

Social media, why can't I post that?

**I do not agree with what you have to say
but I'll defend to the death
your right to say it.**

~Voltaire

#freedom_of_speech

IMAGE CREDIT

Over 25 years ago, the Internet was born and new laws about the right of free expression were established. The freedom to read and post on the Internet is open to all users.

Supporting Questions

1. What is the difference between rights and responsibilities?
2. Do we have the right to say anything we want on social media? (Bill Rights)
3. What are the benefits associated with posting on social media?
4. What are the risks associated with posting on social media?

5th Grade Civics Inquiry

Social media, why can't I post that?	
Arkansas Social Studies Standards	C.2.5.1 Evaluate various ways of fostering citizenship and <i>civic virtues</i>
Staging the Compelling Question	Respond to the following question in a journal entry then discuss: Have you ever said something you wished you could take back?

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
What is the difference between rights and responsibilities?	Do we have the right to say anything we want on social media?	What are the benefits associated with posting on social media?	What are the risks associated with posting on social media?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Create a graphic organizer comparing the definitions of rights and responsibilities.	Create an infographic or poster describing rights and limits on speech.	Discuss in a Socratic Circle the benefits of social media.	Write a persuasive paragraph describing why using social media can be harmful.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<p>Source A: Definition of rights from Dictionary.com</p> <p>Source B: Definition of responsibilities from Dictionary.com</p> <p>Source C: Information about rights and responsibilities from US Citizenship and Immigration Services</p>	<p>Source A: The Bill of Rights from the Bill of Rights Institute</p> <p>Source B: How Free Speech and Social Media Fit Together</p> <p>Source C: Article from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "U. S. Courts What Does Free Speech Mean?"</p>	<p>Source A: Blog post from Elizabeth Press at Dell Computers, "The Workplace Benefits of an Active Social Media Life"</p> <p>Source B: Blog post from IG Reviews, The Positive Effects of Social Media on Teens</p> <p>Source C: Article from CNN, "The upside of selfies: Social media isn't all bad for kids"</p>	<p>Source A: Article from the <i>Baltimore Sun</i>, "Studies send mixed messages on influence of social media on teens"</p> <p>Source B: Blog post from The Conversation, "Online posting can have very serious consequences"</p> <p>Source C: Article from the <i>Associate Press</i>, Cyberbullying could be increasing teen suicide rates, study says</p>

Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that discusses the compelling question, Social media, why can't I post that? using specific claims and relevant evidence from current sources while acknowledging competing views.
	EXTENSION Students will create a presentation (visual, electronic) to teach other students ways to be more conscious of what they post on social media in which they show how some social media posts can be hurtful to others and what to do when they see/read hurtful posts on social media.
Taking Informed Action	<p>UNDERSTAND Social media posts can hurt other people and we are responsible for our actions and words.</p> <p>ASSESS Students will be able to revise social media posts so as to limit harmful words, phrases, and language.</p> <p>ACT Students will design a public service announcement that encourages positive social media usage.</p>

Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of rights and responsibilities involved when posting to social media. By investigating the compelling question “*Social media, why can’t I post that?*”, students evaluate the power of the written word, its effect on others, and civic responsibility toward others. The formative performance tasks build on knowledge and skills through the course of the inquiry and help students understand there are limits to freedom of speech when it adversely affects others. Students create an evidence-based argument about those limits and why they should not post anything they want whenever they want.

In addition to the Arkansas Curriculum Framework for Grade 5 listed on the one-page blueprint, this inquiry highlights the following student learning expectations from the Civics strand

C.3.5.2 Evaluate ways rules and laws change society and reasons why people change rules and laws at the local, state, and federal levels

C.1.5.1 Examine foundational documents of the United States government (e.g., Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, U.S. Constitution)

In addition to the Key Idea listed previously, this inquiry highlights the following Conceptual Understanding:

D2.Civ.9.3-5. Use deliberative processes when making decisions or reaching judgements as a group.

D2.Civ.10.3-5. Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others’ points of view about civic issues.

D2.Civ.13.3-5. Explain how policies are developed to address public problems.

Note: This inquiry is expected to take **eight** 40-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries in order to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “*Social media, why can’t I post that?*” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument supported by evidence while acknowledging competing perspectives.

Staging the Compelling Question

In staging the compelling question, “*Social media, why can’t I post that?*” teachers may prompt students by asking, “Have you ever said something you wished you could take back?” After students have responded to the question in a journal entry, discuss the responses in class. Students could also create a T-chart listing advantages of speaking to people in person and disadvantages of speaking to people only through writing. The discussion that follows should include both advantages and disadvantages of verbal and written conversations/comments. The topics of discussion should be guided by the student journal entries or T-charts and address such as things as: being able to see the reaction of someone, the impact of tone (verbal or written), choice of words, anonymity and its effect on content and word choice.

Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question—“What is the difference between rights and responsibilities?”—has students create a graphic organizer comparing the definitions of rights and responsibilities. The featured sources for this question introduce the student to the definitions of rights and responsibilities, and then compare how these terms are used in analyzing rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Source A: [Dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) contains a definition of rights. Any dictionary could be substituted.

Source B: [Dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) contains a definition of responsibility. Any dictionary could be substituted.

Source C: [US Citizenship and Immigration Services](https://www.dhs.gov) links directly to the Department of Homeland Security. This site highlights the rights and responsibilities of citizens in the United States.

Supporting Question 2

For the second supporting question—“Do we have the right to say anything we want on social media?”—students create an infographic or poster describing rights and limits on speech. In addition to the resources from the previous supporting question, the featured sources provide students with additional materials that allow them to examine the Bill of Rights and additional laws that impact speech. **Source B** The article How Free Speech and Social Media Fit Together is lengthy for grade 5 students to read in its entirety. A suggestion for paring down the article is to have students read different sections of the article, for example this article could be divided into 5 segments; the section on employee generated content could easily be eliminated for this inquiry. The other reading sections could be divided as such: 1) opening sentence to “Speech” is More than Written or Spoken Words 2) “Speech” is More than Written or Spoken Words to What is NOT Protected Speech? 3) What is NOT Protected Speech? to How Free Speech and Social Media Fit Together 4) skip Employee Generated Content and begin with Managing Defamatory Speech to the conclusion. Note: teachers may need to discuss some vocabulary words such as detrimental, chaff, abridging, defamatory, advocating, etc.

Source A: [Bill of Rights Institute](https://www.billofrights.org). This link is the Constitution’s Bill of Rights. This document establishes the foundation for rights of Americans.

Source B: [How Free Speech and Social Media Fit Together](https://www.sara-fhawkins.com) is an article by attorney Sara F Hawkins

describing situations where the 1st Amendment provides protection of speech, and speech that falls outside of the 1st Amendment.

Source C: [U S Courts What Does Free Speech Mean?](#) is produced by the Federal Judiciary. This document references the specific laws that impact freedom of speech.

Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question—“What are the benefits associated with posting on social media?”—asks students to discuss in a Socratic Circle the benefits of social media. In addition to the previous featured sources, the sources for this task highlight the positive impact that social media can have on a teen’s life. The Source B article is a little lengthy, but easy to read. It could easily be divided into sections as with Source B in Supporting Question 2. Students could read their section individually and compare notes and their takeaways.

Source A: [The Workplace Benefits of an Active Social Media Life](#) Use the image or graphic that shows various reasons why social media is used.

Source B: [The Positive Effects of Social Media on Teens](#) is an article that describes the positive effect that social media can have on students.

Source C: is a link to an article from CNN indicating social media can provide support for students.

Supporting Question 4

For the fourth supporting question—“What are the risks associated with posting on social media?”—students write a persuasive paragraph describing why using social media can be harmful. In addition to the resources from the previous supporting question, the featured sources provide students with additional materials that allow them to evaluate the negative impact of social media. When accessing Newsela articles teachers are asked to join or sign in to read the entire article; however, there is no cost for using Newsela as it is a free resource for teachers. .

Source A: [Studies send mixed messages on influence of social media on teens](#) is a *Baltimore Sun* article 6-14-17 adapted by Newsela staff. It warns students of potential negative effects of social media.

Source B: [Online posting can have very serious consequences](#) by Thao Nelson, *The Conversation*, adapted by Newsela staff 07/26/2017. This is a cautionary source describing the potential lasting impact of social media posting.

Source C: [Cyberbullying could be increasing teen suicide rates, study says](#) by the *Associated Press*, adapted by Newsela staff 11/16/2017 is an article that warns that cyberbullying can be a result of social media use.

Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined a variety of articles and infographics about the impact of social media. Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understandings and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students construct an evidence-based argument using multiple sources to answer the compelling question “Social media, why can’t I post that?” It is

important to note that students' arguments could take a variety of forms, including a detailed outline, poster, or essay.

Students' arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- *Posting on social media is a right guaranteed to me as a result of the Bill of Rights, but because there are lasting implications of my posts that can help or hurt people, I should be careful of what I post.*
- *Posting on social media is a right that I am guaranteed, so I can post whatever I want.*
- *Social media is a fantastic place that enables me to express my ideas and beliefs.*
- *Social media is the greatest because I can express my ideas to my friends and others quickly and don't have to worry about grammar, punctuation, and all that stuff.*

Extension

To extend their arguments, teachers may have students will create a presentation (visual, electronic) to teach other students ways to be more conscious of what they post on social media in which they show how some social media posts can be hurtful to others and what to do when they see/read hurtful posts on social media.

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by drawing on their understandings of the implications of social media use.

To *understand*, students can describe that posts can hurt other people, and we are responsible for our actions and words.

To *assess* the issue, students will be able to revise social media posts so as to limit harmful words, phrases, and language.

To *act*, students will design a public service announcement or poster campaign explaining responsible use of social media.