

Lesson 1

Digital Resources and Sites

Learning Outcomes

- Talk about how websites can reflect the values and views of the providers.

Vocabulary

Social media

Global community

Influence

1 Study the image below.

There are many different social media platforms and new ones are emerging all the time.



With your group, complete the table.

Platform	Purpose
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2 Read how social media connects everyone, then complete the activity with your partner.



Social media allows you to communicate, exchange ideas and share knowledge globally. There is a vast array of online resources available to you.

In this lesson, you will think and talk about the background of social media and ask yourself what its purpose is. We will then take a look at how social media reflects or mirrors your culture, values and views within the wider world. Being part of social media makes you a member of a global community. Our world, which for most of its recorded history was thought to be so big, is now perceived as much smaller and accessible at the click of a button. The unfamiliar becomes familiar and reachable through the use of social media and digital sources. It is important to consider the authenticity of all social media sources and think about who the author is and what their agenda is. Cultures, values and views across the world are individual and unique to certain areas and people. The world of social media has changed all of that as we have become intercultural and globalised.

Work in pairs and identify any words from the text that you think are important or that you do not understand.

Discuss them with your partner.

3 Read about the types of social media below and then complete the activity.

Social media is used to describe online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration.

Nowadays, people are using many different types of social media to connect online for all kinds of reasons.

Social blogs give people tools to publish content online in formats that encourage discovery, sharing, and commenting. These networks range from more traditional blogging platforms like WordPress and Blogger to microblogging services like Tumblr. A weblog is a frequently updated online personal journal or diary. It is a place to share your thoughts and your passions.

A wiki is a website that anyone can edit online easily. Wikis are commonly used to share information about a given topic. The online encyclopedia Wikipedia is by far the most popular wiki-based website, and is one of the most widely viewed sites of any kind in the world.

Podcasts are also becoming more and more popular. A

podcast is an episodic series of digital audio or video files which a user can download and listen to or view. Episodes often focus on a theme or topic like cycling or starting up your own business.

Online forums (also known as message boards) are one of the oldest forms of social media. They are sites where you can leave messages and expect to see responses to the messages you have left. Or you can just read the board for information.

Pinterest and similar social bookmarking sites help people discover, save, and share visual content.



Work in pairs to explore the infographic. Answer the questions below.

- Did you know that social media involves all these elements?
- How do they work together to help people to communicate and learn?

4 Read the text below and answer the questions that follow.

There is a saying that goes as follows: "Tell me what book you are reading, I'll tell you who you are". In regards to social media, we could change this expression to "Tell me what you are writing, I'll tell you who you are". When you read a blog or any social media post, it is worth remembering that these writings reflect the character and views of the writer.

Social media is so popular that for many people it has become the main source of news, information and knowledge. As you have learned, the range of digital sources and social media varies greatly. When you are reading information on social media, you need to remember a few things.

Everything that is shared on social media has been written by someone for a particular purpose or with a specific

DATE

1. Who has written it?
2. What type of language have they used?
3. Do you agree with the viewpoint?
4. What does the writing tell you about the character of the writer?

viewpoint. Some social media outlets use factual information, some use personal opinion and others are driven by a campaign they feel passionate about.

Discuss the following questions:


- a. What different types of people use social media?
- b. What is their purpose?

User	Purpose
Friends	Looking to share activities, photos
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

5 People write different viewpoints on social media. Read the text below and answer the questions that follow.

Social media is a wonderful way to gather information about a range of subjects. The more time we spend navigating our way around all the different social media platforms, the better we get at analysing and understanding the viewpoints of the writers. Different users have different writing styles. The writing style of the user can give you an insight into their emotions and feelings and very often will give you a good idea of the kind of character that they possess. The language a writer uses, whether it is angry, sad, bitter or joyous, is another clue you can use to determine their viewpoint and character. So, when you read content on social media, you need to see if you can answer the question: what does this writing say about the writer's character?

Work in pairs. Look at some examples of social media and try to infer what you can say about the viewpoint and character of the writer.



Out and About

The Village Kitchen is the latest restaurant to open its doors in the city centre. As the name suggests, this is a place where you'll get food like your mother used to make. Traditional dishes like Harees, Khabees, and Machboos are among the favourite entrees and the green salad is one of the best I've ever eaten. When you see the dessert menu, you'll be spoilt for choice. My own favourite is the Luquaimat, but the others looked delicious too.


The restaurant has a cosy atmosphere and the staff is super friendly. Best of all, the bill was very reasonable. Overall, highly recommended.


Analysing the viewpoint


- Do you agree with the viewpoint?
- What is the tone of the writing?
- Rewrite one of your examples to change the tone.




Tweets Tweets & replies

 lina@filmhouse
Why is everyone rushing to see THAT movie at the Mall?
[#curious](#) [#critic](#)
💬 ↻ 17 ❤️ 20 ✉

 rtkevin@school_of_life
Life not easy in the morning...especially Sundays. Is there something wrong with me? [#concerned](#)
[#mentalhealth](#)
💬 3 ↻ 4 ❤️ ✉

 dana@mentoring
The distance between your dream and reality is called action. What are you waiting for? Make it happen!
[#dreamscometrue](#)
💬 ↻ 17 ❤️ 47 ✉

 caroline@fashionhouse
Just finished my latest creation – ready for Arab fashion week. Can't wait. [#soproud](#)[#colour](#)[#style](#)
💬 1 ↻ 4 ❤️ ✉

6 With your group, you are going to design your own website. What will be the main theme of your website. List the ideas you want to share.

Lesson 2

Privacy and Electronic Safety

Learning Outcomes

- Know how to protect yourself on social media.

Vocabulary

Virus

Social media protection

- 1 List the social media sites you use in order of preference. Work in pairs to write a definition or draw an image that explains what social media is. List at least two examples of social media. Be ready to share your ideas with the class.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



2 What are the risks involved in using social media? Read the text below and then reflect on the questions that follow.

Maha loves social media!

She spends many hours each day online, chatting with friends and connections in various parts of the world. She hasn't met most of the people in person, only on Facebook, but she still regards them as her friends. However, she does sometimes get into conversations online with complete strangers. This is very risky! Strangers can be dangerous in many ways. They might send viruses, use bad language, spread wrong information, or have a negative influence on the user. They might also use your information in a negative way and hurt you. One should only connect with people one knows.

Maha also uses social media for her school work. There is just so much information available online! She was researching an essay about endangered species last week, and she ended up spending an hour looking at funny videos of animals.

Maha thinks that being able to collaborate with people is a huge benefit. When she's unsure of something, she posts a question online and waits for the answers to come in. It's so much easier than spending hours in the library! Of course, she doesn't always know which posted answer is correct.

Maha

- a. What benefits does Maha get from social media?
- b. What problems does Maha experience when online?

You

- a. What do you use social media for?
- b. What do you think are the main benefits of using social media?
- c. What do you think are the risks?

THINK!

Do you think social media can cause harm in the long term? If so, in what way?

3 Read what does a virus do to your computer and complete the activity that follows.

Has someone with the flu ever visited your house? If so, did you get sick? The flu is a virus that spreads from person to person. In the same way that humans can get viruses, our computers can get viruses too.

Once a virus code gets into your computer, a lot of damage can be done. The virus starts to create more of itself over and over again. Then it spreads throughout the computer and can erase important parts of the system, like files that have been saved, or it can damage the hard drive, where all kinds of information is stored. This is really dangerous because people have sensitive information stored on their computers, like secret passwords for accounts.

The good news is that there are steps that you can take to protect your machine against these viruses.



- Never open messages from someone you don't know.
- Avoid non-secure web pages. You can recognise secure pages as the address begins with 'https://' and they display a padlock icon.
- Use secure passwords. Use a mixture of letters and numbers in your password. Change it every 3-4 months.
- Never provide confidential information via email.
- Read the privacy policy of the platform before you join it.

- a. Create a password for your social media account that you think would be strong. Have your partner guess your password.
- b. How would you analyse a privacy policy?

4 Protect yourself! Read the text and then answer the questions that follow.

We know that social media can be very beneficial. Some social media sites, like Facebook, are a great way of staying in touch with friends and family who may live far away. However, it is also important that you take steps to protect yourself online. Thankfully, the UAE government has put in place laws that protect the individual's privacy, and ensure that those who do not adhere to these laws are brought to justice. There may be times when you are on the internet that you are contacted by someone you don't know who makes you uncomfortable, or you may see things that are inappropriate. If this happens to you, it is important that you tell an adult you trust or your parents. There is no need to be afraid to tell them. You have done nothing wrong.

- a. Come up with at least two ways that you can protect yourself on social media.



Staying safe online

QUOTE

Social media is also used to do good things in the world. Read the quote below and think about other examples where social media was used to do good.

"I used my social media platforms for philanthropic activities this year. I partnered with Red Crescent to help raise money to build a hospital."

Saeed Al Rumaithi

5 Safety checklist for you and your peers.

If you think that your peers are at risk, make sure to tell them some of the steps that they can take to protect themselves against malicious attacks. Use the safety checklist to make sure that you are all doing everything you can to stay protected.

What to do if you are being targeted on social media:

- Tell your parents or a trusted adult
- Do not retaliate
- Try to ignore the person/comment/image/requests
- Block the person from your site
- Save the evidence. Keep a record of every message but do not reply
- Accept friends wisely
- Use privacy settings
- Don't give out personal information
- Use protection software
- Turn off your GPS
- Don't use auto log
- Use parental controls
- Understand that people can be misleading
- Don't do anything online that you wouldn't do in person



Safety checklist

a. Do you have any further questions?

b. What did you learn in this lesson?

.....

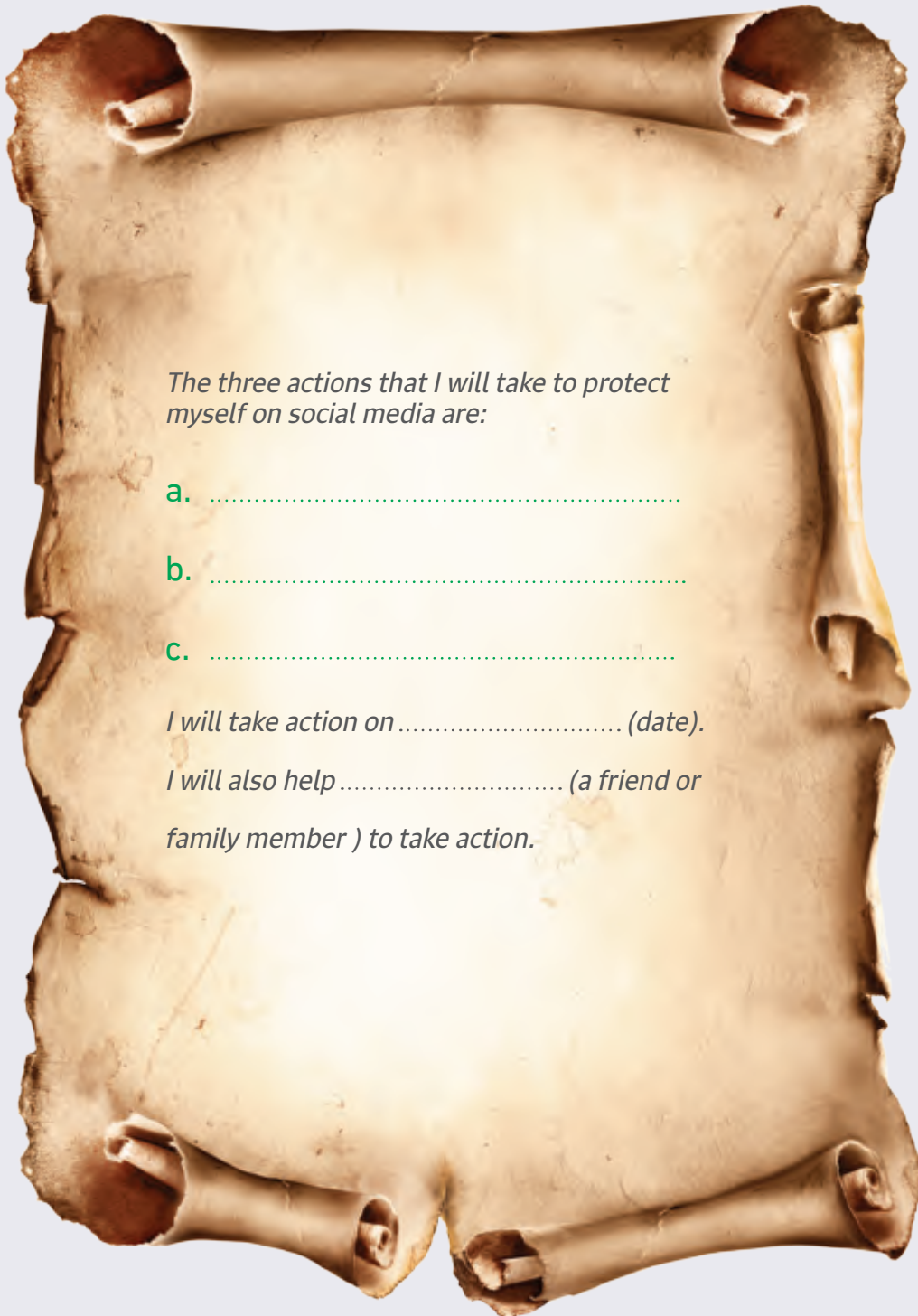
.....

c. What would you like to learn more about?

.....

.....

6 Draw up a contract to ensure that you will take action to protect yourself on social media.



The three actions that I will take to protect myself on social media are:

a.

b.

c.

I will take action on (date).

I will also help (a friend or family member) to take action.

Lesson 3

Electronic Abuse

Learning Outcomes

- Identify how digital media can be used maliciously for grooming, bullying and stalking.

Vocabulary

Cyberbullying

Grooming

Stalking

1 Work with a partner. What do you think is the message being conveyed by this image?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



2 You have heard about and discussed three of the dangers that people face online. Now think about examples of each of these dangers.

Bullies have been around forever. We are all familiar with stories about the schoolyard bully. Modern technology has given bullies a whole new platform for their actions. Cyberbullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person.

Most of the time cyberbullying is easy to spot — for example, a response to a status update on Facebook that is mean, or cruel. Other times it can be less obvious, posting personal information designed to hurt or embarrass another person. Cyberbullying also can happen accidentally. It is very hard to detect the sender's tone in a short text message. What one person thinks is a joke could hurt someone else's feelings.

Stalking is defined as harassing or threatening behaviour that is engaged in repeatedly. Such harassment can be either physical or virtual. People who have been physically stalked complain about someone following them or appearing at their home, school or place of business. Their stalker may make harassing phone calls, leave messages or objects, or sometimes even vandalize the person's property.

Cyberstalking is similar to stalking, but instead the Internet or other electronic means are used to stalk or harass a person.

More dangerous than cyberbullying or stalking is online grooming. Online grooming happens when people form relationships with children online and pretend to be their friend. They do this by finding out information about their potential victim. They try to isolate the victim and may use flattery and promises of gifts or threats and intimidation in order to achieve some control over them.

Cyberbullying	Grooming	Stalking
.....
.....
.....

3 There is increasing awareness of the dangers of cyberbullying nowadays. Read your assigned story below. Then work in groups to answer the questions that follow.

Hessa

When she was in the 7th grade, Hessa met someone in an online chat room. This person forced her to share some personal information and then released it online. Hessa's personal information was released and went viral. Other kids at her school saw it and started to bully and tease her. She became really upset.

A year later, after she changed school, she found a new group of friends. However, her online stalker used her information to create a fake Facebook page. Most of her new friends started ignoring her, talking about her, and bullying her. She reveals her feelings in her video on YouTube, describing how she cried every night and how she lost all but one friend.

That one friend, Reem, realised what was going on. She did her best to comfort Hessa. When Hessa started missing school, Reem decided to take action. She could not go on seeing her friend being so sad and lonely. Reem confided in her teacher. She told her what had happened to Hessa and how she was the victim of cyberbullying.

The teacher spoke with Hessa's parents who, in turn, contacted the police. Cyberbullying is a crime in the UAE. The police arrested the bully and he is now awaiting sentencing. Hessa is slowly returning to the happy, carefree person she once was.



Cyberbullying can affect anyone

- How was social media used maliciously in this case?
- What was it that affected the individual in the story?
- How do you think that you would feel if you were in that person's shoes?

4 Read the article about grooming and then do the activity that follows.

There are some people who use social media to harm others. We need to watch out for this and be mindful of where dangers may lie. These people are called 'groomers'. People who want to groom children will visit the sites and services that are popular with young people. They will join in online games or communities that they frequent.

On Facebook, they might send out 'friend requests' at random in the hope that young people will accept them. They also try to identify young people who might be particularly vulnerable by looking at the things they post. They will pay attention to likes and dislikes of a young person and may strike up a conversation about their favourite author or movie, pretending that the groomer has similar interests. Very often after a friendship has been established, they may ask the young person to chat privately, perhaps on social media or on a mobile chat app.

If you use online games, social media or chatrooms, it's important to let a parent know if someone is making you feel uncomfortable. Most important of all, do not meet up with someone you have met online unless you discuss it with your parents first.

Discuss the following scenario with your partner: A good friend has told you that they are going to meet a friend that they met online. Their new friend has told him that he has a new video game that they could play together. Your friend is planning on meeting this new friend after school. He has not told his parents.



Cyberbullying can affect anyone

5 Read the text about stalking and then do the activity that follows.

You may have read in the newspapers about celebrities that have been stalked. Some of these stalkers have even broken into the celebrity's home. Many of the celebrities have had to get court orders to restrict their stalker from coming anywhere close to them. One stalker actually punched his victim in the face!

Nowadays, it is not just celebrities who are stalked. Cyberstalking has become more common recently. Cyberstalkers use email, instant messages, phone calls, and other communication devices to stalk. It can take the form of harassment, inappropriate contact, or just plain annoying attention to your life and your family's activities.

Cyberstalking can be terribly frightening. It can destroy friendships, self-image and confidence. Fortunately, the UAE has issued Federal Decree No 5 of 2012 [cybercrime law]. This law is aimed at discouraging the misuse of social media. The law states that anyone who uses a computer network and/or social media to invade the privacy of another person shall be punished by imprisonment or fine. The prison sentence can run for a period of 6 months. The fine is between AED 150,000 and AED 500,000.

- a. How would you know if someone is stalking you?
- b. What actions should you take if this happens?



6 Imagine how you would feel if you were a victim of cyberbullying.

- a. What would your day be like?
- b. What could you do to protect yourself?

Work in groups. Write your thoughts on your Footprint sheet.



Steps to take to stay safe on social media.

Lesson 4

Smart Selection of Information

Learning Outcomes

- Talk about the risks of accepting online information at face value.
- Recognize how images and text can be used or modified to present different messages.

Vocabulary

Factual

Opinion

Modification

1 *A picture is worth a thousand words* is a saying that means that it is sometimes easier to show something in a picture than to describe it with words. However, often adding a piece of text or a caption can change the meaning of a picture drastically. Look at the image below and write a caption to accompany the image.



1.
.....

Images and even photographs can be altered using image editing software. An image might be altered to portray or represent a particular message or opinion, sell a product, or even to be used illegally (as in the case of identity theft).

Examine the image below and answer the questions with your partner.

- a. What message is the photo trying to convey?
- b. Is this fact or opinion?

Now find an image and alter it or add text to it to change its meaning. You can use a printed image and write on it, or use a digital image and alter it using editing software.

Present the picture before and after changes to the class, showing how you changed the meaning to present a different message.






THINK!

If you could change the meaning of an image or text, so can everyone else using social media. Think before you believe!

2 Finding the Real Meaning.

Optical illusions are images or pictures that we perceive differently than they really are. Another way of looking at it is that optical illusions occur when our eyes send information to our brains that tricks us into seeing something that does not match reality. Reformed images are those where people take photos from a certain angle to show something different. They might also add or remove things to the original image to create a new one.

With your group, see if you can identify the message portrayed in this selection of pictures. Remember, we all see things differently!

Image	Meaning
<div>1</div> 	<div>.....</div>
<div>2</div> 	<div>.....</div>
<div>3</div> 	<div>.....</div>

3 Read about making jokes on social media and answer the question that follows.

Ahmed had over 1,000 followers on Twitter. He was sitting at home one afternoon and feeling a little bored. He posted the following message on Twitter: Stuck in an elevator in the Burj Khalifa for over 24 hours. On the 86th floor. #Please help. Ahmed went into the kitchen and prepared some food. When he went back into the living room he noticed that he had received notifications that his post was being retweeted. Ten retweets. Forty retweets. The numbers kept creeping up. Ahmed was delighted. This will certainly make his afternoon a lot more interesting.



Ahmed became absorbed playing a video game and soon forgot about his post. All of a sudden, he noticed his message was trending # DubaiPolice. #Help Ahmed. Almost 700 of his followers had retweeted his post! Ahmed grew extremely nervous. His intention was to have a little fun and to liven up what otherwise was a boring afternoon. He did not want to get into trouble with the police or cause them to be distracted from legitimate work. Ahmed realised he had to take action and posted the following tweet: I apologise to all my followers. The tweet about being stuck in the elevator was just a joke. # DubaiPolice # Not funny. # Sorry.

- If you were a friend of Ahmed, how would you have stopped this?

4 Read the text about advertising on social media and then prepare for a debate on the topic.

Social media has changed the world of advertising and how businesses engage with their consumers. Traditional methods of advertising (print, tv, radio, etc.), are no longer enough.

Some people, on social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram, have a huge amount of followers. These people are known as social media influencers. They have the power to affect the purchase decisions of their followers. One UAE social media influencer has over 5.4 million followers on Instagram and has become one of the most influential social media personalities in the Middle East.

Blogging has been connected to influencer marketing for some time now. There are many highly influential blogs on the internet. If a popular blogger positively mentions a product in a post, it can lead to their supporters wanting to try out and buy the product.

The down side of this is that many of the social media influencers and bloggers are now being paid to promote products. It is becoming more difficult to know if a positive review is genuine or if it is simply because the influencer was paid to give the product a positive review.

Some bloggers go so far as to digitally alter images to give a positive spin to 'before' and 'after' photos.

They may use Photoshop to remove wrinkles and blemishes in order to promote a beauty product. Consider the following topic for debate:

- Social media influencers should not be paid to review a product.



5 Is all what we receive true? Read the below and then answer the questions that follow.

There is a reference and a source for everything. You should always verify what you read or what you hear. People send messages on phones and share posts on social media, they frequently ask you to share and broadcast them, but what if the information is not correct? What if they send you wishes for a happy sisters' week, and they ask you to send it to all those you consider as a sister. Out of your good will, you do right away. What if it was not sisters' week!

So, when you receive a message, always go back to a proper source in order to verify the information you just received or read. Then, after checking, you think about whether you would like to share it.

- a. How can you spot fake news?
- b. Why do you need to verify the accuracy of the information?

KEY FACT

The international day of families is on May 15th of every year. It was set by the United Nations to celebrate all caregivers in each family.

6 Images and text on social media can be easily edited and altered. Many of us alter images online on Instagram or Snapchat, for example. We crop out what we don't like, add text, apply filters and insert emojis. These can all change the meaning of the image. When you look at an image on social media, ask yourself if it has been edited to convey a specific message.

Change Yourself

- Take a selfie and save it.
- Take another selfie and edit it to convey a positive or happy message. ("I'm happy", for example.)
- Take a third selfie and edit it to convey a negative or sad message. ("I'm angry", for example.)
- Show the three images to your partner and discuss them.



THINK!

There is a trend of spreading incorrect information on social media. If you edit your online photos, are you adding to this trend?

Lesson 5

Manipulation of Individuals and Behaviour

Learning Outcomes

- Explore how the way information is presented can elicit emotional as well as rational responses.

Vocabulary

Emotional response

Rational response

Unmonitored

Debate

- 1 When people post on social media, they are usually looking to cause some reaction, either emotional or logical. But these reactions can lead to serious online conflicts.



With your partner, think about a time that you clicked a button to react to something on social media:

- Why did you react? How did it make you feel?
- Was it a positive or negative reaction? Why?
- How did other people react?
- Did anyone write comments about the content? Were the comments reasonable or emotional, or both?

2 A debate is a structured argument.

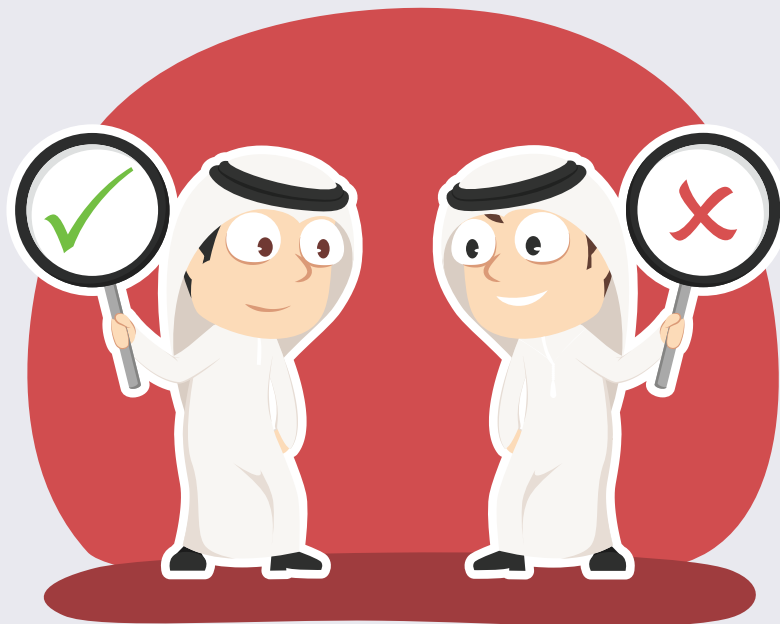
Two sides speak alternately for and against a particular proposal or topic. The subject of the dispute is often prearranged so you may find yourself having to support opinions with which you do not normally agree.

When we debate with others, differences of opinion emerge and things can become heated quickly.

Your goal is to passionately promote the sport that you've been assigned. You have to argue the following points, giving logical reasons for each:

- Why your sport is the best sport
- Why your sport is good for the local community
- Why your sport is good for young people
- Why your sport promotes healthy lifestyles
- Why your sport is good for the local economy

Remember, you must passionately argue and defend your points.



3 Read about reaching out to people on social media then answer the questions that follow.

People use social media for many reasons. Some of those reasons are to socialize, work, study, or do research.

Depending on the social media platform, the users could differ in gender and age group. Different platforms expose different interests that target different people. Some are merely for business, others are for fun, another one could combine both and so on. However, some global news whether happy or sad reaches out to everyone, no matter what gender or age group they are, no matter which platform they are posted on.

It really depends on the way the news is presented. It can capture the interest of everyone and elicit emotional and rational responses. An article or even one picture can stimulate reactions or concerns among all kinds of people.

- a. What post captured your interest most during the past year? What kind of news would be interesting to everyone?
- b. Create an image or write a small article that would be interesting to everyone and can be posted on all social media platforms.

4 Read the passage about monitoring posts and then complete the activity with your partner.

Countries have different standards when it comes to publishing images in the media. Because images can elicit such an emotional response, some countries operate a form of censorship and do not allow any pictures that could cause distress to be on TV or in newspapers. Powerful images of war can sway public opinion. In some countries, people have turned against their government's involvement in a war because they have had such an emotional response to a published image.

The argument in favour of publishing raw and grisly photographs of wars or natural disasters is that they're necessary to bring home to people what's at stake, the real and horrendous damage that these incidents do to cultures and to human bodies.

On social media, as it can be somewhat unmonitored, there is less censorship. People can post these grisly photographs and they can be shared and spread throughout the world very quickly. Images or text that we may prefer not to see can appear in our timelines.

When we look at an image or a newspaper headline, or a piece of text, it is very often hard to engage the rational side of our brain, particularly if the writer is presenting an opinion we agree with. It is important to think rationally about the text you are reading. Analyse the information contained in the article and fact check. If you see a powerful image, ask yourself what was the agenda of the publisher? Could this image be fake?



When have you had an emotional response to a piece of text or image?

When have you had a rational response to a piece of text or image?

With your group, complete the table.

Emotional	Rational

5 Using social media for conversation can cause disastrous misunderstandings between people.

When you have face-to-face conversations, it's easy to see when people are angry or sad or excited. With a text message, for example, it is not so clear. We have no facial expressions, or tone of voice to give us more information.



When you interact with people online, it can be easy to forget that they are people with feelings. It's important to fight this forgetfulness though. The better you are able to understand the feelings of others, the more you can empathise with them.

Think about your social media behaviour. How do you treat other users? How do you like them to treat you?

Consider the following questions:

a. How do you feel when your friends 'like' your post, image or comments?

.....

b. How do you feel when a stranger reacts in a positive way to your post?

.....

c. With your partner, role-play the following: Send your partner a message telling him a story. Then talk to your partner in person and tell him your story.

.....

6 How do you behave on social media? Do you interact with people online in the same way you would interact with them in person? Or do you hide behind a social media mask?

Design one or more emojis that best describe or illustrate the way that you react/reply to posts on social media.

Moral Education in Action

'We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts' (Aristotle).

Introduction to Moral Education in Action

Now that you have completed the Grade 7 units in the Moral Education programme, what happens next? In this unit, you will engage in an action project collectively with your class, in order to further enhance your emerging skills in this area. At the heart of the Moral Education programme is the acknowledgement that the values that we hold as humans shape our actions. This action project can be considered the meeting point of where theory and practice come together.

Young people are not 'Citizens in Waiting' (Professor Audrey Osler). You will be given the opportunity to critically examine your own understanding of citizenship and reflect on a range of complex, but crucial, moral issues in the classroom. After engaging with the units so far in the moral education programme, it is hoped that you will feel empowered, not to mention compelled, to take action for a better community. In this sense, learning from the lessons that you have encountered is linked to responsible action.

The action in the project might range from individual charitable endeavours and making more ethical consumer choices, to more collective forms of direct actions, such as raising awareness or campaigns. This action project gives you both the support and space to begin to try and influence decision making at a variety of different levels. The 'call to action' inherent in this project is an essential component of the Moral Education programme in order to give you a chance to enact the values you have learnt about so far in real-world contexts.

Before deciding on the action project that you would like to embark on it is important that you take some time to step back and plan for the project.





The Action

Once you have decided on your project, together with your classmates you should brainstorm the following questions

What is the specific aim of the project?

How are you going to get it on the agenda of the relevant decision makers?

How can you encourage the rest of your school to get on board?

How are you going to encourage the public to make a change for the better?

What kind of follow-up plans will help to really maximise change?

Ideas for Action Project

1. Establish a student council:

While individual action is extremely important, establishing meaningful structures for collective decision-making is also crucial in the context of this new programme. If your school does not have a formal student body, the cohort of Grade 7 students that you are a part of could be ideally placed to take on this initiative. A student council, comprising representatives from all grade levels, could be set up, with your Grade level taking responsibility for the administration and management. The council could decide the parameters of its decision making in collaboration with representatives from the teaching staff. Some of the areas for consideration might include:

- What decisions should be delegated to the student body and what should remain in the domain of the staff?
- What social events or school reform might be needed?
- Could the student council organise whole-student body meetings or class debates to ensure that student voices are heard on any issues of concern?
- Could students prepare for their future voting responsibilities as citizens by organising mock elections or mock referenda on emerging issues of national or global importance?

2. Policy development:

Developing guidelines or quality standards can be a positive commitment to change at a whole-school level. Grade 7 students could take charge of leading the school community in developing a new policy that stakeholders feel might be needed in the context of their school. For example, if discussions indicated that a policy around environmental protection or sustainable development is required, you could examine energy usage or paper waste in the school, commit to participating in 'Earth Hour', a 'Meatless Monday', a litter campaign or a local 'spring clean' initiative. You could look at whether purchases in the school are coming from sustainable or ethical sources and introduce a Fair trade shop or purchasing policy. Alternatively for example, if you decided the school needed to develop an anti-racism policy you could set up consultative sub-committees under the following headings, access

and enrolment, programme work, staff professional development, linguistic diversity, religious diversity, cultural diversity, and code of behaviour.

Showcase Event for Your Parents

Now that you have undertaken the project work, you will want to update your parents about your progress! Along with the rest of your class you will plan a showcase event. Below are some ideas for organising a showcase event for them:

1. Design:

- With your class and teacher, choose the space and venue for your showcase. (your classroom or the school hall).
- Plan how you will design the space.
- You could represent the flags of all the countries of people in your class.
- You could design a 'name wall' where everyone writes their name.

2. Display:

- Ensure that everything that you have learned from the action project is visually represented.
- Include posters or other graphical representations of the work that you have done.
- Set up a self-running slideshow of photos that were taken during your action project.

3. Engagement:

- Prepare questionnaires.
- Prepare quizzes for parents to attempt.
- Conversation starter sentences to start dialogues.

4. Think:

- Define the best ways through which you can communicate the new knowledge you have acquired and the skills you have developed as a result of this project.

Other Ideas for Sharing Your Action Project

You may decide that you would like to share what you have learned through the action project in alternative ways to the showcase event for parents. Below are some other suggestions:

- Share the main learning from your project in a school blog or newsletter.
- Summarise the main points of your project in a poster or infographic.
- Take part in a partnership event with a local school that has also completed a moral education action project.
- Contribute to a reflective journal or learning log.
- Use social media to share details of some of your project work, for example a class Twitter account or podcasts.

QUOTE

'The great aim of education is not knowledge, but action'

Herbert Spencer