

# Digital Citizenship

## Lesson Title: Just Because It Disappears... Does That Make It Okay?

### High School



#### Essential Question:

How do ephemeral sites like Snapchat impact our daily lives?

#### Materials

- Snapchat: True or False? page
- Snapchat: True or False? Teacher Support Page
- Writing implements

#### Note:

No video accompanies this lesson.

### Procedure:

#### Introduction:

1. Begin session by asking students about their use of social media apps that post pictures and text messages for limited amounts of time such as Snapchat or Burn Note. These are referred to as 'ephemeral' sites (ephemeral means lasting a very short time or short-lived).
  - What are some of the facts you know about Snapchat and other ephemeral apps?
  - Why do young people choose to use ephemeral apps?
  - What are their perceptions of why others use them?
  - What is the best thing about using an app where your post disappears in a set amount of time?
  - What is the worst thing about it?
  - What are the dangers of using an ephemeral app?
  - Are these apps safe? Explain.
  - How is your privacy protected within the app?
2. Tell students that they are going to reveal what they know—and might be surprised to learn—about one ephemeral app, Snapchat. Distribute the Snapchat: True or False? page and ask students to work with a partner to respond to each statement on the page.

3. After students have completed the worksheet, gather as a group to discuss their answers. Use the Teacher Support version to provide facts and research about the app.
  - What is the most interesting new fact they learned? Why?
  - How does any of this information affect their use—if at all?
  - How does any of this information change their answers to earlier questions—if at all?
  - Are ephemeral apps safe?
  - What concerns should we have about ephemeral apps?
  - How do ephemeral apps like Snapchat impact our daily lives?
  
4. Explain that today's discussion will provide fodder and evidence for the assignment. Opponents of ephemeral apps such as Snapchat and Burn Note have become quite vocal in the news, online, and in community groups; however, teen voices need to be heard in public forums that will be read and/or heard by all. The students' task is to write or record a persuasive piece in the form of an editorial or a letter to the editor of a local newspaper OR an opinion piece for a radio station or web-streamed site regarding Snapchat or other 'ephemeral' sites. Remind students that good persuasive writing includes:
  - A stated opinion or arguable point
  - Facts
  - Sound, specific reasons
  - Strong examples to support the case
  - Opposing viewpoints with strong rebuttal
  - A conclusion reiterating the writer's opinion/argument

Determine whether this will be an in-class assignment or completed for homework and follow school writing frameworks.
  
5. When complete, have students share their work with others in the class. Survey the students to see if they support or oppose the use of ephemeral apps—with or without caveats.

## Conclusion

Summarize the themes of the lesson. Close with a discussion of the essential question: How do ephemeral sites like Snapchat impact our daily lives?

# Snapchat: True or False?

Mark each statement true or false and be ready to defend your answers.

1. Pictures are forever on Snapchat. T    F
2. Only the person you send a photo to has access to it on Snapchat. T    F
3. Snapchatters can screenshot images sent to them. T    F
4. The average Snapchat is sent to four or more people. T    F
5. Most teens use Snapchat because adults cannot check up on it. T    F
6. If someone is caught using Snapchat for sending nude photos, and/or possession. T    F
7. Hackers cannot hack into Snapchat photos. T    F
8. The sender can stop the receiver from saving photos. T    F
9. Snapchat is more popular than Twitter. T    F
10. The biggest use of Snapchat is for sexting. T    F

# Snapchat: True or False?

## Teacher Support Page

**1. Pictures are forever on Snapchat.**

**True.** Although Snapchat promotes that pictures last 3-10 seconds on the screen only, forensic researchers have found that the Google Android version of Snapchat doesn't delete the photo. It removes the labels that allow the operating system to find the picture, but hackers can find the photos. The iPhone version is more resistant to hackers, but there have been cases where photos have been retrieved from the iPhone version. (Macworld, July 2013)

**2. Only the person you send a photo to has access to it on Snapchat.**

And the police with a warrant. **So, False.** And anyone else who looks over your shoulder. (MTV News, April 2015)

**3. Snapchatters can screenshot images sent to them.**

**Yes, they can.** The receiver needs to be ready to save it by pressing Home and Sleep buttons simultaneously. It's not easy to do so quickly, but then there is always the opportunity for another person to take a picture of the picture with another cell phone. (Macworld, July 2013)

**4. The average Snapchat is sent to four or more people.**

**This is false.** 88% of all snaps are sent to only one person. However, this does not count the number of people peering over your shoulder or the ones you share with... (Business Insider, November 2013)

**5. Most teens use Snapchat because adults cannot check up on it.**

**True.** Adults are not as savvy as teens about technology—but they are getting there. However, this is not the number one reason teens use Snapchat. The number one reason is that it is quick and easy—and their parents won't see it that way. (Business Insider, May 2015)

**6. If someone is caught using Snapchat for sending nude photos, that person can be charged with porn production, distribution, and/or possession.**

**This is true.** If the charge sticks, the Snapchatter will be required by law to register as a sex offender. (National Crime Prevention Center)

**7. Hackers cannot hack into Snapchat photos.**

**False.** Just plain false. See #1. (National Crime Prevention Center)

**8. The sender can stop the receiver from saving photos.**

**False, but they can monitor it.** (Macworld, July 2013)

**9. Snapchat is more popular than Twitter.**

**True.** According to Bloomberg Technology (June 2016), over 150 million people use Snapchat each day compared with Twitter which has less than 140 million daily users.

**10. The biggest use of Snapchat is for sexting.**

**False.** 14% of users participate in sexting, 1.6% do so regularly. (Huffington Post, July 2014)