



Media Influences

Materials:

- Chart paper and markers for small groups. Divide the chart paper into 2 columns: Social Media and TV/Movies/Podcast. (1) Index card per student
- Worksheet

Brainstorm: Divide students into groups of 4-5 students per group. Have the students brainstorm popular trends for each column. If they need help starting the list, you may provide a few examples including Twitter, TikTok, SnapChat, Facebook or Instagram as popular forms of social media. For TV, movies you may start with some of your favorite TV shows whether they are currently available or not, to help them create their own list. The objective is for the groups to have a wide variety of titles in both columns. Set a timer for 5 minutes for each group to create their own list.

Discuss: As humans, we are designed to be social. Each civilization has its own cultures, traditions shared within the social group or community. In our modern day, we have the internet to provide additional social groups. These groups can provide a sense of community or belonging. As we continue to build our vision of who we want to be, we need to consider how we allow others to influence our choices.

Dive in! To support your personal growth, you need to intentionally choose the influencers you follow and why you follow them.

The internet provides infinite possibilities for information. Using the internet should be a tool to find information and resources. Just like with research for an assignment, you should evaluate the integrity of the source. Remember, just because it is on the internet, does not mean it is accurate or beneficial.

Similar to the pressures for negative addictive behaviors, there can be pressure to participate in social media trends or other media influences. There are positive and negative messages available. As you continue to build the vision of the person you want to be, it is important to consider the influences you allow.

There are many positive outlets to support you in addressing citizenship, healthy lifestyles, and developing your identity or self-image. Your self-image is a small part of your identity. Your



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self-image is how you **see** yourself. Ideally you are seeing all the positive traits about you. Your identity is what you **believe** about yourself. In this lesson, you will explore how you allow social media or other media sources to shape your self-image and identity.

Activity: Once the students have completed the list, allow them to participate in a silent gallery walk to see the other lists. Provide an index card to each student. Encourage the groups to read the lists silently. As the students walk the room, have each student select the 3 types of social media they consider the best or most influential in their life and write it on one side of the card. List their three favorite TV/Movie/Podcast titles on the back side.

In their small groups, have students share their lists and why they selected the titles. What do they like about the options they chose? Call on a few students to share some responses shared in the small group. Note trends or common themes shared by the students.

Reflect: Look through the apps or history on your phone, tablet, or computer to reflect on the various influences you have been exposed to recently. Are they positive? Do they align with who you want to be? You have the power to choose.

Professional Development

If you are not familiar with the social media trends, or media influences your students listed, spend some time reviewing the titles. Sharing a common interest with a student is a way to build a connection with a student, particularly if the student has a unique interest.

For Further Study:

[Child Mind Institute: How Using Social Media Affects Teenagers](#)

[Social Media Use and Its Connection to Mental Health: A Systematic Review](#)