Deepfakes, consent and identity

Students explore how AI-powered image manipulation, like deepfakes and face-swap apps, can blur the line between fun and harm. Through discussion, media analysis, and creative advocacy, they will have the opportunity to reflect on the importance of consent, privacy and empathy when using or sharing digital images. Afterward, students will design a short awareness campaign poster or social media graphic to teach peers how to spot manipulated content and why "think before you share" matters.

Grades: 7 - 9

Learning objectives:

- Understand what deepfakes and face-swap technologies are and how they work
- Recognize the emotional, social and ethical consequences of identity manipulations
- Reflect on consent and digital reputation in the context of online sharing

Materials:

- Internet-connected device and projector or smart board to view example clips and case studies
- "Should I share this?" worksheet
- Campaign creation materials:

  Option 1: paper, markers, poster board, general craft material

  Option 2: digital templates for social media posts using a tool like Canva

Example clips:

Teachers can select their own example clips or case studies, or use some of the suggested options here.

1. For intro to deepfakes:
Deepfakes | What is a Deepfake for Kids? | What is a deepfake and how do they work? | AI for Kids
Deepfakes Explained: The Best of 2019, How They're Made & How to Spot Them

2. Examples of deepfakes:.
Deepfake Tom Cruise
This is not Morgan Freeman - A Deepfake Singularity
Darth Bully Maguire: Duel of the Fates
Ronaldo Deep Fake* Viral Video

1. Intro – 5-10 minutes

a. Show a short clip or image. Ask "what do you notice? Does this look real? If it's not real, how could someone have made this?" After a short discussion, explain what a deepfake is or play one of the recommended videos with an explanation and discuss when it might be used for fun vs. when it might be harmful.

b. You could also provide an example of a harmful deepfake and non-harmful and explore what the difference is.

2. Scenarios – 10-15 minutes

a. Have the students break into even groups. Distribute 2–3 realistic scenarios for discussion:

    i.   A face-swap meme of a friend is posted without asking

    ii. A deepfake of a classmate is shared in a chat

    iii. A fake celebrity video goes viral

b. Students will discuss what's happening, who might be hurt, and what should happen next within their groups. At the end of this section, teachers will bring students' attention back to the front and have a larger discussion on where they all landed.

3. Debate or role-play – 10-15 minutes

Still in their groups, have the students hold debates on questions such as: 'Should you share a manipulated image if it's just for fun?' 'Who's responsible when deepfakes cause harm?' 'If your image was used, what would you want others to do?' Again, once the group discussions are complete, have all the students bring their attention back to the front and discuss their debates with the larger group.

4. Awareness campaign – 15-20 minutes

a. Teams will then design posters, infographics or social posts teaching others about deepfakes, consent and how to check content authenticity.

b. Encourage catchy slogans like 'Don't get fooled by fakes!' or 'Ask before you swap.'

c. At the end of this section, have a leader from each team present their campaign posters to the rest of the class.

Reflection and wrap up

In the final 5 minutes of the activity, hold a discussion around what the students have learned: 'What surprised you? Why is consent important online? What will you do differently next time?'

Students write a takeaway or pledge (e.g., 'I'll always ask before posting someone's photo.').

telus.com/**Wise**

TELUS® Wise