

Who Do You Want to Be?

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Estimated time:	55 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• [35 minutes] Activity #1• [20 minutes] Assignment
Group or individual activity:	Group
Ages:	11-18 years old
Grades:	Grades 6-12
Online / offline elements:	This learning experience contains links to online resources to help facilitate a group-based discussion, with an offline writing assignment.
Areas:	Main area: Identity Exploration and Formation Additional areas: Content Production, Contextual Literacy, Digital Economy, Privacy and Reputation
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Learning Goal

Participants will examine how their online identity and the content they create and share relates to their goals (e.g., career-related, personal, skills / interests they would like to pursue). They will explore how to manage an online persona that considers platform, subject, visual representation, and privacy settings.

Materials

- [One per participant] Handout: My Online Identity
- [One per participant] Paper
- [One per participant] Pens or pencils

Resources

- Article: [Revealing the Man Behind @MayorEmanuel](#) - by Alexis Madrigal (The Atlantic)
- Video: [How to Market Yourself Online](#) - by Youth Radio

Activity #1: My Online Identity

SAY:

- Let's take a minute to think about how we interact with different people depending on who they are. You may act differently around your friends than around your family members or your teachers at school. You also may act differently depending on the setting or occasion — one way with friends at school, and a different way with the same friends when you spend time together outside of school.

SAY:

- We may be slightly different people depending on where we are and who we're with. You have a similar ability to manage how you and your content will appear publicly online, and it can be helpful to start thinking about how you'd like others to view you on the Internet.
- Public figures (e.g., those in the music and / or film [movies / TV] industry, political figures, business leaders) do this all the time. By carefully constructing every part of their brand and public presence, from social media content (e.g., photos, videos, text-based posts) to interviews, they are trying to appeal to fans or customers.

- You don't have to be a public figure with a billion-dollar marketing strategy. Even if you are not, it's still useful to think about who might be looking at your online presence and plan how you appear online.

[Organize participants into pairs.]

ASK:

- What content do you currently make and / or share online (e.g., videos, music, remixes, blogs, designs, animations)?
- What inspires you to make or share this content? Why do you do it?
- What content do you have your real name and image associated with?
- Is there any content that you would not want to be publicly associated with you? Why not?

[Note that if participants haven't made and / or shared content online, they can discuss what type of content they would like to make and / or share, what would inspire them to develop this content, and what content they would want their real name and image linked to and what content they wouldn't want publicly connected to them.]

[Give participants 7 minutes to discuss. And ask the groups to share out.]

SAY:

- Before we can talk about your future online presence, let's talk about your future goals. Discuss with your partner:
 - Where and what do you want to be in a few years from now? It's ok if you have more than one idea and / or career-related goal that currently interests you.
 - How did you come up with that idea(s)?
 - What personal goals do you have that are not related to your career goal(s)?
 - What might you do online to help you achieve your career-related goals or personal goals?

[Pass out the My Online Identity Handout to participants.]

SAY:

- What you do online can help you explore your current interests and also help you discover future passions.

- Individually, take a few minutes to fill out this handout and reflect on your aspirations in the context of how you present yourself online. Remember that everyone's online identity may be different, and your own identity will likely evolve based on how your goals and interests change in the future.

Assignment

SAY:

- Now that we have reflected on how you view yourself and your interests let's think about how you would like to highlight aspects of your identity to others.
 1. Imagine that you are creating a new social media presence that focuses on a particular aspect of your identity. You will be starting from scratch, and you will have total liberty to adjust all of the privacy settings and craft content in any way you wish.
 2. In a written paragraph, discuss how you might structure this new social media presence to portray your chosen image to friends / followers / those you are connected to. In particular, speak to the following concepts:
 - Type of account and platform (e.g., social media, blog, etc.)
 - What would you put in the "About Me" section?
 - Type of content (e.g., photos, videos, text-based posts)
 - What would you set your privacy settings to? Would any of these settings depend on the type of content you share?

My Online Identity Handout

Please write down your answers to the following questions in the space provided.

1. You previously shared this with your partner but to recap, where do you see yourself in a few years from now, both professionally and personally? What type of person do you want to be? What kind of work do you see yourself doing, or how will you be spending your time?

2. Thinking about this “future you,” what kind of skills and assets do you think you will have developed by then? Which ones do you think you will be most excited about or possibly proud of?

3. If you consider who / where you are now, do you think how you currently engage online (e.g., the passions you share, how you present and express yourself, the people and communities you interact with, the skills you develop) has an impact on who / where you would like to be in the near future? If so, how? Or if not, why not?

4. What are specific skills or aspects of your identity that you could feature online now in hopes of getting closer to the “future you”? How, and on what platforms, might you highlight these skills?