

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 the three mini presentations including: representation online, what forms our online identity and diversity and inclusivity online.

1. 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 1](#) and display in different places around the room.

One-by-one, read aloud or display the scenarios from Column A in [Appendix 2](#). 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?





2. 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/

3. What happens to our online identities when we die?

Share the following statistic with learners:

“Only 7% of people want their social media accounts to remain online after they die.”

Take initial reactions then ask what they think happens if a social media account is inactive for a long period, for example after someone has died. Set learners a research project to find out what happens to social media accounts when their owners stop using them or pass away. You could also ask them to consider whether the answers they find are the best solutions. What do they think should happen? How would they facilitate this?

This activity can also be a useful lead into the next activity which encourages learners to review their digital footprint and delete or deactivate content which they no longer wish to appear online.





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 3](#). 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. 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?



7. Internet Obituary

Ask learners to work in groups to imagine what the world would look like if the internet ceased to exist tomorrow. Use the questions below to prompt discussion and consider inviting learners to record their thoughts by writing an obituary for the internet.

Key Questions

- What would your life have been like without the internet? What would be the same and what would be different?
- How has the internet changed lives across the world? What has it brought to humankind?
- What achievements have been made possible by the internet?
- Overall has the internet had a positive or negative impact on the world?
- How might people have to adapt if the internet ceased to exist? Would anything be able to replace it?
- Who would miss the internet the most? Would anyone not miss it at all?

Appendix 1

That's okay.

That's not okay.

Appendix 1

I don't know.

What's the big deal?

Appendix 1

As long as
you don't get
caught.

It depends on...

Appendix 2

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 3

