College Bound

Essential Question

How can information you post on the Internet affect your future opportunities?

Lesson Overview

Students learn that everything they or anyone else posts about them online becomes part of a public online presence known as a digital footprint. Using the **Admissions Packet Student Handout**, they view elements of two students' digital footprints and consider how the footprints might affect those students' admission to college. Students then discuss what kinds of information they would want included in their own digital footprints, and learn strategies for shaping a positive online presence.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- learn that they have a public presence online called a digital footprint.
- recognize that any information they post online can help or hurt their image and future opportunities, including their chances for college admission or employment.
- consider how to present an authentic and positive image of themselves online.

Materials and Preparatio

- ▶ Preview the video "**Abbas's Story – Pride in Your Digital Footprint**" and prepare to show it to students.

- Preview the **Admissions Packet Student Handout – Teacher Version**.

- Copy the **Admissions Packet Student Handout,** one for each student.

- Prepare a list of search results for a celebrity or other well-known person in a form that all students can see, perhaps on an interactive white board or overhead projector.

Family Resources

- Send home the **Privacy and Digital Footprints Family Tip Sheet (High School)**.

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Standards Alignment –

Common Core:

grades 9-10: RI.1, RI.2, RI.3, RI.4, RI.8, RI.10, W.2a, W.2b, W.2c, W.2d, W.2e, W.2f, W.4, W.5, W.6, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.3, SL.4, SL.5, L.4a, L.6

grades 10-11: RL.1, RL2, RL.4, RL.7, RL.8, RL.10, RI.1, RI.2, RI.4, RI.10, W.2a, W.2b, W.2c, W.2d, W.2e, W.2f, W.4, W.5, W.6, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.2, SL.3, SL.4, SL.5, L.4a, L.6

NETS·S: 1d, 2a, 2d, 3b, 3d, 4a-c, 5a-c

Key Vocabulary –

digital footprint: all of the information about a person that can be found online

admission: to let in or to be given entrance

candidate: someone seeking entrance to a school or placement in a job, usually competing with others for the position

introduction

Warm-up *(10 minutes)*

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **digital footprint**.

DISCUSS with students how the information in a digital footprint becomes public by being copied and passed on so that it can be searched and viewed by a large, invisible audience. Also discuss the fact that the information in a digital footprint is often permanently online, because it is archived in a variety of ways and passed on by others.

▶ **SHOW** students the video, "**Abbas's Story – Pride in Your Digital Footprint**."

ASK:

What were some of the messages that stood out to you in this video? Can you relate to Abbas? Why or why not?	Students' answers will vary.
Abbas says that he thinks colleges would actually "kind of like his Facebook page." What examples does Abbas give about how he has created a positive digital footprint for himself?	Sample responses: • He posts a lot of pictures with his family, which shows that he's really active with his family members. • A lot of the statuses he puts up are connected to the volunteer work that he does at a community organization for youth. • He posts music that he creates, which shows people his talent and that he's pursuing his interests.
Do you think you should judge someone based solely on what you find about them online? Why or why not?	Students should recognize that someone's online presence might include things that were intended to be private, or inaccurate information posted by someone else. It could even include information about another person with the same name. Therefore, it may not give a complete or balanced picture of the person.

SHARE with students that they will be exploring how information they post today could affect themselves and others in the future – for better and for worse. Point out that this online material may affect them as they apply to college or think about future jobs and opportunities. Encourage students to consider that they have the ability to shape their online profile so that it presents an image they can be proud of.

teach 1

Review College Applications *(15 minutes)*

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary terms **admission** and **candidate**.

ARRANGE students in groups of two to three and distribute the **Admissions Packet Student Handout**, one for each group.

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The GoodPlay Project
Harvard Graduate School of Education

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EXPLAIN to students they will be role-playing college admissions officers, the people who decide which candidates should be admitted to a college. Tell them that two high school seniors, Markus and Tommy, have applied for admission to college. Their applications include their grades, test scores, and a personal essay. The problem is that the college only has room for one of them. The admissions officers decide to gather information from each candidate's digital footprint to help make their decision.

Note: Your students will likely have a variety of paths in their futures. You may wish to emphasize that many of the same factors that affect their college admissions would also apply to getting a job or getting into a training program.

INSTRUCT students to work as a group to read and fill out their handouts.

teach 2

Select a Candidate *(15 minutes)*

INVITE a volunteer from each group to explain which applicant they chose to admit, and why. Refer to the **Admissions Packet Student Handout – Teacher Version** for guidance on leading the discussion.

ENCOURAGE students to further probe their choices by using these follow-up questions.

ASK:

Why did you not choose the other candidate? Is there additional information about this candidate that could have made you want to choose him?	Sample responses: • Markus did not get in because he did not seem that interesting. He also seemed a little unmotivated. (Maybe it would make a difference if Markus had a stronger online presence that showed he was interested in things other than sports.) • We did not select Tommy because we thought he was fake or insincere. (Maybe it would make a difference if you knew that the exchange between Tommy and his friend Maggie was a private joke. Maybe Maggie is also trying to get into the same college as Tommy, and writes joke messages to make him seem insincere.)
Do you think the comments by JJ and Maggie had a positive or negative effect on their friends' chances for college? Do you think this is what they intended when they wrote the comments?	Students should recognize that these comments revealed private information about Markus and Tommy, and also emphasized negative rather than positive qualities. You might ask students to comment on JJ and Maggie's motivations.
Do you think this is a good way for a real admissions officer to make a final choice? Why or why not?	Students should understand that while admissions officers, prospective employers, and the like sometimes do look at online profiles, this may not be the best or fairest way to assess someone. The material that appears online may not present a full or accurate picture of a person and of his or her personality and achievements.

Do you think teens share too much information about themselves or about others online? Why or why not?	Students will have differing opinions, but they should recognize the importance of carefully considering what they contribute to their digital footprints, and to the digital footprints of others.

closing

Wrap-up *(5 minutes)*

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives. You may want to ask students to reflect in writing on one of the questions, using a journal or an online blog/wiki.

ASK:

How is a digital footprint created? Why does the information in a digital footprint often become public, and why is it permanent?	Students should know that a digital footprint is all the information online about a person, posted either by that person or by others. The information in it can become public because it can be searched, copied, and passed on so that it plays to a large invisible audience. It can be difficult or impossible to remove, and it therefore becomes a permanent part of their online image.
What types of online information would help present the most positive image of you?	Students should realize that their reputation may be enhanced by information on interests and activities, opinions, and material giving a consistent picture of oneself.
What are some of the larger ethical implications of sharing information online about others?	Guide students to reflect on how people can influence the digital footprints of others – for better or for worse – and how it is therefore the responsibility of a good digital citizen to be mindful of what they post about others.

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Directions

You are college admissions officers who must decide which of two college applicants to admit. The admissions committee has already determined that the candidates, Markus and Tommy, are equally desirable based on their grades, test scores, and personal essays. The officers also have the following information from an online search of each candidate.

Review the material below. Then fill out the Feedback Form and make your final choice.

Online Documents about Markus Sanders

Document #: 1 of 3
Description: Post from Markus's blog, "Sports Spots: Reviews of neighborhood courts and fields."

Sports Spots
Reviews of neighborhood courts and fields

WELCOME
About
FAQ
Newsletter

RESOURCES
More reviews

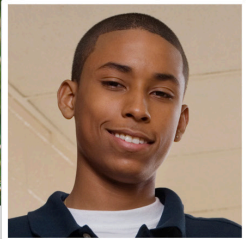Thursday, November 11, 2011

Review of Betts Park
Teens love it, parents don't. Betts Park boasts four baseball diamonds, a soccer field, and four tennis courts. It's an after-school mecca for kids from Central and Highland High Schools, for baseball, soccer, or goofing off. The fields are in amazingly good condition, with green grass cut close and well watered. But spectators beware. There is no room for people to sit. Park operators say the next step is to install bleachers and concessions trucks. For now, though, fans are forced to sit on their coats or … TO STAND.

Photos: Matt-rex public domain image:
URL: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Betts.jpg

leave a comment >>

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Markus Sanders

+1 Add Friend | Message ⚙ ▼

Timeline | About | Photos | Friends | More ▼

About

→ Email **markus_parks-rec@gmail.com**
Website **www.thecoachdrakeproject.tumblr.com**

🚗 Studies at **Hiffland High School**

🏠 Lives in **Chicago, Illinois**

🎂 Age **17**

❤ Interests **blogging about parks and fields**

◄ Groups **Hiffland Baseball Fans**
Bloggers United

TV Shows · 6

All Sports

MLB

NBA

NFL

Soccer

SportsCenter
on ESPN

📝 Post   🖼 Photo

Write something...

Markus Sanders
about an hour ago 👥

get involved in your community today!

Like · Comment

Bryce Stockman ▶ **Markus Sanders**
April 24 👥

Did ya catch that game last night? We goin' all the way baby!!! BOOM.

Like · Comment   👍3 💬1

Markus Sanders
April 24 near Chicago, IL via mobile 👥

You know it. Champions of the WURLD!!!!!!

Like · Comment   👍9

JJ Kane ▶ **Markus Sanders**
April 10 👥

Happy 4U, H -- but U need to get a life and care more about your future.

Like · Comment

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THE COACH DRAKE PROJECT

WHEN OUR HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL COACH PASSED AWAY LAST YEAR, MY TEAMMATE AND I DECIDED WE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING IN HIS HONOR. WE CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF DRAWING A FAMOUS BASEBALL PLAYER EACH DAY FOR A YEAR AND POSTING IT HERE. IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL REQUESTS, MESSAGE ME! WE MISS YOU COACH DRAKE.

CONTACT   ASK   ARCHIVE   RANDOM   SEARCH

4TH APR | 21 NOTES | POSTED BY MARKUS

Andre Dawson #TheCoachDrakeProject #AndreDawson #cubsfan

2ND APR | 35 NOTES | POSTED BY MARKUS

Online Documents about Tommy Williams

Document #: 1 of 3

Description: Article from the *Hiffland High Gazette* when Tommy was a freshman

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Hiffland High Gazette

Freshman starts his own nonprofit to serve kids with learning differences

Monday, March 5, 2008 | http:www.hifflandgazette.org

CHICAGO – Freshman Tommy Williams is starting high school on the right foot. Just before entering Hiffland, Tommy founded a nonprofit organization in Chicago called Making Different Special. The nonprofit offers support groups and tutoring services to elementary and middle school kids with learning differences like dyslexia. According to Tommy's mom, a physician at Chestnut Lake Hospital, Tommy has always been a leader. "When Tommy was little, he was selling lemonade with fruit chunks in it at the neighborhood art fair, when everyone else was selling plain old lemonade. He's always had bright ideas." Not a bad way to start out high school. There will no doubt be four promising years ahead for Williams.

– Cris Cross, Hiffland High reporter

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Search

Tweets   ❯

Following   ❯

Followers   ❯

Favorites   ❯

Lists   ❯

Tweet to Tommy Williams

@twilliams

Trends

#mydigitalfootprint
#commonsense
#graduation
#collegefreshman
#admissions
#MakingSpecialDifferent
Hiffland High School
community service
Coach Drake Project
digital citizenship

Tommy Williams
@twilliams

"Don't count the days, make the days count."
Muhammad Ali

85   **76**   **200**   🐦 Follow
TWEETS   FOLLOWING   FOLLOWERS

Tweets

Jonny Terwiliger @drterwiliger   30 Apr
@twilliams I had the best time at the Youth Center's Big Brother's
club last Tuesday! It was grrrreat!
Expand

Tommy Williams @twilliams   24 Apr
Mentoring is a great way to give back!
Expand

Maggie @magzprops   10 Apr
@twilliams Wait, I thought you gave up Making Special Different
last year...
💬 View conversation

Tommy Williams @twilliams   10 Apr
Check out Making Special Different #makingspecialdifferent
Glad to be part of such a great organization
Expand

Tommy Williams @twilliams   3 Apr
my niece is cooler than your niece instapic.com/p/T4mkPzA7nC/#
Expand

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Description: Screenshots of Tommy's Instapic account taken yesterday

swerve_234 liked **tommyisboss5**'s photo.
8 MINUTES AGO

.ıll AT&T 🗢   10:04 AM   🕐 99% 🔋

Instapic   ↻

tommyisboss5   🕐 3h
📍 **Chicago**

♡ 249 likes

tommyisboss5 two fender benders in one year?
#oops #whatever #carinsurance

♡ Like   💬 Comment   •••

.ıll AT&T 🗢   10:04 AM   🕐 99% 🔋

Instapic   ↻

tommyisboss5   🕐 5d
📍 **Chicago**

♡ 103 likes

tommyisboss5 little maya loves her uncle t!

♡ Like   💬 Comment   •••

Feedback Form

Fill out the chart and answer the questions. Make your final choice, and be ready to make a case for your selection.

	What information about the student online makes him an appealing candidate?	What information about the student online makes you question whether he should be admitted?
Markus Sanders		
Tommy Williams		

Final Choice: _____

Main Reasons for Choice:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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Feedback Form

Fill out the chart and answer the questions. Make your final choice, and be ready to make a case for your selection.

	What information about the student online makes him an appealing candidate?	What information about the student online makes you question whether he should be admitted?
Markus Sanders	• He seems to have a lot of passion about things that interest him. • He has his own blog, which is unusual for someone his age. • He seeems good humored and honest.	• He might be a little superficial, given that he talks about little else but sports. • He does not seem dedicated to helping others. A blog about baseball fields does not count for much. • He might not be very interesting or have very good social skills, judging by JJ's comment.
Tommy Williams	• He started a nonprofit for kids with learning differences. • He seems entrepreneurial. • He seems interesting and fun.	• He seems kind of insincere. Maggie's comment makes it sound like his nonprofit might not be what it seems. • His mother's comment about his lemonade stand makes it sound like his main goal is beating others.

Final Choice: _Most will likely select Markus, but the case can be made for either one._____

Main Reasons for Choice:

If Markus:

1. He seems more honest than Tommy.

2. He seems passionate.

3. He seems like a self-starter.

If Tommy:

1. He started a nonprofit.

2. There is an article about his accomplishments.

3. He has a sense of humor and jokes around with his friends.

1

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1. Your digital footprint is all of the information about you:

  a) that can be found online, posted by you or by others

  b) that can be found online, posted only by you

  c) in the text messages that you send

  d) in the emails that you send to your friends

2. Look at Anna's social network profile below. Find three things on the profile that shouldn't be there and mark them with an "X."

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Anna Johnson

+1 Add Friend   Message ⚙ ▾

Timeline   About   Photos   Friends   More ▾

About

📱 Phone **401-555-0000**

🏠 Lives in **San Francisco, California**

♥ Interests **tennis, photography**

Dianna Carney ▸ **Anna Johnson**
April 24 👥

I have never seen you so drunk!

Like · Comment   💬 1

Anna Johnson #cantstopwontstop
April 24 at 4:03pm via mobile

Anna Johnson
April 24 near San Francisco, CA via mobile 👥

Mr. Fuller's breath smelled so bad today. Can't even.

Like · Comment   👍 13

Anna Johnson
April 24 near San Francisco, CA via mobile 👥

So proud of Michael for his amazing performance tonight! Go see the play if you haven't already!

Like · Comment   👍 3

3. True or false: Only things that you post about yourself affect your online image. Posts about you by other people don't matter.

  a) True

  b) False

College Bound

1. Your digital footprint is all of the information about you:

a) that can be found online, posted by you or by others

b) that can be found online, posted only by you

c) in the text messages that you send

d) in the emails that you send to your friends

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **a**. Your digital footprint is all of the information about you that can be found online, posted by you or by others. Your digital footprint can help or hurt your image.

2. Look at Anna's social network profile below. Find three things on the profile that shouldn't be there and mark them with an "X."
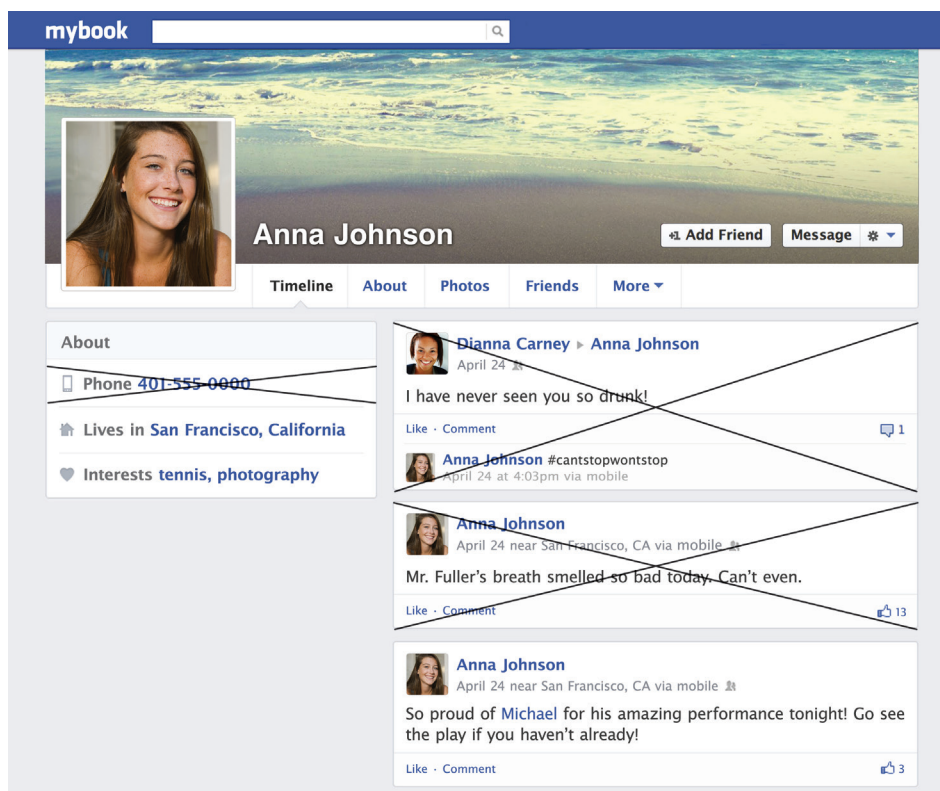
Answer feedback

The references to drinking might create a negative image for Anna. She also makes a comment about a teacher, making Anna (and those who Liked it) look bad. While Anna's phone number won't harm her reputation, it shows that she is not careful with her private information. Anna should remove all of these things to improve her online image.

3. True or false: Only things that you post about yourself affect your online image. Posts about you by other people don't matter.

a) True

b) False

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **b**, False. A person's entire digital footprint is part of their online image. This is why it's important to show positive things about yourself and others when you post online.

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