

Influencer remix studio



Influencer remix studio is a collaborative, creative classroom activity where students critically examine how influencers use emotional appeals and persuasion tactics, then rewrite or “remix” that content into something honest, healthy and supportive. It builds on themes like parasocial relationships, media manipulation and the power of messaging online.

Student objectives:

- Identify influencer tactics (e.g. “false friend” strategies, emotional persuasion)
- Analyze how these tactics affect viewers, especially around gender and identity
- Practice rewriting problematic content to make it ethical, inclusive and empowering
- Strengthen collaboration, digital citizenship and critical media skills

Materials:

- False friends tactics handout
- Printed or digital copies of influencer scripts (real or fictional, example below)
- Remix templates or blank paper
- Access to devices (if students will be recording audio or video remixes)

Instructions

1. Start with a warm-up discussion:

- “What makes an influencer ‘relatable’?”
- “Can you think of a time a creator made you feel like they were speaking just to you?”
- “Why might some influencers pretend to be your friend—even though they don’t know you?”

Review handout: False friends tactics

2. Students separate into groups of 3-4. Give each group:

- A short fictional podcast or influencer-style script (examples below)
- OR
- A real-world influencer post/video transcript, pre-screened for safety/age-appropriateness

Example fictional clip:

“Hey guys, welcome back! You know, life’s tough right now—people just don’t get guys like us. But if you want to get strong and take control, you’ve got to focus on YOU. I used to be ignored until I figured out the truth: no one is coming to save you. That’s why I made this course—just \$59.99—to help you take your power back. Don’t wait for validation.”

3. Before remixing, ask students to highlight or comment where they see persuasive tactics at play.

4. Remix session:

In their groups, students should rewrite the influencer messaging using:

- Empathy
- Honesty
- Healthy and inclusive values

Guidelines for the remix:

- Still sounds “cool,” conversational, or like youth media
- Keeps the same format (e.g., podcast, advice video, TikTok rant)
- Keeps the same target audience (e.g., struggling teen boys, girls facing peer pressure)
- Removes tactics like emotional manipulation, misinformation or shame
- Adds supportive, evidence-based, respectful advice

Encourage creativity:

- Write a transcript
- Record an audio clip
- Design a social media carousel
- Perform a live mini-podcast for the class

5. Share and reflect:

- Quick share-outs (read aloud or slide show) OR
- A more comprehensive “remix gallery walk” with posters

Reflection questions for class discussion or journaling:

- “How did it feel to rewrite the message?”
- “What did you notice about the way the original made you feel?”
- “Why might it be hard to spot these tactics in real life?”
- “What responsibility do creators have online?”

False friends tactics

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with MediaSmarts.



Have you ever felt like someone online was talking just to you? Influencers often make us feel like we know them, even if we've never met. They use this feeling to get your attention and sometimes to share ideas, sell things or try to change how you think.

Here are some ways people online might do this::

- **They make you feel like you are part of their team:** they might say things that make you feel understood. If you are feeling confused or upset about something, this makes you feel like you are not alone.
- **They share about themselves:** they might show you parts of their daily life. This helps you feel like you know them better, like they are a friend, which can make you trust what they say more.
- **They talk about problems you might have:** they might say that things are hard or unfair for people like you right now.
- **They say the past was better:** sometimes, people online talk a lot about how great things were in the past for people like them. Then, they say that the groups they blame ruined things.
- **They say someone else is the bad guy:** after talking about problems, they often say who is causing the problems. They might blame certain groups of people. Sometimes, they use ideas that make it sound like one group is against another, like men versus women. They might even say it feels like things are planned against you.
- **They use special words or codes:** they might use words or phrases that only people who listen to them understand. This can make you feel like you are part of an inside group that knows secrets or special information.
- **They sell you the solution:** they offer their ideas about how you should be or what you should do to be successful. These ideas are often about things like making yourself better looking, fitting into their idea of what men or women should be like, taking back power or making money.
- **They use jokes to hide mean ideas:** sometimes, they say hurtful things but then say they were "just joking". This can make the mean ideas seem okay or make you feel like you should agree to be part of the joke.
- **They say they are telling you the "real truth":** they might say that other places, like the news or schools, are not telling you the truth. They want you to think that their ideas are the true story.