



Project Website <https://pros4democracy.internprize.eu/>

Activity Video Summary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= mgc8LLMIHjc>

Lesson Category

Media and News Literacy

Title

Engaging in Digital Activism

Area(s)

Possible benefits of online social activism, and what are its possible limitations or negative effects

Objectives

- 1. Discover and explore motives for engaging in digital activism.**
- 2. Recognize that there are different customs of engaging in social activism online.**
- 3. Examine and evaluate pros and cons of digital activism.**

Time needed

1-90 minutes class

Materials needed

Notebooks, pen, paper

Age level(s)

14-18

Number of participants per group

Small groups according to the class reality.



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Engaging in Digital Activism
Originally designed by **CECE** as a part of the EuroVoters project

<https://eurovoters.eu>

Step-by-step description of activity

1. Designate and label three different parts of the room “Agree,” “Disagree” and “Undecided.” (you will need this for the Where I Stand activity). As a warmup, ask students to respond and write to one of the following three questions: What is activism? What are different ways people can engage in activism around a social cause or world issue using technology? How can technology be used as a tool for activism?
1. Put students into small groups and ask them to share their responses. Afterward, ask them to discuss in their groups which tools or uses of technology could be most powerful to make change and why. Elicit a few responses from the whole group.
1. Introduce the debate around technology — especially the internet and social media — as tools for activism and social change. Inform students that scholars and activists have presented both pros and cons of digital activism.
1. Have students record the definition of “activism” in their notebooks, and then engage in a short conversation about what digital activism means. Note that, while some advocates and researchers might emphasize the possibilities of digital activism, others might stress its limitations.
1. Provide each student with a copy of the Where I Stand Prompts (provided in the apprentices). Ask students to reflect on the prompts and note their responses to prepare for the whole-class activity. After giving students a few minutes to think about and respond to the prompts in writing, show them three designated areas (Agree, Disagree, Undecided) around the room.
6. Read aloud the first prompt, giving students the opportunity to move to the area representing the response they chose. Emphasize that students should try to think critically for themselves and resist being swayed by peers, and remind students of community guidelines that promote a safe space for exchanging ideas.
6. Once students are in these three smaller groups, ask them to share the supportive reasoning behind their responses, using their written Where I Stand reflections as a reference. Ask a student in each group to serve as a scribe and, on chart paper, take notes on the main points discussed in their small group.
6. Ask one or two speakers from each group to share their group’s charted ideas with the whole class. Repeat this procedure for the second prompt.
6. Ask students, “Was anyone’s mind changed about either of the prompts during the activity, especially those who were undecided?” Elicit a few responses from the whole group.
6. Close the activity by asking students to complete an exit card connecting the themes of the lesson to the students’ interests and agency related to social action. You could use the following question or create your own: What social issues do you feel passionately about and would want to engage in online and/or offline? Why?

Strategies of teaching and learning

Virtual communities of learning and practice.

Evaluation

This activity will engage students in the debate about the efficacy of social media as a tool for social change. After the activity, students should understand and explore the effectiveness of viral hashtag campaigns representing themes related to identity, diversity, justice and action. Students should also be able to discuss and evaluate the pros, cons, limits and possibilities of online activism.

Notes to the educator

In step 1, encourage students to include specific examples when they can.) Students will list their ideas.

Notes to the students

Use the time needed during the activities. If you are familiarized with the concepts here analyzed, please provide that information to the class and teacher. Bring extra information, and collaborate with your colleagues.

Suggestions for follow-up activities

Read and debate in class the following article “Millennials and the Age of Tumblr Activism”:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/21/style/millennials-and-the-age-of-tumblr-activism.html>

Appendices

Where I Stand activity:

<https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/TT-Digital-Literacy-Where-I-Stand-Prompts-6-8-Oct2017.pdf>