

Cyberbullying 101

Understanding cyberbullying and its forms

Ingredients

- 01 Whiteboard and markers

Handout for each student with definitions and examples of cyberbullying
- 02 One video with an example of cyberbullying (*See also...* section)
- 03 Internet access for students to complete a short research activity

Learning/Teaching Situation

The lesson is designed as a first introduction to forms of cyberbullying and the different roles of individuals involved in cyberbullying. Its aim is to allow students to discuss their own perception and experience and raise awareness about the phenomenon of cyberbullying and its various forms.

Target Group

The target group for this lesson is a high school class and is appropriate for students between 14 and 18 years old.

Description

Cyberbullying is bullying through mobile phones, social media, and messaging or gaming platforms. The perpetrator may be anonymous but often cyberbullying can be an extension of bullying at school and performed by the same individuals. Raising awareness and developing empathy is key to preventing cyberbullying.

How to do it (Step by step)

Step 1

Introduction (10 minutes): Ask the students if they know what cyberbullying is and collect various answers until you all have a clear definition. Mention that some characteristics are repetition, intention, imbalance of power (may not be the case when it is anonymous), aggression. Ask students to share their own experiences and perceptions of cyberbullying.

Step 2

Video (15 minutes): Watch a short video with an example of a cyberbullying situation (two examples that you can choose from are available in the *See also...* section). After watching the video ask students questions about how the example fits in with the definition you have discussed. Prompt students to think about how the victim may have felt, who was involved in the example (e.g., bully, bystanders, victim, family) and whether their behavior can change the outcome.

Step 3

Brainstorming before research activity (10 minutes): Prompt students to mention any forms of cyberbullying they know. Start writing the names of the forms of cyberbullying on the whiteboard. Then give students the handout and ask them to find the forms they had not thought of earlier. Explain these other

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Step 4

Group research activity (15 minutes): Divide students into groups and ask them to conduct a small research activity where they look for real-life examples of each type of cyberbullying. Walk around the classroom and discuss with each group regarding whether this form of cyberbullying is common or not and what examples they have found.

Step 5

Conclusion (5 minutes): Conclude the lesson going back to the idea of behavior and whether our behavior can change a cyberbullying situation (e.g., not reposting or liking messages that constitute cyberbullying on social media, reporting to the online platform or to the school, voicing support towards the victim). Link this to the different forms of cyberbullying and prompt students to express their ideas.

There is more...

This activity can easily be modified to focus on whichever aspect of cyberbullying is of more interest.

For example:

- changing the research activity to a search on the mental and physical consequences of cyberbullying could be used to focus more on that topic

- the research activity can be substituted for something more creative, for example making a one-minute video or simple poster raising awareness against cyberbullying.

See also ...

Childnet International (2021, February 10). *Crossing the Line PSHE Toolkit: Cyberbullying - Gone too far.* [Video] YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51_MO7hWTQI

Childnet International (2021, February 10). *Crossing the Line PSHE Toolkit: Sexting - Just Send It.* [Video] YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65aNokVDM08>

Florida State College at Jacksonville (n.d.). Cyberbullying. *Child and Adolescent Psychology*. <https://library.achievingthedream.org/fscjchildpsychology/chapter/cyberbullying/>