

Below you will find quick activities to accompany our in-depth lesson plan to support the theme of online identity. The activities are designed to draw out a range of themes which are touched on in the lesson plan and assembly including how identities can be represented online, respect and freedom of expression, and the importance of celebrating diversity and difference online.

1. Online Choices Compass

Using **Appendix 1**, print off the compass points and post them up around the room. Read each scenario below to the group and ask them to move to the point which best suits how they feel about it. Discuss their reactions to the scenarios, any methods they already use for managing or protecting their online identity, and strategies for seeking help. Remind them of the importance of speaking to an adult if something ever does worry or upset them online.

Scenarios

- You decide to share a funny photo of your friend to a group chat, even though you know they don't like the photo.
- You go to a friend's house and they want you to play an online game that your parents have said you aren't allowed to play.
- You have been chatting to someone online for a while and they ask what school you go to.
- You share a link with your friends to a website which has information that could upset people or cause offense.
- You choose a profile picture that isn't a photo of you.

You may also want to add your own scenarios to target issues relevant to your learners.



Free to be

2. 'Free to Be' Online

Ask learners to watch the following video from BBC Own It which is all about owning your online identity and doing the things that you love to do online:

www.bbc.com/ownit/its-personal/spoken-word-pupils?collection=your-online-identity

Key questions

- What are the key messages in the video?
- What did you like/dislike about the video?
- What did you find out about online identity from the video?
- If you were in this video, what would you have said about the topic of online identity?

To extend this activity, ask learners to create their own story or rap about the theme, 'free to be me' online. This could have a clear focus. For example: Free to be kind online, free to be happy online, or could be more general.

Learners could produce a storyboard, a script, or a video like the one shown.



3. Equality Thermometer

Ask learners to cut out the thermometer and name cards (**Appendix 2**). Place the thermometer vertically in the middle of a plain piece of A4 card and attach with a split pin (on the grey dot). Using the thermometer rating of 1 -10 (10 holding the highest importance) ask learners to place the names in order of who they think is most important online.

Key questions

- Who did you rate as the most important online? Why?
- Who did you rate as the least important online? Why?
- Where did you put yourself?
- Did you find this difficult? Why?

After the discussion, ask learners to twist their thermometer from vertical to horizontal. Ask learners what they think this demonstrates.

Use this as an opportunity to illustrate to learners that the online world has the potential for everyone to be equal online. Ask learners if they think this reflects what the online world is like, and if not, why.

4. Jessica's Wish

Ask learners to watch the following video, 'Jessica's Wish': vimeo.com/152415364
The full text for the poem that is featured can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Key questions

- What would it be like if we were all the same?
- What's good about being different online?
- How many ways are we all different online?
- Do we always have to agree with/have the same view as other people?

Ask learners to create a storyboard to accompany the poem. They may also wish to turn these storyboards into short films or animations, using the original video as inspiration.





5 Identity Detectives

Ask learners what they associate with the word 'identity.' Create a mind map as a group.

Next, read out a few simple descriptions to the learners. For example:

- This person creates trick shot videos and loves the colour purple.
- This person enjoys cooking and likes to play games on their phone.
- This person is very energetic and creates animations on their tablet in their spare time.

Educators can create more descriptions to target relevant issues to their learners.

For each description, ask the group to draw who they think the person is, and then compare with the rest of the group. Use group discussion and the questions below to draw out the idea of stereotypes, and look at how these can affect people online as well as offline. You may need to help learners understand that even though there may be some online activities or interests that appear to be 'for' a certain type of person (e.g. a particular gender, age, personality, appearance etc.) this is something that can be challenged.

Key questions

- Why did you draw this particular person?
- Are you surprised by the different drawings? Why?
- Is it okay for people to like the same things online? Why?
- Is it okay for people to like different things online? Why?
- How would you feel if someone told you that you shouldn't like something because of who you are? How can we help people who might get told this or feel this way?

6. Web Connections

The educator will need a ball of string for this activity.

Ask all learners stand in a circle facing inwards. The educator starts by holding the ball of string and saying the phrase, "My name is _____ and I like to _____ online. Who else likes _____?"

The person holding the string, (on the first go, the educator) throws the ball to someone else who said they liked the online activity mentioned. Once the person has the ball of string in their hands, they say the sentence, "My name is _____ and I like _____ online. Who else likes _____?"

Keep repeating this cycle of the saying a statement and passing the string. As the game progresses, learners will become connected by the web of string.

When most learners are connected, encourage the rest of the group to suggest things that they know will connect anyone who isn't yet holding the string.

When everyone is connected, ask for a volunteer. Ask this person to drop their string so they are excluded from the web. Ask how that person might be feeling by not being a part of the web. How does this also affect the rest of the web?

Use as an opportunity to explain how a community is weaker if it excludes people, and communities that include everyone are much stronger. Make a link to how this includes online communities too.





7. Dealing with Differences Online

Ask learners what they would do if someone was being mean or hurtful to them online. Discuss their answers and then read through the response cards ensuring they understand each action (**Appendix 4a**). Read one of the scenarios in **Appendix 4b** and ask learners to choose which three actions would be most important for that person to do.

Learners could do this in pairs or small groups. Share as a whole group and highlight the importance of telling an adult, saving the evidence and blocking contact from that user.

Reported messages will only be removed if they break the terms and conditions of the website/game/app or if they break the law, but do encourage children to look for these features on the online services they use. Remind learners that if anything happens online that worries, upsets or confuses them, they should always speak to a trusted adult for more help and support.

8. Diversity Factor

Explain to learners that their task is to work in small groups and create a YouTube channel that celebrates diversity. You may wish to find out from your learners prior to this activity which videos they already like to watch. Research them, and show a couple of different examples that highlight the diversity of current videos and video channels that currently exist.

Lead a group discussion on what 'diversity' means. You may wish to have a dictionary and thesaurus on hand for learners to look this word up.

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines 'diversity' as, "The fact of many different types of things or people being included in something."

Activity brief to share with the learners:

- Your YouTube channel needs to **celebrate, respect** and **represent diversity**.
- It needs to have a relevant and catchy name.
- There should be a diverse and inclusive mix of members.
- Think about how your channel will have the 'Diversity Factor.'
- Try to make your channel different from others already out there.

Ask each group to create a mood board for their channel. Explain to the learners that they need to think about colour, design, subject matter, members, etc. Learners could bring in old magazines and newspapers as well as use craft materials to help create their mood board.

Learners can present their mood board to the rest of the group, ensuring they touch upon the brief throughout.

These presentations could be created as a video, or shared with other groups in your school/setting.

Key questions

- Who do you think this YouTube channel appeals to?
- Why do you think this?
- What one thing could we change to make it have even more 'Diversity Factor?'





Appendix 1

It's not okay.

It's okay if no
one finds out.



Appendix 1

I'm not sure
about this.

It depends.

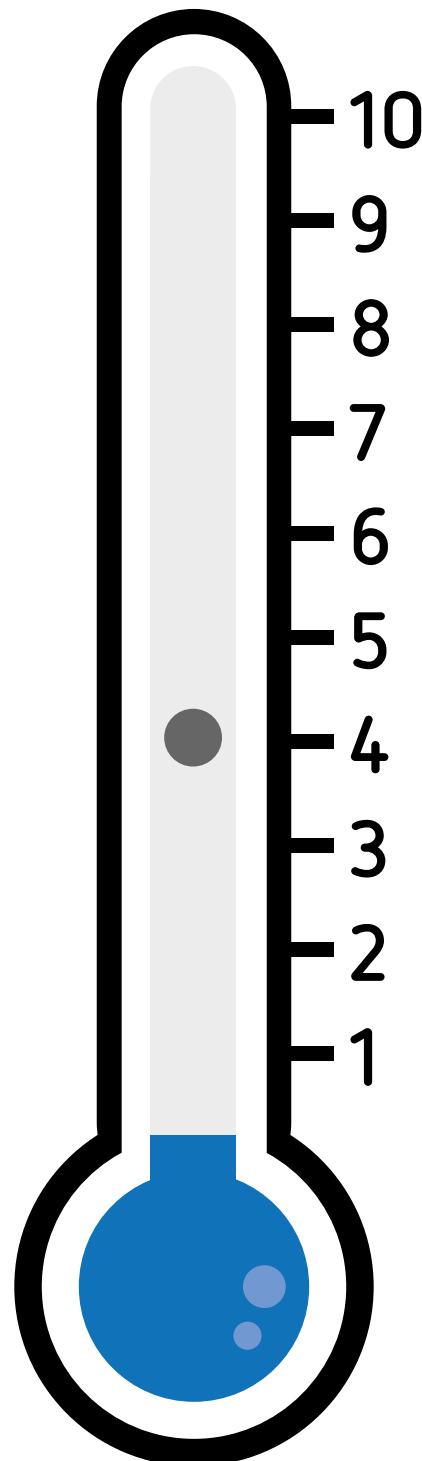
Appendix 1

It's fine.

Appendix 2

Are we all equal online?

Celebrity	Politician	School friend	Family member	Parent
Me	Teacher	Doctor	YouTuber	Farmer



Appendix 3

Jessica's Wish



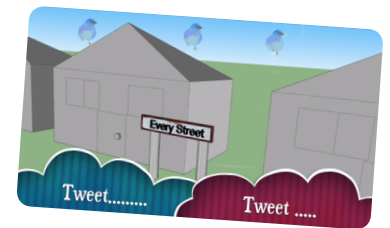
Jessica smiled and went online,
"Did people like this post of mine?"
On screen she saw just 2 likes there,
She huffed and said, "Oh, no one cares.
Why can't my friends all be like me?
How wonderful that life would be!
If I was in charge of things online,
Being the same would be just fine."

All of a sudden she heard a beep,
On screen appeared a purple sheep!
"Good day," he said, "I'm here for you.
I've come to make your wish come true,
Take care with what you choose to do,
If nothing's different, nothing's new."
The sheep then vanished from the screen,
"How strange," she said, "what did he mean?"



She went downstairs and grabbed her phone,
All set to play, get in the zone...
"What's this?" she asked, about her game.
The scores had changed, they're all the same.
"Oh," said Jess, and had to grin,
"We're all the same, no one can win."
She called her friends, "What's up today?"
Her friends had nothing new to say.

She chose to visit other sites,
What she saw there gave her a fright.
Each film, each pic, each word, each tweet,
From every house in every street,
Was just the same, with no new voices,
No new content, no new choices.
She closed her eyes and said, "No more!"
This internet is such a bore!



The sheep was right, and very wise.
If we're the same, there's no surprise.
No highs, no lows, no variation,
No news, no views, no inspiration.
"Please change it back," Jess cried sadly.
The sheep appeared, "I'll do that gladly."
Be kind online, choose not to hate,
It's difference that makes us great.



Appendix 4a

Talk to an adult	Block the sender	Send a mean message back
Report the messages	Save the messages	Ask them to stop
Ignore the messages	Delete the messages	Send a silly message back
Say something nice	Do something else	I'm not sure what to do

Appendix 4b

Scenario	Advice for educators
Someone starts destroying your game or tries to kill off your character over and over again.	<p>This is called 'griefing.' Children should block this person and remove them from their game. On some games this requires you to send a message to the administrator of the server/game (this is often another player).</p> <p>On other games there are report, help and block buttons that children can use to let the game know about another user's behaviour.</p> <p>Remind a child to always tell an adult if they see or experience anything that worries or upsets them in a game.</p>
Someone sends you a message saying no one wants to be your friend because you speak with a weird accent and wear funny clothes.	<p>Tell children it is really important to save the message and show it to an adult as soon as possible. They could then block the sender so they cannot message them again.</p> <p>Remind children not to retaliate by saying anything hurtful back as that could make the situation worse.</p>
You see a message on a game saying, 'You're just a girl; of course you're rubbish at this game!'	<p>Encourage children to block the user so this player cannot play against them again. Some gaming networks allow you to report other users, which can affect their gamer rating as well.</p> <p>Discuss with children how playing a game online with people you know (e.g. school friends, family) can sometimes be a better and safer experience than playing a game with strangers.</p> <p>It is also important to highlight that mean comments based on gender are never acceptable.</p>
You are in a group chat and your friend is being mean to somebody else and removes them from the chat.	<p>Encourage children to take positive action. They could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell a trusted adult who can then help the person who is being excluded. • Reach out privately to the person who was removed and ask if they are okay. • Say something positive about that person to support them. • Remove themselves from the group if being a part of it makes them feel uncomfortable. • Talk in person to their friend who is being unkind and explain how it made the other person feel.
You put a picture of yourself up as your profile picture and people make mean comments about your appearance.	<p>Remind children not to send a mean comment back as this can make the situation worse, and they can also end up in trouble for what they said in retaliation.</p> <p>Encourage children to report the user and block them, to save a copy of the messages and to make sure they talk to an adult if they are worried or upset by anything said to them online.</p> <p>Discuss with the children the importance of thinking before sharing images online and to remember to be kind to others online. It is also important to highlight that mean comments about someone's appearance can be extremely hurtful, and that it is not acceptable to target someone online in this way.</p>
You are watching a make-up tutorial on YouTube and notice that a boy has commented, 'That looks so cool!' Other people have commented mocking him and saying that he shouldn't be interested in this type of thing.	<p>Encourage children to report the unkind messages. They can ask an adult to help with this.</p> <p>Remind children not to send a mean comment back as this can make the situation worse, and they can also end up in trouble for what they said.</p> <p>Discuss with children the positive effect they can have by saying something kind and supportive online.</p> <p>It is also important to highlight that mean comments based on gender are never acceptable.</p>