



Bildung und Sport

Louise's Teaching Tips 1 – Mobile phones, social media and me

Unterrichtsmaterialien



Mobile phones, social media and me

This unit is designed to introduce the topic of “mobile phones, social media and me”. It deals with the changing way we interact with the world around us, how we are increasingly seeing events through a filter, namely the camera on our mobiles. As there is no speech involved in the video, it can also be used when dealing with this topic in other languages.

The unit is not intended as a criticism of mobile phones or social media, but rather to encourage the students to reflect about what they are doing. This is why the last task involves them using their mobile phones to produce a short video of their own.

Background information for the photo: The photo was taken on 15 September 2015 at the premiere of the film *Black Mass* in Brookline, Massachusetts, attended by the actors Johnny Depp and Dakota Johnson.

The photo quickly went viral and was shared and retweeted thousand of times. Many social media users called the old lady “the only smart one”.

This photo was kindly suggested by Uli Nürnberger in Gauting.

Background information for the video: This two-and-a-half minute video does not contain any speech. It follows a young girl from the time she wakes up to the time she goes to bed, on a day she has forgotten her mobile. It shows how she is isolated from everyone else because she is the only one without a mobile phone and is, like the old lady in the photo, living in the moment itself rather than experiencing everything through a filter.

Task 1: Photo

Look at the [photo](#) and do the tasks below with a partner. Then share your ideas in class.

- a) Describe the photo and outline what you think is happening.
- b) What do you think the people are going to do with their photos/videos, and why?
- c) Discuss why you think the photographer captured this moment.
- d) Say why you think this photo went viral.

Task 2: Video *I forgot my phone*

Watch the two-and-a-half-minute video [I forgot my phone](#).

1. In pairs, make a note of the different situations the girl was in that day. Discuss how you think she felt in each one.
2. Which adjective best sums up how you think the girl felt that day. Compare your adjectives and explain the reasoning behind your choice.
3.
 - a) In some of the situations shown in the video, people were taking selfies. In small groups, discuss why you think selfies have become so popular.
 - b) Make a list of when and where you think it is acceptable to take selfies, and when you

shouldn't. Compare your list with that of the others in your group.

Creative task

In small groups, think of how you could present the ideas in 3b) in a short two-minute video for younger students at your school. Create a storyboard for your film and think of a suitable title. Film your video, edit it and then present it to the other groups in your class.

Extending the topic

If you are interested in extending the topic, the following materials could be used:

TED talk

The TED talk by Sherry Turkle, entitled "[Connected, but alone?](#)" is long (19:30 minutes) although extremely thought-provoking. If time is a problem, you could just watch the first seven-and-a-half minutes, as there is a great deal to discuss even in this section: Why is Sherry Turkle worried about mobile phones? What is the point of the examples she gives? Why does she say we are setting ourselves up for trouble?

A transcript can be found [here](#).

Infographics

There are two excellent infographics that provide more vocabulary and insights into our "obsession" with our phones and social media:

[The social sickness](#) is a tongue-in-cheek look at our relationship with social media and the different types of people who use it.

[Unplugged: A smartphone detox](#) looks at how smartphones get us hooked.

Facebook – the musical

Dealing with the topic of social media in class can be a tricky topic, as we don't want to be seen to criticize the social media channels that the students use, e.g. *What's app*. However, seeing as Facebook is no longer as cool with the younger generation (because their parents are on it and often want to "friend" them!), the song [Facebook – the musical](#) can be used. It pokes fun at our desire for likes, posting, checking updates, etc. It's fast and fun – in the style of a typical Broadway musical.