

Growing Up Online

A Study Guide for Teachers

About the Film

FRONTLINE takes viewers inside the private worlds that kids are creating online, raising important questions about how the Internet is transforming the experience of adolescence. At school, teachers are trying to figure out how to reach a generation that no longer reads books or newspapers. Fear of online predators has led teachers and parents to focus primarily on keeping kids safe online. But many young people think these fears are misplaced. Online media has also intensified the social dimensions of adolescence as teens create and play with identities on sites like MySpace and Facebook and encounter intense peer pressure in a variety of virtual worlds. Parents are confused about how to respond to the increasingly private worlds inhabited by their children, lacking an understanding of both the creative potential and the genuine risks of this new dimension of our cultural environment.

Watching the Film

Teachers can either assign the film for viewing as homework or show the film in class. Suggested discussion questions are provided, divided into sections that correspond to the chapters of the film. The lessons and activities in this guide can be used in the classroom without having viewed the film.

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

Although any teacher can use these lessons, library/media specialists, media teachers and teachers of health, sociology, English and history should find that these activities lead to meaningful student-based research and lively discussion. These activities are suitable for both high school and college students.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

This guide offers a comprehensive group of discussion questions divided into seven areas correlated with each chapter of *Growing Up Online*.

Featured Lesson Plan

How Did MySpace Become Your Space?

Students investigate the history and economics of MySpace.

Lesson Objectives:

Students will:

- Understand the history of MySpace -- the who, what, when and why it was created
- Explore the economic foundation of MySpace and consider the special interests of the parent company
- Analyze how advertising is enmeshed and personalized on MySpace
- Practice public speaking skills by presenting in a news journalism format
- Investigate the terms *target audience*, *datamining* and *advergame*

ADDITIONAL LESSON IDEAS:

Compete with MySpace!: Design a New Site. Students play the role of Web designer and create a layout for a site that competes with MySpace.

Take Action: Classroom Ideas That Build from the Discussion Questions

RESOURCES:

An annotated list of Web sites for educators

Growing Up Online: A Guide for Parents

PURCHASING THE FILM:

Growing Up Online can be purchased through shop PBS for Teachers:

www.teacher.shop.pbs.org . Also, teachers and students can watch the film streamed in its entirety on FRONTLINE's Web site, www.pbs.org/frontline/kidsonline

Credits

This Teacher's Guide was written by Renee Hobbs and Kelly Mendoza at Temple University's Media Education Lab at the School of Communications and Theater in Philadelphia, Pa. (www.mediaeducationlab.com). Simone Bloom Nathan, Milton Chen and Faith Rogow served as members of the advisory team.

Discussion Questions: Table of Contents

The comprehensive Study Guide is divided into seven parts. Questions under each section help promote active discussion of the program. Teachers can use all or some of the discussion questions as a catalyst for writing or media composition assignments, in conjunction with viewing chapters from the documentary. *Growing Up Online* is available in streaming video at the FRONTLINE Web site, www.pbs.org/frontline/kidsonline. Click on "Watch the Full Program Online" to access each chapter.

Part 1: Internet in the Home. Viewers are introduced to Morris City, N.J., where most teens spend time online talking with friends on social networking sites, playing games and doing homework. Parents appear to be absent from these virtual worlds. Use these questions with the program chapter titled *Living Their Lives Essentially Online*.

Part 2: Digital Media in Schools. At school, teachers are dealing with using new technologies in the classroom. Some teachers are eager adopters of technology, while others are hesitant and feel uncomfortable. Use these questions with the program chapter *A Revolution in Classrooms and Social Life*.

Part 3: Social Networking -- Keeping in Touch. Today, kids "hang out" and talk with friends in virtual spaces through instant messaging, text messaging, chat rooms and social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook. Use these questions with the program chapter *A Revolution in Classrooms and Social Life*.

Part 4: Identity Play. Jessica Long, the shy girl next door, creates a new identity online as the popular Autumn Edows. The Internet allows young people to express themselves, experiment with different perspectives, and play with aspects of their identity. Use these questions with the program chapter *Self Expression, Trying On New Identities*.

Part 5: Parenting, Privacy and Control. Parents are challenged in managing their kids' media use and are anxious about online predators, what their kids post online, and whether their kids are engaging in harmful online behavior. Use these questions with the program chapters *The Child Predator Fear* and *Private Worlds Outside Parents' Reach?*

Part 6: Online Relationships -- Healthy or Unhealthy? Some teens, such as Sara and Ryan Halligan, experienced the Internet in ways that were damaging. Sara was drawn to support sites for eating disorders, while Ryan experienced harassment through cyberbullying. In both cases, parents did not realize what was going on in their kids' online worlds. Use these questions with the program chapters *Private Worlds Outside Parents' Reach?* and *Cyberbullying*.

Part 7: Post-Viewing. The program ends with high school graduation and some changes. Sara has received help for her eating disorder; Greg decides it's time to disconnect from the Internet as he starts college; and Autumn Edows' parents are now supportive of her online identity. How do parents and teens better understand life online? Use these questions with the program chapter *Updates*.

PART I: Internet in the Home

Viewers are introduced to Morris City, N.J., where most teens spend time online talking with friends on social networking sites, playing games and doing homework. Parents appear to be absent from these virtual worlds. Use these questions with the program chapter *Living Their Lives Essentially Online*.

- 1.1. What is your initial reaction to the program? What did you like or dislike about it?
- 1.2. At home, how often are you online? At school, how often are you online? What percentage of the time do you think you spend: Doing homework? Chatting with friends? Updating your profile? Playing games? Surfing/looking up stuff you're interested in? Downloading music? Uploading/downloading videos?
- 1.3. A survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project found that in 2004, 67 percent of parents said the Internet has been a good thing for their children. However, this number decreased to 59 percent in 2006. Why do you think the number of parents who reported the Internet being a good thing for their children has decreased?
- 1.4. In the opening of the program, we see boys gathering to collaboratively play a military-style videogame. What characteristics of a computer make it different from other media in the home, such as television, videogames, stereo/radio, magazines and books? How do these characteristics influence:
 - How the computer is used in the home?
 - Who uses the computer?
 - Where the computer is placed?
 - How much the computer is used?
- 1.5. In the introduction to the program, the narrator says: "This is Morris County, N.J., but it could be anywhere in America. Here, like in the rest of the country, some 90 percent of teenagers are online, a number that's still growing." From what you saw in the film, is Morris County indicative of a typical American community? Why or why not? Is it like your community?
- 1.6. Documentary programs, because they depict real people and real issues, are often framed as "the truth." But documentary producers make decisions about how to tell a story just like producers of other media messages. Remember to take a step back and think about the decisions the producers made. Some questions to consider:
 - Who produced this film?
 - Why did they produce it?
 - Who is the target audience, and what techniques are used to appeal to that audience?
 - Whose voices do we hear in the program; that is, who is portrayed, and what are their stories? Whose voices are left out -- who do we hear less of or not at all?
 - What questions did the producers leave unasked? If you could interview one of the people featured in the documentary, what would you ask?

PART 2: Digital Media in Schools

At school, teachers are dealing with using new technologies in the classroom. Some teachers are eager adopters of technology, while others are hesitant and feel uncomfortable. Use these questions with the program chapter *A Revolution in Classrooms and Social Life*.

- 2.1. More teachers are using tools to try to detect cheating or deter students' inclination to cheat. In the program, we see the use of plagiarism-detection tools like Turnitin.com and writing assignments completed during class time to make sure students do their own work and generate their own ideas. In terms of student writing, what are some different types of "cheating"? What are the elements you would include in your definition of "cheating"?
- 2.2. One teacher in the program says, "We almost have to be entertainers." If we think of an entertainer as an actor, musician, dancer or someone who performs, in what ways is your favorite teacher like an entertainer? In what ways is he or she unlike -- or different from -- an entertainer? What are the positive and negative consequences of expecting teachers to be entertaining?
- 2.3. One student claims he "never reads books" but relies on summaries and annotated notes he finds on Web sites. He confesses that he feels guilty about this, stating, "I feel like I kind of cheated it." Should he feel guilty? Why or why not?
- 2.4 In the program, we see teachers using digital technology for their presentations. How do students use digital media in school? In what grade levels and in which types of classes are students most likely to use digital media for learning? What types of uses are most and least common? Why?

PART 3: Social Networking -- Keeping in Touch

Today, kids "hang out" and talk with friends in virtual spaces through instant messaging, text messaging, chat rooms and social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook. Use these questions with the program chapter *A Revolution in Classrooms and Social Life*.

- 3.1. One teen describes MySpace and Facebook as fun because they are "a section of the Internet that's your own." How is a profile -- an online space -- similar to and different from other parts of the world that are your own, like your bedroom, school locker or diary?
- 3.2. As shown in the program, social networking sites can be used as a way to "talk junk," insult others or hash out conflicts. Is fighting online a relatively safe way to express negative emotions in responding to others (without having to deal with them face to face)? Or does online fighting do more harm than good?
- 3.3. The program describes social networking sites as places where kids post pictures, accumulate friends, post messages to others and describe themselves. What other kinds of things do teens and young adults do on social networking sites that aren't mentioned?
- 3.4. Girls describe how online name calling among different groups escalated to physical violence between girls in a school cafeteria. The event was videotaped by students and posted to YouTube. From the list below, choose three of the following groups. Explain the *similarities* and *differences* in how the fight video would function for each group -- and how these groups might perceive the video.
 - The girls who were fighting in the video
 - The person who filmed it and uploaded it
 - Other students in the school
 - Teachers and administrators at the school
 - Parents of the girls who were fighting
 - Parents of students who were in the cafeteria at the time
 - Law enforcement in the community
 - Teens who viewed the video online -- but are from a different school or area

- MTV market researchers
- YouTube's advertising sales department
- A high school student in China who will soon be an exchange student in a U.S. high school

PART 4: Identity Play

Jessica Long, the shy girl next door, creates a new identity online as the popular Autumn Edows. The Internet allows young people to express themselves, experiment with different perspectives, and play with aspects of their identity. Use these questions with the program chapter *Self Expression, Trying On New Identities*.

Note: More information about this topic is available in the Growing Up Online Viewing Guide for Parents.

- 4.1. Some teens, like Autumn Edows, feel like they can be someone else online. Sara, however, mentioned that while she has to play a role in real life, she can be more authentic online. What do you feel when you're online? Can you be more real and authentic, who you really are, or do you enjoy feeling like you're someone else, or playing around with your identity?
- 4.2. When you think of stuff to post on your profile, who is the main audience you're communicating to? Who are other potential audiences that might be viewing, but that you might not think of when you post things?
- 4.3. In the program, teens are shown talking about the photos of themselves that they post online. Some people may post images of themselves looking like musicians, models or celebrities. Profiles may perpetuate stereotypes of others because we only get a glimpse of them through their photographs, their interests in music and movies, and pictures and comments from their friends. Do you think it is easier to stereotype people online than in real life? Why or why not? What information does a photograph tell about a person? What information does a person's music selections provide? How do popular culture and the mass media affect people's selection of different types of images and music for their profiles?
- 4.4. Before the Internet, in order to be seen by the world, you had to be portrayed in some form of mass media, and you had to be famous in some respect -- in the news, in politics or as a celebrity. Now anyone can be seen online by anyone else in the world. Some people have become famous for videos or photos they've posted (such as Autumn Edows). What are the positive and negative consequences of blurring the line between being a celebrity and a regular person?

PART 5: Parenting, Privacy and Control

Parents are challenged in managing their kids' media use and are anxious about online predators, what their kids post online, and whether their kids are engaging in harmful online behavior. Use these questions with the program chapters *The Child Predator Fear* and *Private Worlds Outside Parents' Reach*?

Note: More information about this topic is available in the Growing Up Online Viewing Guide for Parents.

- 5.1. In the program, we see parents who are actively monitoring teens' online use and other parents who are not. What factors play a role in whether or not a parent will be involved in monitoring teens' online media use? From your point of view, what forms of involvement are most useful? Least useful?
- 5.2. Shows like "To Catch a Predator" on *Dateline NBC* contribute to parental anxiety about online media. What elements of this FRONTLINE program are likely to increase parents' fears? What elements of the program might be reassuring?
- 5.3. Evan Skinner e-mailed parents in her community after she learned about the photos taken when her son and other students went to a rock concert and got drunk. Ryan

Halligan's dad contacted the parent of another teen whose Web site was full of suicidal thoughts and feelings. Why did they do this? What are some consequences of reaching out to other parents to share concerns?

PART 6: Online Relationships -- Healthy or Unhealthy?

Some teens, such as Sara and Ryan Halligan, experienced the Internet in ways that were damaging. Sara was drawn to support sites for eating disorders, while Ryan experienced harassment through cyberbullying. In both cases, parents did not realize what was going on in their kids' online worlds. Use these questions with the program chapters *Private Worlds Outside Parents' Reach?* and *Cyberbullying*.

Note: More information about this topic is available in the Growing Up Online Viewing Guide for Parents.

- 6.1. Teens turn to the Internet to find information about health, such as changes the body goes through, nutrition, sexuality issues, mental and emotional issues, and substance abuse. A teen who's seeking support for a problem might surf the Web for answers, bring up the problem in a chat room or blog post, put up a video or join an online support group. In the program, we see two teens using online media to find information and express damaging thoughts and behaviors. In Sara's case, she found tips that supported and praised anorexic behavior by browsing and chatting on "ana" sites. After experiencing online and offline bullying, Ryan Halligan chatted with a friend about killing himself and learned about various ways to commit suicide. Why might someone be attracted to dangerous or unhealthy communication and Web sites with dangerous information? Why might someone want to create such sites?
- 6.2. Teasing, lying, gossiping, threatening, spreading rumors or harassing online (and offline) can severely affect people's self-concept and self-esteem and have an impact on their emotional state. In the program, we see one girl who describes flirting with boys and then revealing she was just kidding. She explains: "You wouldn't do that to someone's face, but online is completely different. ... No one can do anything. You're at your house, they're at their house." What are some of the short- and longer-term consequences of this behavior for life online and in the real world?

PART 7: Post-Viewing

The program ends with high school graduation and some changes. Sara has received help for her eating disorder; Greg decides it's time to disconnect from the Internet as he starts college; and Autumn Edows' parents are supportive of her online identity. How do parents and teens better understand life online? Use these questions with the program chapter *Updates*.

- 7.1. At the end of the program, we see the parents of Autumn Edows, who are now supportive of their daughter's online identity. Her father says: "People say things about the Internet, and they talk about the danger. From where I stand, I'm glad it's there." But earlier in the show, we learned that they had made her delete the photos of herself from her computer. What must have happened to cause this dramatic shift in the parents' thinking?
- 7.2. At the end of the program, Greg decides it's time for him to "disconnect" by going to the Coast Guard Academy, where he will spend seven weeks without cell phones or the Internet. Have you ever thought about "disconnecting" from it all? Do you think it would be easy or difficult? What would you enjoy or dislike about disconnecting?

FEATURED LESSON PLAN: How Did MySpace Become Your Space?

Overview: Do you know who created MySpace and when it was created? Who currently owns MySpace? Why is MySpace such a popular place for advertisers who target teen consumers? Students will do some investigative reporting to uncover the history and economics of MySpace.

Objectives: Students will:

- Understand the history of MySpace -- the who, what, when and why it was created
- Explore the economic foundation of MySpace and consider the special interests of the parent company
- Analyze how advertising is enmeshed and personalized on MySpace
- Practice public speaking skills by presenting in a news journalism format
- Investigate the terms *target audience*, *datamining* and *advergame*

Materials needed:

- Computer with projector
- Student access to computers/library for research
- Copies of assignment handout, Lesson One, for all students

Time Needed: This lesson can be divided into three steps:

- Step I. Gather Information: Two periods
- Step II. Plan, Organize and Practice: Two periods
- Step III. Present Ideas and Discuss: Two periods

Procedure:

1) Open up the discussion with the questions below. Teachers may be surprised at how students depict themselves on My Space. Be sure to allow students to voice their knowledge, experience and enjoyment of MySpace first before moving to the lesson plans, which introduce more critical perspectives.

You might spend a lot of time on MySpace, or at least know about it, but have you thought more deeply about it?

- *Do you have a MySpace page (or pages)? Do you visit every day? How much time do you spend on MySpace?*
- *Do your parents have a MySpace page? If not, have you shown them your page?*
- *If your school does not block MySpace, have a student show the class his or her MySpace profile.*
- *How would you describe what MySpace is to the following audiences? 1) your friends; 2) your parents; 3) a grandparent; 4) a teen living in the late 1800s*
- *Before social networking Web sites, how did teens engage in social networking? Think about the following eras: 1) the industrial revolution; 2) hunter-gatherer societies; 3) the 1980s (don't forget to consider geographic location and cultural influences)*
- *Visit the MySpace page of someone you don't know. How does this page reveal information about the person? What design and content techniques are used to catch your attention? Would you want to add this person as a friend or leave a comment on his or her page? Why or why not? What do you want to know about this person that is not posted on this profile?*

- *How does MySpace "compartmentalize" the way you provide information about yourself? What types of information does MySpace deem important? How does MySpace frame the communication experience? What different information would you get if you were meeting with someone in person?*

2) Divide into groups of four to five. Review the assignment handout with students and discuss the three-step process. Explain the criteria you will use to evaluate student work. Encourage students to create an informative and entertaining "news journal" report as their final oral presentation. Provide time at the end to discuss what students learned and wrap up the lesson.

Assessment: Use the following criteria to assess student work:

- Observation of group work -- everyone plays a role
- Completion of group presentation where answers are provided for questions on the topic
- Credibility and variety of research: Have students selected a diverse array of high-quality sources?
- Ability to answer audience questions confidently
- Critical thinking and dialogue in the wrap-up discussion

Lesson Variation:

- If you have more than three groups, you can either have some groups investigate the same topic or brainstorm additional topics and questions to investigate.

Student Handout: How Did MySpace Become YourSpace?

Name: _____

Do you know who created MySpace and when it was created? Who currently owns MySpace? Why is MySpace such a popular place for advertisers who target teen consumers?

Objective: Working in a team, you will create a three- to five-minute newscast to share your investigative reporting of the history and economics of MySpace.

Step I. Gather Information

To investigate the following topics, use library research and credible online sources, and be sure to keep track of the sources for your information. Come up with a list of answers and facts about the following questions:

Group 1: History of MySpace

Your group will explore the history of MySpace:

- Who created it? Which company (companies) was involved?
- Why was it created?
- Who is the *target audience* of MySpace?
- How did it end up as the number one social networking site?
- Now that you know the history, what do you envision for the future of MySpace?

Group 2: Economics of MySpace

Your group will explore the current economics of MySpace -- that is, how MySpace functions as a business.

Questions to consider include:

- Who owns MySpace? When did they acquire it, and how much did they pay for it?
- Why might this company be interested in owning MySpace?
- What else does this company own?
- What is *datamining*? How does it relate to MySpace?
- What do you think will happen to MySpace?

Group 3: Advertising on MySpace

Your group will explore how MySpace makes money -- mainly, through advertising.

- In what ways do you encounter ads on MySpace? Are there *advergames*?
- How is advertising on MySpace different from advertising on other Web sites?
- What kinds of things are advertised on MySpace?
- What companies would be interested in advertising on MySpace? Why?
- What do you think the future of advertising on MySpace will look like?

Step II: Plan, Organize and Practice

Organize your information into a three- to five-minute "news journal"-style presentation where everyone plays a reporter role. You can type out your broadcast word for word or use a bulleted list for a more extemporaneous format. Be sure to include transitions between reporters, and have the flow of the story make sense.

Make sure your story has the following elements:

- Newscaster Intro: "Welcome to Channel X. ... I'm Sherry Boberry."
- Hook: Catch the viewers' attention. Why is this important? Why should they not change the channel?
- Discussion of the issues in concise, factual format
- Controversy? Any dirt on your topic?
- Conclusion: What's next? What might the future hold?
- Transition to the next story or a commercial break

Step III: Present Ideas and Discuss

Sitting in front of the room at a news desk, the group should report its information about MySpace. The rest of the class plays the role of a live studio audience, and volunteers can act as the makeup/wardrobe person, cameraperson, sound person, producer or other roles you think of. After your broadcast, allow the studio audience members to ask questions. For example, if someone has a question about the information you provide, you can refer to your research sources. You should appear as the "expert" on the topic. After all groups have presented, come together as a class to reflect upon and discuss this experience.

ADDITIONAL LESSON IDEAS: Classroom Ideas That Build from the Discussion Questions

Wild, Wild West

The Internet is sometimes labeled the new "Wild West." Is this true? Have students do a Web search to learn about what life was like in what is characterized as the Wild West. They should come up with a list of five themes that represent the Wild West and compare them to what the Internet is like.

Conduct an Interview

In the program, teachers discuss the role computers play in their classroom. One teacher appeared to eagerly adopt technology in his classroom to engage students' attention. Another teacher appears to hesitate as she finds it difficult to keep up with technology and is less comfortable using it in her class. She voices a sense of helplessness, saying, "My time is over." Do teachers generally feel this way about new media in the classroom? Do they fall into the "eager adopter" or "hesitator" categories? Are there other types of responses besides these two? Have students interview two different teachers by asking them whether and how they use new media (computers, the Internet, podcasting, etc.) in teaching and how they feel about the rise of technology in classrooms.

Me, Myself and Avatar

As a class, visit a networking site that uses avatars, such as Second Life or Habbo. Check out the options for creating an avatar. What values are embedded in the choices offered? How are dimensions of gender, race, occupation and personality depicted through various choices? Do you prefer an avatar that reflects what you look like or one that looks completely different? Why?

The Disconnection Experiment

Invite students to choose a day when they commit to completely disconnecting themselves from all forms of media: Internet, phone/cell phone, TV/movies, radio, music (including iPods!), books, magazines and newspapers. Make sure they choose a typical day in their lives -- not one when they're camping or playing sports all day. Can it be done? Have students reflect on their experience by considering the following questions:

- What were your initial feelings that day?
- What media did you miss most and why?
- What sorts of things did you do instead?
- Were you able to completely avoid *all* media?
- How did you feel at the end of the day?

ADDITIONAL LESSON IDEA: Compete with MySpace!: Design a New Site

Overview: In this assignment, students play the role of Web designer. This assignment lets students explore how the choices made by Web designers affect how people use a site. They work for a company that plans to launch a new social networking Web site that will compete with MySpace. They brainstorm a design for a new site that is different from MySpace, but that targets the same audience, and give a persuasive oral presentation to share their ideas.

Objectives: Students will:

- Brainstorm unique ideas for online social networking tools
- Analyze effective and ineffective Web design, usability and visual appeal for the target audience
- Consider components that will appeal to social network Web site users
- Create a Web page design document
- Practice effective group collaboration and communication
- Present a complex idea in a persuasive, concise, timely way

Materials Needed:

- Materials to draw the design -- a large sheet of paper, whiteboard or chalkboard, with several colors of writing utensils
- Copies of Lesson 2 handout for each group

Time Needed:

- Step I. Brainstorm: 30-45 minutes
- Step II. Design Layout: 30-45 minutes (longer if you're using a computer program)
- Step III. Pitch the Design: 10 minutes per group

Procedure: Divide into groups of three to five. Each group will complete the three steps shown on the Lesson 2 handout.

Assessment: Use the following criteria to assess student work:

- Observation of group work -- everyone plays a role
- Concise and persuasive group presentation of design concept
- Presentation reflects thinking about the usability, marketability and uniqueness of the design
- Ability to answer questions confidently

Lesson Variation:

- Rather than having students design a MySpace competitor, have them design a social networking site for a different target audience, such as an older demographic or a specific group of people.
- The assignment can be changed from the design of a completely new site to the redesign and relaunch of the "new" MySpace. Students can focus on the same redesign concepts applied to changing and improving MySpace. Groups can still pitch the best redesign concept to the media executive.

Student Handout: Compete with MySpace!: Design a New Site

Name: _____

When using any Web site, we often forget to consider who designed the site, how they designed it, and if they did so in a way that best suits our needs. For instance, think about all of the components of MySpace and what it has to offer people who use it. What sorts of things does it include? What does it allow users to do? If you were to redesign MySpace, what would you include, take away or change? How would you make it different or better? This assignment will let you explore how the choices made by the Web designers affect how people use a site.

Objective: In this assignment, you play the role of Web designer. You work for a company that plans to launch a new social networking Web site that will compete with MySpace. You must design a new site that is different from MySpace but that targets the same audience.

Step I: Brainstorm

Based on what you know about MySpace, brainstorm ideas for this new Web site. Questions to consider:

- Who is the target audience of MySpace? What does this audience want in a social networking site?
- What is our site's name (and is it available as a Web address)? What's our marketing angle or slogan?
- What does MySpace currently offer, and what is it missing? What kinds of things will the site offer that are similar to MySpace, and what things that are different from MySpace?
- What parts of MySpace are frustrating or difficult to use? How can we offer something better?
- Why will people come to our site, or switch from MySpace to our site?

Step II: Design Layout

Neatly draw the elements for the new site page on a large sheet of paper, on a whiteboard or chalkboard (so you can easily erase). What is the basic concept and look of the home page? Toolbars? Login? Color schemes? Space for advertising?

If you are taking a class in graphic design, Web design or media production, you can complete this step using application software tools.

Step III: Pitch the Design

As a team, you will pitch your idea to the media executive (your teacher). Share your design concept, and explain the different parts of your site. Be persuasive about how this site is different from and better than other social networking sites. Everyone in the group must play a role in this presentation. The media executive is a very busy person -- you only have three minutes for your pitch. Be concise! The executive might ask you questions. Be ready to think on your feet and respond.

Resources for Educators

Media Education Resources

Kaiser Family Foundation

www.kff.org

The Kaiser Family Foundation conducts research on health issues and is a leader in health policy and communications. It offers research and fact sheets on the media's health impact on youth. Check out its well-known study, "Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18-Year-Olds."

American Academy of Pediatrics

www.aap.org

The AAP, concerned with the media's effect on the health of children, offers information for parents about entertainment rating systems, media guidelines for parents and recommendations on rules for Internet use.

Alliance for a Media Literate America

www.amlainfo.org

The AMLA is the leading media literacy organization in the United States. It advocates media literacy research and education in K-12, higher education and nontraditional educational settings, and provides resources and a community for anyone interested in media literacy education.

Online Lessons for Educators

PBS Teachers: Media Literacy

www.pbs.org/teachers/media_lit/related_sites.html

This site offers links to a variety of PBS program guides and online activities for K-12 educators that help students explore the "behind the scenes" of media and promote media literacy skills.

Netsmartz Workshop: Online and Offline Activities

www.netsmartz.org/resources/resources.htm

A clickable list of all the online and offline activities by Netsmartz Workshop divided by K-12 grade level. Middle and high school educators view the "Real Life Stories" section which offers video vignettes about online relationships targeting middle and high school students, and provides accompanying activities and links to related news articles.

bNetS@vvy

www.bnetsavvy.com

bNetS@vvy is a bimonthly e-newsletter offering parents, guardians, and teachers tools to help kids ages 9 to 14 stay safer online.

Are You a Multitasker?

www.mypopstudio.com (in the "Digital" studio)

My Pop Studio visitors can test their multitasking skills in a challenging game that simulates media multitasking and scores their multitasking ability. Teachers can download a free lesson-plan booklet with accompanying activities for this and all other activities on My Pop Studio.

Additional Materials for Parents and Educators from FRONTLINE

A comprehensive Viewer's Guide for Parents is available as a PDF download at: (www.pbs.org/frontline/teach/kidsonline) It includes Web resources and information about: How to manage kids' media use, and build teen engagement with online media, Fear of online predators, Online relationships, and A cyber quiz, "What Kind of Cyber Guide Are You?" helps parents to assess their media management styles