Cyberbullying

This lesson outlines one simple way to integrate the Bystander Revolution Cyberbullying video playlist and discussion questions into a high school classroom setting.

Grade Level:
High School

Estimated Time:
45 minutes

Common Core ELA Standards Grades 9–10:
R.7, SL.1.B, SL.1.C, SL.1.D, SL.2, SL.3, SL.5, W.2.A, W.2.B, W.2.C, W.2.D, W.2.E, W.2.F, W.3, W.4

Grades 11–12:
R.7, SL.1.B, SL.1.C, SL.1.D, SL.2, SL.3, SL.5, W.2.A, W.2.B, W.2.C, W.2.D, W.2.E, W.2.F, W.3, W.4

OVERVIEW

Students will discuss what cyberbullying is, along with suggestions for actions they can take when they witness or experience it. Students will watch videos with personal advice from celebrities and students, share their own experiences, and debate the merits of different prevention, intervention, and coping strategies. The lesson concludes with an opportunity for the educator to discuss resources available to students at the school, and present an optional homework assignment.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
- Define the term "cyberbullying."
- Summarize solutions heard from other students and celebrities.
- Compare and contrast different prevention, intervention, and coping strategies.
- Apply the strategies to help themselves and others when they encounter cyberbullying.

MATERIALS NEEDED
- Computer & internet access
- LCD projector (optional)
- Cyberbullying video playlist
- Pens/pencils & paper

PREPARATION
- First, watch the Cyberbullying video playlist.
- Familiarize yourself with popular social networks and the definition of cyberbullying.
- Copy the **Graphic Organizer** (pg.6), one for each student.

PROCEDURE

Introduction

(5 minutes)

Introduce the topic by asking students the following questions:
- How many of you use social media?
- Which platforms do you use?
- By a show of hands, how many of you have ever seen cyberbullying on those platforms?
- Where else can cyberbullying happen?

Then explain to students that the definition of cyberbullying is: *the act of harming or harassing a person in a deliberate manner using technology networks, e.g., texting, social media, gaming, or websites.*

KEY QUESTION

How can students keep social media safe?

DEFINITION

Cyberbullying is: the act of harming or harassing a person in a deliberate manner using technology networks, e.g., texting, social media, gaming, or websites.

Video Viewing
(15 minutes)

Introduce the video playlist by explaining to students that they are about to watch 8 short, unscripted videos from celebrities and students talking about their personal experiences with cyberbullying. Instruct students to keep in mind any experiences they have had with cyberbullying and to consider whether the solutions presented in the videos would work in those situations. Provide students with the **Graphic Organizer** to keep track of their reactions. Then show the following 10-minute playlist.

Discussion
(15 minutes)

Below are some sample questions you might use to lead a conversation, as time permits. Each sample question has several possible follow-up questions that may be useful in the discussion.

1. Why do some people attack others on social media?
- Do you think it may be easier to bully someone when you aren't looking them in the eye? Why or why not?
- Why might people forget that their words can have as much impact online as they do in person?
- How do you think online anonymity plays a role?
- Do you think that because of social media, a lot of the bullying that used to happen in person is now happening online instead?

2. What are examples of ways that you can help someone who is being attacked online?
- Would you post a supportive comment for that person? Why or why not?
- If you don't feel comfortable posting something publicly, would you send a direct message to the person being bullied to let them know you don't agree with the bullying? Why or why not?
- How do you report the behavior if it violates the website's policy?
- Could it help to tell a teacher, parent, or another adult you trust? Why or why not?
- Do you think an adult would be as effective at helping as a peer? Why or why not?

3. What are examples of things you can do if you're being harassed online?
- Should you reply to the harassment, or could that make it worse?
- Could you ask the website or social platform to remove any posts that violate its rules?
- How could printing out the mean message or post, or taking a screen shot before deleting it, help you in the future?
- Do you think you should tell a teacher, parent, or another adult you trust?
- When would you log off and take a break from that site for a while?

4. What might be some benefits to unplugging and going offline?
- How could it help you refrain from looking at hurtful comments?
- Why might it increase your productivity and reduce interruptions?
- How could doing things in the real world give you mental or emotional relief?

5. How could your social media posts impact your future employment, as Jenna discusses in her video?
- Do you believe that what you say and do online will stay there permanently? Do you ever think of how something might look to you a few years in the future?
- Do you think if more people thought about potential long-lasting consequences, there would be less bullying online? Why or why not?
- Do you think your social media could affect your chances of getting a job or into college in the future? How?

6. Neil Gaiman talks about the importance of not bullying the person who is bullying. What does he mean?
- Do you think bullying someone who is cyberbullying is likely to get them to stop? Why or why not?
- Do you think it can sometimes feel natural to want to fight back?
- Do you think fighting back would help or escalate the bullying?
- Would intervening with support or positivity be more effective?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT
(5 minutes)
Ask students to imagine they go to the same school as Bella (video #7) and are witnessing the soccer goalie being bullied online by his teammates. Ask them to write a paragraph about one thing they would do in that situation, other than changing their profile picture to support him (as Bella discusses in the video). If time permits, ask students to share what they've written with the class.

CLOSING
(5 minutes)
Let students know that if they are being bullied or know someone else who is, there are free, anonymous resources listed on bystanderrevolution.org/help. If there are resources available within your school, like a guidance counselor or social worker, you can make students aware of those options as well. You should also emphasize that if students are in danger or are witnessing an emergency, they should tell a teacher or guidance counselor, or call 911.

OPTIONAL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS
1. Watch a video and reflect in writing
Have students visit bystanderrevolution.org and watch another video of their choosing. Ask students to write a letter to the person in the video, telling them why they agree or disagree with the advice presented. Ask them to tell the person how they might apply what was said to their own life.

2. The Weekly Stand
The Weekly Stand is a list of 52 simple, fun, transformative actions bystanders can take to reduce bullying and improve school culture. Each action contains helpful background information, suggested strategies and phrases to use, and a video for inspiration.

Have students go to bystanderrevolution.org/weekly, choose one of the actions to complete, and then turn in proof that they did it through some creative means: a photo, a screenshot, a short video, an essay, or even a comic strip.

ABOUT BYSTANDER REVOLUTION

Bystander Revolution is an online resource offering practical, crowdsourced advice about simple things individuals can do to take the power out of bullying.

As you watch these videos keep in mind any experiences you have had with cyberbullying. Consider whether the solutions presented in the videos would have worked in those situations. Use the notes column to keep track of comments, questions, or thoughts you may have.

	VIDEO	NAME	NOTES
1		Post Support Online	
2		Nina Dobrev	
3		Neil Gaiman	
4		Ansel Elgort	
5		Jenna	
6		Chenzira	
7		Bella	
8		Elizabeth Banks	