

Digital Citizenship: Arts Integrated Lessons

Lesson Title: Addicted to the Internet?

Grade Level: High School



Essential Question:

Are we as a society addicted to the Internet?

Materials

- Lyrics to and recording of “The Web is a Bore” by JuneBug
- Copies of the Internet Addict Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ)
- The More Things Change... Handout on quotations regarding television use

Discussion Guidelines

1. Write the following sentence on the board: Americans are addicted to the Internet.
2. Indicate that one side of the room is yes, the other is no, and that students should stand on the “yes-to-no scale” to indicate their opinion about the statement on Internet addiction.
3. Have students turn to a person standing close to them on the scale and discuss their reasons.
4. Ask students to share with the larger group. After discussion (or perhaps for the discussion), have students return to their seats.
5. Distribute lyrics and listen to “The Web is a Bore” by JuneBug. Review the concept of social commentary: a form of communication that seeks to express an opinion or deliver a message regarding a social issue, usually with the intent of creating change by appealing to the audience’s sense of justice. Social commentary pieces do not always tell us what to think, but they do provide information about problems. How is this song social commentary? What does this song have to say about Internet addiction? How do you know? What is the style of the song? (Alternative Rock). How does it suit the message?
6. Ask students if they have ever thought about their own addiction or non-addiction to the Internet — whether used on phones, iPads, laptops, etc.
7. Distribute the copies of the Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire. Ask student volunteers to read the questions out loud. Tell them NOT to answer the questions out loud; you are not trying to diagnose them. This is just for them to think about.

8. If time permits, or as an extension lesson, explore with students the much-repeated quotation attributed to French critic, journalist and novelist Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1908-1990): 'plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose' or 'The more things change the more they stay the same.' Distribute the handout with quotations relating to television and technology in the 20th century. How do those comments compare to the lyrics of "The Web is a Bore"? How do those comments and concerns about television compare to today's concerns about Internet addiction? What other instances can you think of in the ways society (or your parents and grandparents) react to change through the generations? Ask students to create their own quotation about their use, perspective or predictions about social media and online life in general.

Conclusion

Ask students to once again stand on the scale to indicate their opinion about Americans and Internet addiction. Did their opinions change? Why or why not?

“The Web is a Bore”

by JuneBug

It seems like everyone is lazy nowadays
Sat on their computers inside
Like helpless flies they have got stuck inside a web and they are
Watching their lives flash past their eyes

But the web is a bore
The web is a bore
The web is a bore
The web is a bore

Don't want to know how many people liked your profile picture
I'd rather see you in person
I couldn't care if you got retweeted by someone famous
I'd rather hear it from you first

'Cause the web is a bore
The web is a bore
The web is a bore
The web is a bore

Solo

And if you wait or even hesitate you might find you're too late
To do the things you want, is that what you want?
That's what I thought

Chorus x 2

Internet Addict Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ)

Developed by Dr. Kimberly S. Young

To assess levels of addiction

Dr. Young says, "Answering positively to five out of the eight questions may be indicative of an online addiction."

- Are you preoccupied with using the Internet? Do you think about your previous or future online activity?
- Do you have the need to be online longer to be satisfied?
- Have you made repeated but unsuccessful attempts to cut back, stop or control your Internet use?
- Do you become moody, restless, irritable or depressed when you stop or decrease your Internet use?
- Is your time spent online longer than what you originally planned?
- Did your online use negatively affect a significant relationship, education, career or job?
- Do you conceal the extent of your Internet usage from your therapist, family or others?
- Does the Internet serve as an escape from problems or relief from a bad mood?

Source: <http://www.globaladdiction.org/dldocs/GLOBALADDICTION-Scales-InternetAddictionTest.pdf>

The More Things Change...

20th Century Commentary on the Advent of Television

"TV will never be a serious competitor for radio because people must sit and keep their eyes glued on a screen; the average American family hasn't time for it."

- Author Unknown, from New York Times, 1939

"I can think of nothing more boring for the American people than to have to sit in their living rooms for a whole half hour looking at my face on their television screens."

- Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th President of the United States

"One of the few good things about modern times: If you die horribly on television, you will not have died in vain. You will have entertained us."

- Kurt Vonnegut

"Television has proved that people will look at anything rather than each other."

- Ann Landers

"[Television is] an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home."

- David Frost

"We cannot blame the schools alone for the dismal decline in SAT verbal scores. When our kids come home from school do they pick up a book or do they sit glued to the tube, watching music videos? Parents, don't make the mistake of thinking your kid only learns between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. "

- George H.W. Bush, 41st President of the United States