

Debating the Privacy Line-Lesson Plan
12th Grade

Consider: Media Monitor
20 mins.

Before the lesson: This lesson involves students choosing from a list of online resources, which they will use to explore and analyze the lesson topic. Use the Resource Notes on the Teacher Version of the student handout to review the resources beforehand. You may want to suggest particular resources over others for particular students, or you may want to watch a resource together as a class. You will also need to confirm that all resources are accessible and not blocked by your school or district's filter.

1.

Ask: How much information do you think your school knows about you?

Invite students to respond. Students may say name, address, class schedule, or academic information.

2.

Ask: What about what you do outside of school? Do you think they know anything about that?

Students may say no or refer to extracurricular activities that are connected to the school. Some might also refer to social media as a way for the school to know about what students do.

3.

Tell students they are going to watch a short video about how one school monitors its students' social media. As they watch, they should think about how the school does it and whether they agree or not. (Slide 4)

Show the video "Schools are watching students' social media, raising questions about free speech." Note: If you're short on time, you can stop the video at the 6:13 mark.

4.

Invite students to share out their answers to the discussion questions.

Highlight arguments for and against schools monitoring students' social media accounts. (Slide 5) Answers may include:

Schools Should Monitor Social Media	Schools Shouldn't Monitor Social Media
Problems that start on social media, like bullying, transfer to school.	
Problems on social media can distract from learning and cause safety issues.	
Schools can be sued if they don't take online threats seriously.	

Monitoring what students like and their private messages is going too far and can lead to unfair discipline.

Open-ended access like collecting passwords or "shoulder-surfing" potentially stifles free speech and thinking.

5.

Explain that schools are not the only ones tracking people's social media. The government also tracks a large amount of information about people, including social media activity. Some say it's necessary to keep people safe. Others argue it's a type of mass surveillance. Surveillance means closely watching or keeping track of a person or people. (Slide 6) Critics say it violates people's privacy and the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution, which protects people from unreasonable searches. (Slide 7)

Explore: Safety Vs. Privacy

20 mins.

1.

Say: Today, you're going to look at some arguments for and against the government accessing personal information, specifically social media and cellphone data.

2.

Distribute the Safety Vs. Privacy Student Handout and have students read the directions silently. (Slide 8)

3.

Watch the videos as a class and have students fill out their worksheets.

4.

Invite groups to share out their notes and capture new ideas. Use the Teacher Version to help guide discussion. (Slide 10)

Highlight any specific takeaways that you want students to capture and allow them a couple of minutes to add to their notes. If students do not surface the key takeaway of Resource #3, consider addressing it explicitly: Government collection of data can have a disproportionate effect on groups who are marginalized in that country. See Teacher Version for examples.

Create: Take a Side

15 mins.

1.

Point students to Part 2 of the Safety Vs. Privacy Student Handout and read the directions aloud. (Slide 11)

2.

Allow students time to work independently or in pairs to complete this section. If time allows, have them share their work with a partner.