for each student)
- 4 Signs to post in different of the room with the following words: (1) Confusing (2) Not Surprising, (3) Encouraging and (4) Disturbing

Key Words

constantly
decline
demographic groups
dominate
economic
ethnicity
household income
majority
race
stable
universal

Social Media: What We Love and Hate about It

1. Begin the lesson by telling students that for today's lesson plan, we are going to talk about social media. Ask: *What is social media?* Elicit and explain that social media are apps and websites that engage people in communicating, sharing content, interacting, collaborating and building community. Ask students to share examples of social media platforms, which may include Instagram, TikTok, Discord, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter/X, WhatsApp, Twitch and other examples.

2. Give students five minutes to write down what they love (or like) about social media and what they hate (or dislike) about social media. They can do this by making two columns (one with what they love, one with what they hate, creating two sematic webs (with a circle of "love about social media" and another web "hate about social media," or doing a "quick write" about both what they love and hate about social media. Challenge students to spend the whole five minutes writing, not to put their pens down and think of everything they possibly can.

(Note to Teacher: For students who don't use social media or use it minimally, have them write what they've heard that others hate and love about social media instead.)

3. Reconvene students and on the board/smart board or two pieces of chart paper, write "loves/likes about social media" and "hates/dislikes about social media" and ask students to share some of what they wrote during the five minutes. When you've gotten their responses down, ask students: *As you look at all the responses, what do you notice? What do you wonder?*

4. Engage students in a brief discussion by asking a few to share one item from their "love" or "hate" lists and share why they love or hate it. For example, they can complete the sentence as follows: "One thing I love (or hate) about social media is _____ because _____.

Our Experiences with Social Media

(Note to Teacher: You can have students complete this survey as homework the evening before you teach the lesson.)

1. Explain to students that later in the lesson, we are going to read about a recent national research survey that the Pew Research Center conducted about teenagers and social media. Before we look at what the survey says about teens and social media, we will do a survey within our classroom (or other classrooms or the whole school if other teachers are using this lesson) and then later see how our responses compare to the national survey.

2. Distribute the Student Survey, using either paper/pen or create a digital survey tool such as Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere Google Forms, Survey Monkey, based on the questions.

3. Give students 5-10 minutes to do the survey. When they have completed the survey, quickly tally the results (with percentages) or do so later and resume the lesson the next day.

Note to Teacher: As an alternative, work with a few students to produce a report with charts or graphs that summarize the class or school results.)

Reading Activity

1. Distribute a copy (or a link) of the first page of Pew Research Center's Teens, Social Media and Technology 2023 to each student and explain that this is the national survey that Pew Research Center conducted in 2023. Give them 10-15 minutes to read it silently, or read aloud together as a class. As an alternative, you can have students focus primarily on reading the graphs and charts in the article. Or, if you have a smart board, project the charts and look at them together as a class.

2. After reading, engage students in a discussion by asking some or all the following questions:

   • What did you learn from reading about the survey?
   • What result was most surprising? Which was least surprising?
   • Do the results resonate with your own personal experience? How so?
   • What is your biggest takeaway from reading this article?
   • What does being online or being on social media "almost constantly" mean to you?
   • What did you learn about the results for different identity groups (race, gender, age and household income)? Do these results surprise or are they what you expected? Please explain.
   • How might this survey be useful to young people, social media companies and policy makers?
   • If you could share one thing about either your own experience with social media or the results of this survey with a younger sibling or younger person you know, what would you tell them?

3. You can also share that many researchers are studying the impact of technology on young people—socially, academically and emotionally. For example, share that in 2022, Pew Research Center did a study on Connection, Creativity and Drama: Teen Life on Social Media in 2022, finding that a majority of teens say social media provides them with a space for connection, creativity and support and are more likely to say these platforms have a positive rather than a negative impact on them. At the same time, smaller but notable numbers of those surveyed acknowledged the drama and pressures that can come along with using social media.

4. Share with students the results from your class or school survey and have them compare and contrast the Pew study with their own results. Engage students in a brief discussion by asking:

   • What do you notice?
   • What do you wonder?
   • What's different about the results from our classroom study compared with the Pew study?
   • Why do you think there are those differences in results?
   • What are some other research questions you would want to know about teenagers and social media?

My Thoughts about the Results

1. Place the four signs (Confusing, Not Surprising, Encouraging, and Disturbing) in different parts of the room. Explain to students that they will move to a part of the room to share their feelings/response to a few of the results from the Pew survey. Show students the four signs and quickly share what each means:

   • **Confusing:** Something that is unclear or uncertain.
   • **Not Surprising:** Something that is expected or anticipated.
   • **Encouraging:** Something you makes you feel hopeful.
   • **Disturbing:** Something that makes you feel worried, concerned or anxious.

2. In advance, choose one or two of the Pew survey results below to use during this section.

   • Roughly nine-in-ten teenagers say they use YouTube, making it the most widely used platform measured in the survey.
   • Nearly 1 in 5 teens say they're on YouTube, TikTok "almost constantly."
   • Teen girls are more likely than teen boys to say they almost constantly use TikTok and Snapchat.
   • 32% of Hispanic teens say they are on TikTok almost constantly, compared with 20% of Black teens and 10% of white teens.
   • Nearly half of teenagers say they use the internet "almost constantly."

3. When you've selected one or two results, say each statement aloud (one-at-a-time) and invite students to move to their selected part of the room that reflects their thoughts or feelings about the result (Confusing, Not Surprising, Encouraging, Disturbing). When they have found their spots, provide 3-5 minutes for students to share with others in that spot why they that response.

4. Reconvene the class and ask a few students to share what section of the room they chose, what result they identified and why. After some students have shared, engage students in a discussion by asking:

    • Why do you think the survey analyzed results for different racial, gender and socioeconomic groups? Why does that matter in the survey?
    • Is this survey useful to you and if so, how?
    • What about the Pew survey is important?
    • Where might there be some bias in the survey?
    • What can we do about the information we learned today—either as individuals, as a school or as a community?

Closing

As an exit ticket, have students choose a social media platform and write a post to share one of their biggest takeaways from the Pew survey results.

Additional Reading and Resources

    • America Is Averting Its Eyes From Something Very, Very Wrong (New York Times, December 21, 2023)
    • Health advisory on social media use in adolescence (American Psychological Association, May 2023)
    • More so than adults, U.S. teens value people feeling safe online over being able to speak freely (Pew Research Center, August 30, 2022)
    • Connection, Creativity and Drama: Teen Life on Social Media in 2022 (Pew Research Center, November 16, 2022)
    • Teens, Social Media and Technology 2023 (Pew Research Center, December 11, 2023)
    • The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens (Common Sense, 2021)

Common Core Anchor Standards

CONTENT AREA/STANDARD
Reading
R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. R2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
Speaking and Listening
SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. SL5: Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
Language
L4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate. L6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

CASEL's SEL Competencies

COMPETENCIES
Self-Awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.
Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts.
Relationship Skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.
Responsible Decision-Making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

STUDENT SURVEY

1. Personal demographics
    (Note to Teacher: You can make this question optional.)

    • What is your race?

    • What is your gender?

    • How old are you?

    • What type of community you live in?   Urban   Suburban   Rural

2. Do you have access to a ...

• Smartphone	yes	no
• Desktop/laptop	yes	no
• Gaming console	yes	no
• Tablet computer (e.g., iPad or similar)	yes	no

4. If there are other apps you use regularly, list them here:

3. What apps do you use?

• BeReal	yes	no
• Discord	yes	no
• Facebook	yes	no
• Instagram	yes	no
• Reddit	yes	no
• Snapchat	yes	no
• TikTok	yes	no
• Twitch	yes	no
• Twitter/X	yes	no
• WhatsApp	yes	no
• YouTube	yes	no

5. How often are you online?:
    Almost constantly
    Several times a day
    About once a day
    Several times a week or less often
    Never

6. How often do you use each of the social media apps?
    (Note to Teacher: You can use all of these or choose 5-6.)

	almost constantly	several times a day	about once a day	several times a week or less often	never
• BeReal					
• Discord					
• Facebook					
• Instagram					
• Reddit					
• Snapchat					
• TikTok					
• Twitch					
• Twitter/X					
• WhatsApp					
• YouTube					

ENCUESTA PARA ESTUDIANTES

1. Datos demográficos personales
   (Nota para el profesor: esta pregunta puede ser opcional.)

   - ¿Cuál es tu raza?

   - ¿Cuál es tu género?

   - ¿Cuántos años tienes?

   - En qué tipo de comunidad vives?   Urbana   Sub-urbana   Rural

2. ¿Tienes acceso a un ...
   - Smartphone   sí   no
   - Computador/portátil   sí   no
   - Consola de videojuegos   sí   no
   - Tableta   sí   no
     (por ejemplo, iPad o similar)

3. Qué aplicaciones usas?
   - BeReal   sí   no
   - Discord   sí   no
   - Facebook   sí   no
   - Instagram   sí   no
   - Reddit   sí   no
   - Snapchat   sí   no
   - TikTok   sí   no
   - Twitch   sí   no
   - Twitter/X   sí   no
   - WhatsApp   sí   no
   - YouTube   sí   no

4. Si hay otras aplicaciones que utilices habitualmente, enuméralas aquí:

5. ¿Con qué frecuencia te conectas a Internet?:
   Casi constantemente
   Varias veces al día
   Más o menos una vez al día
   Varias veces a la semana o menos
   Nunca

6. ¿Con qué frecuencia usas cada una de las aplicaciones de redes sociales?
   (Nota para el profesor: puede utilizarlas todas o elegir 5-6.)

	Casi constantemente	Varias veces al día	Aproximadamente una vez al día	Varias veces a la semana o menos	Nunca
BeReal					
Discord					
Facebook					
Instagram					
Reddit					
Snapchat					
TikTok					
Twitch					
Twitter/X					
WhatsApp					
YouTube					