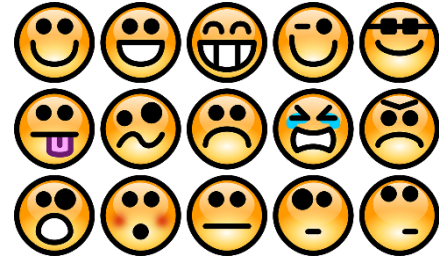


Digital Literacy: Behaving Ethically Online

From mediasmarts.ca

Students will be introduced to the idea that “hot” emotional states such as anger or excitement can make it harder for them to control how they act. They will discuss the concept to empathy and look at the ways in which digital communication can make it harder to feel empathy for other people.



Part 1: Our Emotions

1. Write down on three things people have done recently that have made you happy, and three things that have made you mad.

Things that have made me...	
Happy	Mad

Think back on those moments and try to remember how you *felt*:

- how long did you stay angry or happy?
- what did feeling that way make you do?
- what did it make you *want* to do?

You can jot down your ideas along with what you wrote above, or you may just reflect on them without sharing.

Happiness and anger are examples of “hot,” or intense, emotions that can be hard to control and can make us do things we normally wouldn’t.

Other “hot” emotions might include: fear, excitement, frustration, and jealousy).

2. Reflect and respond to the following questions:

- a) Do we always know when we’re feeling these hot emotions?
What might be some times when we’re feeling them without realizing it?

- b) How do we feel when we’re happy or excited? What are the ways our body shows that we’re feeling an intense emotion?

- c) How does being in an intense emotional state affect how we think and make decisions?

Part 2: Empathy

Do you know what “empathy” means? It has two meanings:

1. <i>Feeling</i> what other people feel → like when you get sad because something happens to your friend	2. <i>Recognizing</i> how other people feel → like when you’re able to tell your friend is angry even if they don’t say anything
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3. What are the clues that tell us how someone is feeling?

4. Think of a time you knew that a friend or family member was mad, and think about *how* you knew that (look on their face, tone of their voice, if they seemed to be preoccupied with something, etc). What are some things that might happen if we don't realize that we are, or someone we're with is, in a hot emotional state?



5. How is talking to people online (through things like) different from talking to people face-to-face?

OFFLINE (face-to-face)	ONLINE (video games, social networks, texting and instant messaging)

6. Think about before when you thought of ways that you can tell if someone else is in a hot emotional state. Which of these do we have when we're online and which don't we have? How might this affect how we respond to things that make up feel intense emotions when we're online?

Part 3: Ethics and Empathy Online Task

You will read three scenarios then respond to the following questions about each one.

- How would you feel in this situation?
- What would you do to resolve this situation?
- Who would be affected by what you do?

SIDE A

Scenario 1:

Even though they've never met offline, Nathan and Jeremy are best friends who spend a lot of time playing Realms of Chivalry together online. They have a lot of fun fighting monsters as well as joking together and teasing each other. When they meet a War Hound, a kind of giant dog, Jeremy runs away instead of fighting it and asks Nathan to leave it alone, too. Nathan wants the War Hounds' treasure so he fights it and makes fun of Jeremy, saying he's sorry that Jeremy was so scared to the little puppy dog. Jeremy doesn't say anything but a few minutes later his character attacks Nathan's, and after the two fight for a while both of them log out of Realms of Chivalry. Nathan doesn't understand why Jeremy got so mad.

- How would you feel if you were Nathan?
- What would you do to resolve this situation?
- Who would be affected by what you do?

Scenario 2:

Ella likes to play with Sky Giants, action figures that come with codes that let you control that character in the Sky Giants virtual world. One afternoon while playing with her friends online she sees that Oscar, a classmate of hers, is being teased for playing a female giant called Valorica. She and Oscar aren't really close friends but Ella doesn't like to see anybody being bullied, so she tells the other players to leave Oscar alone and that there's nothing wrong with playing a female character – it's just a game, after all. To her surprise, though, Oscar gets mad and tells Ella to leave him alone.

- How would you feel if you were Ella?
- What would you do to resolve this situation?
- Who would be affected by what you do?

Scenario 3:

Maria is checking her social networking page when she notices that she's getting a lot of weird comments on a photo that's been tagged with her name:

"Nice hair"

"TinTin lives"

"Cockadoodledooooo!"

She finds out that her friend, Jennifer, posted a photo of the two of them in which Maria's hair is standing up in the front. Maria doesn't even remember when the pictures were taken and she definitely did not want it posted! She feels especially made because she doesn't know of any reason why Jennifer would be so mean to her.

- How would you feel if you were Maria?
- What would you do to resolve this situation?
- Who would be affected by what you do?

Now you will read the next set of scenarios. Each of these will revisit the scenarios from Side A but from another point of view, Side B.

Consider the same three questions for each.

SIDE B

Scenario 1:

Jeremy lives on a street where there aren't any other kids to play with, so he spends a lot of time playing Realms of Chivalry. He's made some good fiends like Nathan, but they don't talk much about their offline lives. When he's offline, he spends a lot of time with his dog, Gus. A few weeks ago, Gus started getting sick and Jeremy is very worried about him. He knows it's silly, but he didn't want to fight with the War Hound on Realms of Chivalry, and when Nathan fought with it he felt like he was going to cry. He knows he was wrong to get mad at Nathan but he's afraid that Nathan will make fun of him if Nathan finds out why he was upset.

- How would you feel if you were Jeremy?

- What would you do to resolve this situation?

- Who would be affected by what you do?

- Does this change how you felt about this story when you heard it from Nathan's point of view?

Scenario 2:

All of Oscar's friends have Sky Giants, but his mother says she just can't afford to buy him such an expensive toy. One day his mother brings home a surprise: someone she works with has a daughter who quit playing Sky Giants and gave away her Valorica figure. Oscar's friends tease him a lot when they play, but it's better than not playing at all. He makes a joke out of it because he doesn't want his friends to know his mother couldn't afford to buy him a new Sky Giant. One day, Ella, a girl from his class that he doesn't usually play with, starts yelling at his friends to stop bullying him. He doesn't want to have to explain why he plays with Valorica It's so embarrassing!

- How would you feel if you were Oscar?
- What would you do to resolve this situation?
- Who would be affected by what you do?
- Does this change how you felt about this story when you heard it from Ella's point of view?

Scenario 3:

Jennifer is looking at the pictures she took on her phone and deciding which ones to post. She finds one of herself that she thinks looks really good but her friend Maria is also in it, with her hair standing up in a way that makes her look silly. She knows that Maria will be upset if anyone they know sees the picture. Because she and Maria have a lot of the same friends, she knows that if she posts it people will see Maria in it and tag it with her name so that everyone she knows will see it. If Jennifer doesn't post it, though, none of her friends will see it.

- How would you feel if you were Jennifer?
- What would you do to resolve this situation?
- Who would be affected by what you do?
- Does this change how you felt about this story when you heard it from Maria's point of view?