



Introduction to Social & Online Media

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Wednesday, May 20, 2020



HS Intro to Social & Online Media

Overall Lesson: **Social Media Posts**

Sub lesson for Wednesday, May 20: Using #hashtags

Objective/Learning Target:

Students will learn how hashtags have been effective in promoting social movements and identify how hashtags on social media can help raise awareness about an advocacy issue. *Youth & Media



Warm Up/Bellringer

What are the top hashtags trending today? Do a search and find the top five trending hashtags (on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram).



Activision Using Hashtags

While individuals often use specific social media platforms in advocacy campaigns for particular reasons, these platforms share certain characteristics. One helpful common feature is the hashtag. Hashtags allow us to draw attention to our ideas by connecting our posts to other posts on the same topic. For instance, if we wanted to share videos from our recent football game where our striker performed a hat trick, we could include “#football” and “#hatrick” in the description of the video to allow other people looking for football videos to see it. This way, we could increase the chances that professional sports scouts might view our videos.



Activision Using Hashtags (cont.)

Hashtags are especially useful for advocacy projects. For instance, after the shooting of Trayvon Martin in Florida, USA by a police officer, a number of advocates began writing posts about race relations in the United States and including the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. With the increasing popularity of the hashtag, more and more people were able to see posts about individuals' experiences as a person of color and their engagement with the police in the United States today by searching for "#BlackLivesMatter." Through social media activism, Black Lives Matter developed into a strong advocacy movement supported by powerful people.



Activision Using Hashtags (cont.)

The hashtag is a powerful form of social media on a global scale. When the terrorist organization Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls from their high school in Chibok, Nigeria, people in Nigeria tried to raise awareness around the issue on social media by posting content online with the hashtag “#BringBackOurGirls.” The issue quickly garnered global support, with powerful celebrities and public figures supporting the cause.



Activision Using Hashtags (cont.)

There are many other examples of using hashtags for advocacy around the world. For instance, Mexican university students used “#YoSoy132” in the 2012 presidential election, Hong Kong university students rallied around the “#umbrellarevolution” hashtag during the democracy protests of 2014, and Chilean university students used “#MovimientoEstudiantil” to advocate for educational reform.

When you are advocating for a cause, using hashtags is a great way to reach an audience with your ideas. In the following exercise, we will explore the use of hashtags on social media.



Lesson/Activity #1

Find a hashtag that has recently been used to promote a cause. (search for “#justicefor” or recent examples such as #JusticeForAhmaudArbery or #Graduation2020 or #SupportHealthCareWorkers or #SupportSmallBusiness)

Once you find a hashtag, review the conversations taking place and come up with a short summary of what is being discussed.



Lesson/Activity #2

1. What kind of content is being shared using the hashtags?
2. Are there similar conversations happening under these different hashtags? Why do you think this is/is not happening?
3. Do some hashtags seem to be more effective (e.g., more likely to be reposted) than others? Which ones? Why?



Lesson/Activity #3

Now, come up with an issue that is important to you and:

1. Create a hashtag for it.
2. Design an image, infographic, meme, chart, or graph to promote your hashtag. (Remember the [CANVA](#) lesson plans? Use [these resources](#) to help you design your graphic.)
3. Decide various ways that you can spread your hashtag through a network. What are some successful strategies we learned from examining other hashtags?



Additional Resources

- [How to Find Top and Trending Hashtags to Use on Instagram](#)
from Social Marketing Writing

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