# The First Amendment in a Digital Age

*Social Media, the Classroom and the First Amendment,* written by Melissa Wantz, and published by the First Amendment Center and Knight Foundation, takes a fresh look at how America's schools can enhance learning through the use of emerging and interactive media.

This guide is designed to give teachers the tools and ideas they need to engage students using social media and existing curricula. The guide was inspired by the recent Knight Foundation study "Future of the First Amendment 2011" written by Dr. Kenneth Dautrich. The Knight study – based on a survey of 12,090 high school students and 900 high school teachers -- indicates that students who are most active in social media also have the best sense of First Amendment principles. That suggests that Twitter, Facebook and other social media can play an important supplemental role in the classroom.

We are indebted to Knight Foundation for its support and the funding of this teachers guide. Knight Foundation, along with the First Amendment Center, Newseum, American Society of News Editors and McCormick Foundation are also the core founders of *1 for All*, an unprecedented national campaign on behalf of the First Amendment (http://1forAll.us).

*1 for All* is the collaborative effort of educators, artists, journalists, lawyers, librarians and many more who believe that the American public would benefit from a greater understanding of the First Amendment and the need to protect all voices, views and faiths.

The campaign is defined by these guiding principles:

- *1 for All* is nonpartisan. At a time of deep political polarization, we choose not to take sides. In fact, a shared commitment to freedom of speech, press and faith should unify this nation.

- It's all about education. America's teachers would like to do a better job of teaching about the First Amendment, but they often lack the resources they need. *1 for All* provides educational materials, course content and study guides for teachers of grades 1 through 12. In addition, *1 for All* sponsors campus festivals celebrating and exploring the First Amendment freedoms.

- *1 for All* is interactive. There's no point in celebrating free expression without encouraging some of it. Students and others are encouraged in a variety of public competitions to submit photos, videos, songs and stories that reflect the value of freedom in America.

- The focus is on all five freedoms: religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. America's news media are quick to defend freedom of the press, and churches

embrace freedom of faith, but these freedoms are interdependent and deserve the full support of all Americans. We can't pick and choose the freedoms we like.

*1 for All* is a celebration of the freedoms that truly make America special. It's not a coincidence that the strongest, most dynamic, most creative and most ambitious nation in the history of the planet is also the most free.

*Ken Paulson*

President
The First Amendment Center and the American Society of News Editors

# Social Media, the Classroom and the First Amendment

A guide for middle school and high school teachers
published by the First Amendment Center and
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

**Classroom Guide**:

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# Introduction:
# The educational role of social media

**"Public opinion sets bounds to every government, and it is the real sovereign of every free one."**

**– James Madison, author of the Bill of Rights**

Twitter, Facebook, YouTube. James Madison could never have envisioned the tools Americans would someday have to freely, publicly express their opinions.

The very idea of the Internet, with its ability to communicate instantly with anyone, anywhere, would have been bewildering to Americans living in 1789, the year Madison authored the First Amendment.

Faces were faces. Books were books. Tweets belonged to birds.

Today, more than two centuries after adoption of the Bill of Rights – the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution -- Americans are living through a groundswell of change in the way public opinion is expressed and shared. Even children have access to the most powerful communication tools ever developed -- at their fingertips, often in their own pockets.

If an earlier generation of Americans wanted to take full advantage of the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment—religion, press, speech, assembly and petition—they had to make due with phone calls, fliers, letters to the editor and press releases. Today, these tools are considered almost quaint.

A blizzard of new technology has altered the landscape and empowered Americans of all ages. Practicing the basic liberties embodied by the 45 words of the First Amendment has never been easier.

The question for teachers today is not whether they should incorporate social media into their lessons and projects, but how.

**Social media have lasting implications for democracy**

Social media started out as a fun way for people to interact on the web by creating and sharing content with each other. The tools of social media have evolved over the past 10

years in unexpected ways, becoming a potent means of informing and organizing like-minded citizens.

"Digital networks have acted as a massive positive supply shock to the cost and spread of information, to the ease and range of public speech by citizens, and to the speed and scale of group coordination," new media author Clay Shirky wrote in an article for the March/April 2011 issue of Foreign Affairs.

In the spring of 2011, Facebook and Twitter made headlines around the world because they were used to help foster uprisings across the Middle East.

From Tunisia to Egypt to Libya, dictators who had oppressed their impoverished majorities for decades were overthrown by masses of suddenly empowered citizens tapping into cheap, fast and effective ways to organize, protest and rebel. The hunger for justice, opportunity and representative government—a hunger that had been denied for a long time—found expression and eventually resolution, thanks to free communication tools available to any 14-year-old. The series of revolutions was named the Arab Spring.

In the United States, millions of citizens used social media in the fall of 2011 to quickly organize "Occupy Wall Street" assemblies in cities and towns across the country as a way of protesting government and corporate practices.

When campus police at the University of California at Davis used pepper spray on "Occupy" students who were assembled peacefully that November, the outcry that followed was captured by traditional media as well as across informal social media networks such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Some Americans shared their outrage about the incident by adding the officer's image to famous pieces of art or photograph, creating an Internet phenomenon – a "meme" – that spread virally in a matter of hours on a Tumblr blog.

When companies such as Netflix and Bank of America announced more expensive business models in the summer of 2011, consumers turned to social media outlets to complain, convincing the corporations to rethink their plans.

These powerful examples of free expression, via the responsible, mostly intelligent use of social media, are growing by the day. They have lasting implications for the future of American government, commerce and democracy in the 21st century.


**Student use of social media correlates with support for free expression**

American teenagers today have never known a world without the ability to instantly connect and share their beliefs, thoughts, plans, opinions, art and politics. While many of their teachers can remember a time before cell phones, Internet and email, the students cannot.

A [2011 survey commissioned by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#) found that 75% of high school students use social media to get news and information at least three times a week. They are "digital natives" to the world of tweets, texts, links, posts, blogs, uploads, downloads and especially to sharing information quickly and cheaply across a multitude of platforms.

But while the average high school student can text, update and Google faster than just about any teacher, studies have shown that few can name the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.

[A study by the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum in 2006](#) found that 22% of Americans could name all five members of "The Simpsons" television family, compared with just one in 1,000 people who could name all five freedoms embodied in the First Amendment. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Today's teachers have more opportunities than ever to encourage student expression, interaction and communication. They have more ways to make the First Amendment understandable and relevant by incorporating social media tools into their lessons and assignments.

In fact, the Knight Foundation survey found that 91% of high school students who engage in social media agree that "people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions." Of those students who never use social media, only 77% believe this.

There is a clear, positive relationship between the use of social media—Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and other tools—and greater support for free expression rights.


**Teachers using social media rewarded with higher student engagement**

Excellent teachers want to prepare students for the world they are entering, not the world they are leaving behind. These teachers seek to challenge students and to guide them creatively with the most current tools in order to build educated, responsible citizens and to ensure the health of a participatory democracy.

Teachers who are already using social media in their classrooms are discovering that by offering students authentic publishing opportunities over the Internet, they are getting a higher level of engagement from students.

A 2010 [study published in the Journal of Computer Assisted Learning](#), found that college students using Twitter for classwork were more highly engaged in the learning process and had higher grade point averages than students who did not use the social media tool in a course. The teachers surveyed also reported feeling higher levels of engagement in the class while using Twitter.

Social media scholar and Lock Haven University professor Reynol Junco surveyed more than 2,000 college students who used Facebook in 2011 and found that students who comment on status updates, view photos and RSVP to events are more involved in campus activities. Students who share links and check up on friends on Facebook tend to have higher grade point averages, he found.

Many high school and middle school teachers report they are seeing stronger efforts by students to achieve mastery of material and standards when online publishing is added to curricular goals. Students tend to try harder when they know their potential audience goes beyond one teacher or one classroom.

These teachers are not always comfortable with the new media. They realize early on that they will probably not ever be the experts in the room when it comes to using social media; the kids will always be ahead of the adults in this area. Instead they incorporate some of the most powerful communication tools ever invented in the history of humanity by imbuing their classrooms with an attitude of creative experimentation. They play.

They accept that some of the new things they try will work and some will not. They find ways to connect social media with important standards, critical content and treasured lessons. Software developers call this stage -- when the public helps to work the kinks out of a program -- "beta mode," and many classroom instructors are finding it a nice way to grow and learn right along with their students.

Teachers are finding opportunities for renewal, creativity and experimentation as they watch their class blogs, Facebook groups and Twitter feeds give birth to vibrant communities. As they share their experiences with colleagues across campus, throughout the country and around the world, they are finding camaraderie and support they never knew was there.


**Social media tools spark a creative, expansive era in education**

The purpose of this guide is to help educators imagine new ways to teach First Amendment rights using social media. Backed by more than two centuries of free expression in the United States, the lessons, resources and ideas presented here are meant to inspire and inform teachers of just a few of the possible ways students can share and express their opinions in a classroom environment.

Teachers in all subject areas are encouraged to experiment with the use of social media in their lesson planning to help students learn to think critically, master subject material and take advantage of their Constitutionally guaranteed freedoms.

Educators also are encouraged to understand how social media impact individual privacy, and to teach students to build their "digital footprints" in the most responsible ways. These areas are also covered in the rest of this guide.

With new social media tools being invented every month, the ideas presented here are just the beginning of a creative, expansive, exciting era in education for teachers and students.

# Before Starting:
# Addressing concerns of teachers about use of social media

The social media landscape is changing as fast as the imagination and new technology allow. These days that is incredibly fast.

Using Web 2.0 tools -- that is, those online tools that allow students to contribute and share information, rather than just passively read it -- is often a matter of experimenting and finding what works for you and your students.

Many teachers have concerns about using social media in the classroom. School administrations and governing boards differ across the country in their responses to teachers using Twitter and Facebook with students. Some have passed laws or rules forbidding their use; others have allowed teachers great freedom in experimenting with new online tools as they come along.

Some teachers are waiting to be given explicit permission to use social media. Others are incorporating it into their lessons and waiting to see what happens.

Teachers who are considering using social media in lessons for the first time may have these general concerns:
- Privacy
- Access to technology
- Fear of looking dumb in front of students
- Fear of inappropriate use by students
- Concerns about age-appropriateness of social media sites

Let's look at these issues one by one.


**Privacy**

One of the biggest differences between traditional tools of communication, such as paper and pencil, and Internet-based social media tools today is how fast and far information can travel.

Teachers and students 10 years ago did not have to worry about their ideas leaving the classroom except maybe on a piece of paper that eventually was tossed out. There was no assumption of anyone reading their ideas except the teacher and possibly their peers in class.

Now ideas can be disseminated broadly within seconds over networks that might range from 10 to 10,000 people or more. This is both a gift and a responsibility for teachers.

It's a gift because students who use social media networks to publish their ideas, questions and projects have a much higher incentive to use proper techniques, ask more sophisticated questions and create more polished work. All of the expectations we teachers have for students -- use proper spelling, speak with authority, proofread your work -- become intrinsic motivators when social media are added to the assignments because the audience is so much bigger, making the stakes so much higher.

It's a gift, too, because students who publish under their real names are building online portfolios of real work and creating "digital footprints" that can lead to opportunities down the road. Today, when college admissions officers or employers want to know more about students, they Google them. Those students with a body of work to show for their high school years quickly stand out over those who have only a Facebook page to their name.

The responsibility lies with the teacher in deciding what work should be posted online and under what circumstances. Some teachers create private networks that are not open to Google or other search engines. This allows students to speak freely, take more chances; but it also diminishes the impact of their ideas and possibly the effort they expend when they understand the only people really seeing their work are their classmates and the teacher.

Other teachers have students post on public networks that are wide open, but they choose the project carefully and remind students frequently that they are posting for a worldwide audience. (In reality, the world will not come looking and does not really care, but the potential is there, which is enough to spark a class into trying hard and remembering best practices). These teachers find that the more authenticity they give their assignments, the more students strive to do their best. This mimics the real world students will be entering.

In fact, it *is* the real world.

**Access to technology**

Uneven access to technology is a major concern for educators. How do you use social media if your school blocks them? What do you do if you don't have many computers, or many students don't have cell phones? What if students don't have technology at home?

There are no pat answers to these questions because every teacher's technology situation is different. Each educator must determine how feasible it is to ask students to participate online in their education.

For some teachers, the answer lies in using whatever technology exists to have students do as much as possible. This is called pushing the envelope of your circumstances. It might mean pairing or grouping students into teams to use classroom or school computers. It

might mean having students do social media work at home on their own computers. It might mean having students pull out their cell phones and smart phones or laptops in class. It might mean bringing your own cellphone with a remote hotspot to tether the class computer to a wireless account.

Some teachers find ways around blocked social media by working with their technology coordinators at the school site or district to get bypass codes for YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, or to get tools and websites unblocked on campus or in their own room. Some teachers can't even attempt to bring up the issue with their administration.

The desire by students to use social media to participate in the ongoing conversation of learning is so great that most will find a way to do so outside of class if the teacher just assigns it. Students will go to a friend or relative's house, the community library, the local Apple or Windows store, borrow a phone or hound their parents to fix their Internet connection.

If you want to bring up the idea of using social media with your administration, but are worried the reaction will be negative, you might wish to leave your administrator a copy of the 2009 report out of Massachusetts Institute of Technology titled ["The Instructional Power of Digital Games, Social Networking and Simulations and How Teachers can Leverage Them."](#)

In that report the authors state:

> "Since a key characteristic of social networking sites is for each user to have their own profile, they have the ability to create their online identity and connect with anyone from around the globe also profiled on the site. In the age of globalization, this is a tremendous opportunity to connect students with other students who have similar interests as well as different experiences.

> This gets at the heart of social networking technologies -- social cognition. These emerging technologies have connected people in so many ways -- ways that not too long ago would have been unimaginable. As a result, we have seen an explosion in the processes and capacities individuals, as they collaborate and leverage others' abilities in new ways. … 'These skills build on the foundation of traditional literacy, research skills, technical skills, and critical analysis skills taught in the classroom' (2006, p. 19). These are all critical skills, often developed in conjunction with distributed learning environments -- designed to leverage activities around principles of distributed cognition, and collective intelligence. These two skills in particular are based on the view that intelligence is more than just an attribute of an individual, but distributed amongst brain, body, and world (Clark, 1997); improved reasoning is made possible by the use of technology to 'expand and augment human's cognitive capacities' (Jenkins et al. 2006, p. 37)."

**Fear of looking dumb in front of students**

Everyone realizes that younger people often learn and often adopt new online technologies faster than older people. This is true in every profession and every hobby, but it's no excuse not to use social media with students.

Playfulness is the best attitude for teachers wanting to incorporate social media into a lesson. Approach the technology aspect of the project the way you would if someone handed you and your class a bunch of Play-Doh.

Play with it.

Expect some mess, some silliness, some confusion, some laughter, some raised eyebrows and even rolled eyes. Social media tools are cool and fun. The kids will come up with new, faster and better ways to use them than you ever expected. This makes teaching more interesting!

Teachers need to be experts in their content and in their classroom management, not in every possible new technology by which students learn, reproduce or share their understanding. The world today is moving much too quickly for that.

If you wait until you are the most knowledgeable one in the room, not only will you not ever become the expert of any relevant social media tool (the tools are always changing, too), you will deny class after class of students the opportunity to participate in the most powerful communication platform ever created.

Find the place in your curriculum where a social media component makes the most sense. Outline a vision for its use. Build in opportunities for the types of inquiry and thinking you want to facilitate. Give kids directions for a project and a vision for the end product. Then let them go.

And, as will inevitably happen, when you struggle to make sense of the technology, let them see you struggle. This will teach them that it's normal to make mistakes -- out loud, in public.  It will reinforce the idea that even for adults it's acceptable, even expected, to move slowly and with uncertainty when learning something new. Laugh at yourself. Praise that kid in the room who's always one step ahead.

Model with grace and humor what it looks like to be a lifelong learner. It's one of the best gifts you can give your students.


**Fear of inappropriate use by students**

Some teachers worry that because communication is instant with social media, they will not be able to control or prevent inappropriate use. They worry that the kids will take

advantage of an online assignment to do something wrong, which will make the teachers look bad.

In several years of using this type of media with students at the high school level, my colleagues and I have not found this to be the case. Only one or two of my students have ever misused online tools in the course of an assignment, usually by pushing the envelope of "school appropriateness," which can and has happened with other types of nondigital projects whether they be delivered in writing, art, a speech or a debate.

We know there will always be kids who will make bad choices, no matter what tools they are given. But it's nothing we can't handle.  Adults understand that students are young and that they sometimes act rashly.

The same rules can apply with social media assignments that apply to all classroom assignments. The same consequences can be given.

In fact, when students understand that parents, grandparents, other teachers and community members are able to read their work online, they tend to toe the line with very little pressure from their teachers.

Just remind them that you are sending the principal a link to all of their fantastic work when the assignment is over. This is generally enough to ensure best behavior.


**Concerns about age-appropriateness of tools**

Of course, age is a significant factor when determining whether and how to use online communication tools.

Most popular social network sites are made for users 13 and older. Children younger than 13 should use alternatives to sites such as Facebook and Twitter, since it is not legal for them to have their own accounts. Teachers need to know the age requirements of each site before they use it.

Teachers of younger students also might consider using only first names and the initials of their students to further protect privacy. Students should be directed not to give away personal information such as phone numbers or addresses online. And some schools have specific policies in place about what student information can and cannot be used online (e.g. student photographs, full names).

Some teachers want to avoid blurring the line between professional and social relationships with students, and so they choose not to use Facebook for class assignments, instead setting up more protected sites such as Edmodo or Ning. Others set up alter ego Facebook profiles for themselves so students do not have access to their personal lives online.

There is no perfect age guideline for when teachers can or should use social media with students. Some teachers are tweeting with third-graders. Others are comfortable "friending" their high school students on Facebook.

Common sense, professional boundaries, knowledge of local policy or laws, and a degree of moderate caution are probably all that are needed for teachers to make good decisions.

# Basic Tools:
# 12 social media tools to use
# with class assignments

Some of the 12 social media sites listed here were unheard of a year ago. Others have survived, battle-tested and relatively timeworn; they appear to be standard-bearers that will be with us permanently.

All of the dozen tools described here can offer American students a creative, authentic way to practice free expression rights guaranteed by the First Amendment.

## The Big Four: Facebook

**What is it?**
A free social network that allows members to share status updates, photographs, video, links to websites and articles. Various levels of privacy controls can be set, and teachers can form private groups for students to connect and share.

**Where is it?**
[www.facebook.com](www.facebook.com)

**What are the benefits for teachers?**
The biggest benefit is that you are going where the students already are.

Most high school students and many middle school students spend a portion of every evening gathered on Facebook as they do homework (or avoid doing homework). By using this site for group discussions, assignments, creative projects, extra reading, questions and more, teachers are taking advantage of a tool students know well and one that will be around for years to come.

The site also carries with it an authenticity that is hard to beat. Students enjoy creating Facebook profiles for imaginary historical figures or literary characters because that's what those people would be doing if they were alive today. They find it easy to contribute to class discussions or teacher surveys on Facebook because they are notified every time someone posts to the group page.

**What are downsides for teachers?**
Facebook is a social site above all else, and some teachers worry about blurring the line between their own personal and professional lives since they will be interacting with students on the site.

Recent changes to Facebook have made it easier for teachers to keep their own social life separate from students. They can set up class groups in which students join without "friending" the teacher. They can create professional Facebook profiles for their teacher-student interactions and social profiles for family and friends.

**What are downsides for students?**
Some students complain about the nexus of their primary online social network with school assignments. They say they wish they could have "one place where we can get away from school."

**Examples and Best practices**
1. Facebook fan pages for historical figures or literary characters: find all the biographical information, photos, birthplace and take on the identity of the person. Have students create a mock Facebook page for the character. Update status, thinking in "real time." Host a virtual online salon, students post simultaneously over 45 minutes on each other's pages, engaging in conversation with each other. You might want to avoid having students create profiles for living people unless it is clear they are fake profiles.
   - "Using Facebook to Teach" (YouTube) Examples of how one high school history teacher, Sara Romeyn at Bullis School in Maryland, uses Facebook as a teaching tool for advanced placement U.S. History. (3-minutes)
2. Uploading short videos or linking current event articles that relate to an in-class topic.
   - "The American Experience on Facebook" (Facebook page) Richard Geib, AP U.S. History teacher at Foothill Technology High School in California, uses Facebook to post audio, video, lecture notes and more for his class.

**Quick-start Tips and Tutorials**
1. "Facebook for your Classroom in 7 Minutes" (YouTube) A short video tutorial by teacher John Bunker of STEM School and Academy in Colorado. Music by Beethoven as inspiration. This walks you through exactly how to set up a group page, post photos, record or upload video and more. (7-minute video)
2. "Back to School: Tips for Teachers on Facebook" (Facebook) A blog post on how teachers can create separate lists and adjust privacy settings. By Jesse Dwyer, a teacher and training and communications leader at Facebook.

**Alternatives to Facebook**
See www.edmodo.com or www.ning.com

# The Big Four: Twitter

**What is it?**
A free social network that allows members to post 140-character "tweets" to their "followers." Followers are approved by the user. Tweets can include links to websites, articles, photos and videos. "Hashtags" (e.g., #assignmentname) allow tweets to be easily searched and organized.

**Where is it?**
www.twitter.com

**What are the benefits for teachers?**
The biggest benefit is increased participation in the classroom. No longer are the same few students the only ones to raise their hands. Now the shy ones will jump in. During a lecture, students can tweet comments or questions via a cellphone or laptop.

A second benefit is the focus it brings to student comments. They have to condense their ideas or questions to 140 characters. This helps to crystalize thinking.

Twitter also helps establish a dynamic community of learners. Twitter chatter during class sometimes spills over to outside of class.

**What are downsides for teachers?**
Teachers need to choose topics carefully, ones that lend themselves to interaction, questions and comments. A lecture where all you want is for students to record data or facts is probably not the kind to involve with Twitter.

**What are downsides for students?**
It takes practice to listen, read and tweet simultaneously. Some students might find it overwhelming at first. Most will catch on quickly, especially if they have practice texting or instant messaging.

**Examples and Best Practices**
1. "Twitter in the Classroom"(YouTube). Increasing attention and engagement in their studies, Roosevelt High School students have discussions online using Twitter, video and wikis. Wikis are websites developed collaboratively by a community of users, allowing any user to add and edit content. Video by University of Minnesota Videos. (2 minutes)
2. "The Twitter Experiment: Twitter in the Classroom" (YouTube). Dr. Monica Rankin's uses Twitter in her college classroom at the University of Texas, Dallas. Students share experiences. She is amazed at the results of her experiment. (5 minutes)

3. [“CNN: Twitter in the Classroom”](YouTube) 8th graders using Twitter during Enrique Legaspi's 8th grade history class at Hollenback Middle School in East Los Angeles. (2 minutes)
4. [“Five Unique Uses of Twitter in the Classroom”](article) U.S. News & World Report.

**Quick-start Tips and Tutorials**
1. [“Teacher Tips: Using Twitter in the Classroom”](YouTube) by Chris Haskell, Boise State University. How to set up a Twitter account for a classroom, including how to send tweets as texts to student cellphones. (3 minutes)
2. [“Twitter in Schools: A Getting Started Guide”](blog) by Steven Anderson, district instructional technologist in North Carolina. Everything you might wonder about getting a Twitter account and the questions you should know the answers to … before you set it up.

**Alternatives to Twitter**
See [www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)

# The Big Four: YouTube

**What is it?**
A free video sharing network that allows members to view, comment on, rate, upload, download and link to videos.

**Where is it?**
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

**What are the benefits for teachers?**
Teachers can project short clips of relevant information or tutorials to students in class, can email, tweet or send Facebook links to videos they can watch at home, can embed videos onto their own class wikis or blogs.

Teachers can record mini-lessons or directions for students to watch on their own time if they need to see a lesson again.

**What are downsides for teachers?**
YouTube's main website has advertising and comments that may be inappropriate in a school setting or vulgar. It shows thumbnails of other "related" videos that may not be appropriate or may be distracting. Many school districts block YouTube so teachers cannot access the site at school.

In September 2011, YouTube launched a site specifically for teachers at [www.youtube.com/teachers](http://www.youtube.com/teachers) and created the [YouTube Teacher Community](), which offers free access to thousands of educational videos. This may become the place to go for educators wishing to incorporate it into their class assignments.

**What are downsides for students?**
Students can be subjected inadvertently to inappropriate material.

**Examples and Best Practices**
1. "10 Ways to Use YouTube in the Classroom" (YouTube, Teachers Channel) From sparking lively discussions to creating video playlists for your classroom, this series of 10 short videos gives teachers some great examples for using YouTube with students.
2. "How to Use Online Video in the Classroom: How Teachers can bring the best of YouTube and other online video services to their students" (blog) Jennifer Hillner on Edutopia.org. From keeping videos short to finding Creative Commons videos that are safe to use, publish and share.
3. "FTHS Filmmaking's Channel" (YouTube) A channel for students at Foothill Technology High School in California to post their filmmaking projects. Students comment on and share original video. Created by filmmaking teacher Cameron Crouch.

**Quick-start Tips and Tutorials**
1. "How to Use YouTube in the Classroom" (Video) by Learn It in 5 website. How to search, share, link videos. (5 minutes)
2. "How to Upload a Video to YouTube" (article) by Webvideozaon.com. Screenshots and detailed step-by-step instructions.

**Alternatives to YouTube**
- See www.vimeo.com on this list
- www.teachertube.com (unblocked at most school sites)
- www.khanacademy.org (not a social networking site but a valuable free library of 2,700 video lessons narrated by Harvard M.B.A. Sal Khan and raved about by Bill Gates).

# The Big Four: Blogs

**What are they?**
Websites that allows teachers to create blogs to host lessons, directions, photographs of class activities and to publish student writing, images and video online. Members can upload text, links, photos, video and can allow readers to comment.

**Where are they?**
There are a number of free blogging sites:
- www.edublogs.org
- www.wordpress.com
- www.blogger.com
- www.weebly.com

- [www.posterous.com](www.posterous.com)

**What are the benefits for teachers?**
Blogs are easy to create, free and can be beautiful to visit. They can store an incredible amount of material, allowing teachers to share best practices with each other.

Students write for the public -- and the cute boy in 6th period -- when they write on a blog, so teachers often see their best writing and learn where the gaps in technique are. Teachers can read blogs at home without lugging stacks of paper around.

Students who are unsure of what or how to respond will often read the work of other students who have already answered a blog question. Their writing improves just from reading.

**What are downsides for teachers?**
Teachers of different subjects can get overwhelmed managing a number of different blogs.

**What are downsides for students?**
If students have five teachers and are expected to post work on five different blog sites, it can be a lot to manage the URLs, passwords and procedures.

**Examples and Best Practices**
1. [“The Benefits of Student Blogging: Alphabetically Speaking”](#) (blog) A teacher shares a list of why her students blog.
2. [“Billings Beta”](#) (winner of the 2010 Best Class Blog Award from Edublog) Students from Billings Middle School in Seattle write about their school experiences.
3. [“Foothill Technology High School Art & Design”](#) (blog) Cameron Crouch, photography teacher at Foothill Technology High School in Ventura, CA, uses a blog to show student work. Lessons and guidelines for his art, photography and filmmaking classes are at [www.foothillart.org](www.foothillart.org) . Students comment on each other's work and offer work for sale at [www.foothilltech.zenfolio.com](www.foothilltech.zenfolio.com) .
4. [“FTHS World Humanities Blog: A Student Centered Blog”](#) (blog) Robin Houlahan, sophomore world history teacher at Foothill Technology High School has students respond online to issues and questions on this Wordpress blog.

**Quick-start Tips and Tutorials**
1. [“Create a Blog: The 5 Minute Blog”](#) (YouTube) Step by step directions of how to step up a free blog on Blogger.com. Uploaded by freetutorials. (6 minutes)
2. [“Blogging in a Nutshell”](#) (YouTube) How to set up a classroom blog, how to embed code, add videos and links. Fourth-grade science teacher Kristy Drakeford from Harrodsburg, Kentucky, shows her class blogs and how to create them. (15 minutes)

**Alternatives to blogs**
See [www.Tumblr.com](www.Tumblr.com) on this list.

# Four Alternative Tools

**Edmodo:** A free private social network for education, very similar to Facebook. Some teachers prefer Edmodo in order to increase student privacy and maintain more distance between the sociability of Facebook and their class assignments. Simple to set up. No student emails required for creating their accounts. Allows uploading and downloading of files, online homework turn in, resource libraries for teachers. www.edmodo.com

- "Edmodo Demo Video" (YouTube) Quick overview of what you can do with Edmodo and how to view class accounts and student pages. (2 minutes)

- "Edmodo Tutorial" (YouTube) Step by step guide on how teachers can set up their accounts (9 minutes).

- "Edmodo Teacher Hub" (wiki) Offers best practices, examples for various grade levels. Comments from teachers.

- "Introduction to Edmodo" (YouTube) Explains to students how the social network works and how to choose their user name and access a teacher site. (6 minutes)

**Ning:** A social network that is personal and can be made completely private. Free for teachers. Offers ability to blog, chat, instant message, sent mass emails, host video and PowerPoints. Members can decorate and customize their own pages, similar to MySpace pages. www.ning.com

- "Creating an Educational Network with Ning" (YouTube) Shows you step by step how to create your own social network on Ning. (3 minutes)

- "A Sample Ning Network" (YouTube) Shows examples of Nings in a school environment. (3 minutes)

- "World Class 2012" (Ning site) A Ning site for sophomore world literature students at Foothill Technology High School.

**Vimeo:** A free video sharing network, similar to YouTube, but without advertisements. Clean look. Offers the same services as YouTube. Members can set privacy controls on videos they share. A paid version allows unlimited uploading and much faster rendering of high-definition videos. At the end of every video, the viewer is prompted to watch other videos by from the same account, unlike YouTube which prompts viewing of random, possibly inappropriate, videos.  www.vimeo.com

- "Lynda.com Tutorial: Vimeo Essential Training—Creating an Account" (YouTube) How to set up a free account. (2 minutes)

- **"Strengths and Weaknesses of Vimeo video hosting for teachers"** (wiki) Lists classroom example and pros and cons of Vimeo.

**Tumblr:** A free blogging site that offers what many students say is a more efficient, simpler way to blog, comment and especially follow bloggers, similar to Twitter. www.tumblr.com

- **"Tumblin Teachers"** (Tumblr blog) This Tumblr group is for educators to share information and resources related to the use of technology in the K-12 classroom.

- **"A Beginner's Guide to Tumblr"** (blog) Analyzes the growth of Tumblr and reasons to use it in a classroom setting. Includes screenshots.

- **"How to Use Tumblr"** (YouTube) Shows how to create a Tumblr blog. (7 minutes)

## Four Emerging Tools

**Storify:** A free curating tool that enables easy gathering of social media streams, such as Tweets, Facebook updates, YouTube videos, Flickr photos. Users place the filtered, aggregated streams into a narrative of their choosing and publish it. These narratives can be embedded on other websites. www.storify.com

- **"Storify Demo"** (YouTube) An overview of the potential of Storify and how to make a story. (1 minute)

- **"The Story Behind Storify, a new real-time curation service"** (YouTube) Interview with the founders of Storify, who explain that everyone is a reporter thanks to social media. How to "make meaning out of the noise." (15 minutes)

**Pinterest:** A virtual pinboard that lets users create, organize and share digital ephemera such as images of favorite books, toys, recipes, fashion. Users can create a collage of shared images, resources, links across multiple users. Similar to Twitter but visual rather than text-centered. www.pinterest.com

- **"How to Use Pinterest: A Tutorial"** (YouTube) An overview of the Pinterest site and how to add images, RSS feeds and followers. (4 minutes)

**VYou:** A free video sharing site that allow members to send and receive video messages with friends by creating, storing and sharing prerecorded responses. An asynchronous chat format, used often as a question-and-answer platform. www.VYou.com

- **"VYou.com Video Conversational First Look"** (YouTube) An overview of the VYou internet video blogging site. (4 minutes).

**8tracks:** A free music-sharing site that allows members to create and legally share online custom playlists of at least eight tracks. Allows uploading and streaming of music, adding of text and art on a personal webpage. A paid version eliminates ads on the sidebar.
[www.8tracks.com](http://www.8tracks.com)

- ["8tracks Tour"](#) (Vimeo) An overview of the 8tracks website. How to find, mix, bookmark and share music. (2 minutes)

# Resources:
# Great webpages for teachers

- [“100 Inspiring Ways to Use Social Media in the Classroom”](#)

- [“25 Excellent Social Media Sites for Teachers”](#)

- [“Social Media Revolution” (video)](#)

- [“My Teaching Channel Adventure: Connected Coaching, Social Media & Some Seredipity”](#)

- [“Improving Reading & Writing & Critical Thinking Skills with Media”](#)

- [“26 Free Web Tools”](#)

- [“Three Trends that Define the Future of Teaching and Learning”](#)

- [“Making the Case for Social Media in Education”](#)

- [“6 Ways Social Media is Changing Education”](#)

- [“What Exactly can you Learn on a Mobile Phone”](#)

# Lesson Plan 1

# Mockingbirds and Minority Opinions:
# Using social media
# to understand literature
# and guaranteed freedoms

**Level: High School**
**Subject: Language Arts, end-of-unit project**
**Duration: One week or longer, flexible if work assigned outside of class**

## Overview
A flexible, multi-week literature project for 9-12th grade students, featuring authentic publishing opportunities through online social media, in addition to formal writing, presentation, listening and speaking opportunities.

## Introduction
Free expression is the foundation of American democracy, the cornerstone of individual freedom. It is also responsible for the clash of ideas that occurs because neither the government nor the majority has the right to stop unpopular ideas or opinions.

Democracy is a perpetual work in progress, and it is the responsibility of each generation to recognize the disparities between the ideals and realities of American political and social life.

Citizens in a healthy democracy must be able to establish ideals in political and social life and insist on comparing current practices with these. They should be able and willing to not only recognize disparities between the ideals and realities of their place and time in American culture but also know how to take action individually, socially and politically to right wrongs.

This lesson helps high school students explore and practice modern methods of communication and activism using social media as part of their study of one of the most popular and enduring of American novels, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This project assumes

students have finished reading the book and are ready to explore deeper layers of characterization and theme.

Students will assume the roles of characters in the novel and express ideas from their perspectives. They will explore the novel's themes and analyze how complex characters interact with each other when there are conflicting motivations and values. They will use technology to create their own content on a social media platform of their choice.

While this project focuses on Harper Lee's 1960 novel, teachers can adapt the methods and ideas explained here to any work of literature where characters must stand up for their rights, fight for freedom and confront social ills, oppression and intolerance.  Examples of books this lesson could be adapted for include, but are not limited to: *1984, Brave New World, Fahrenheit 451, A Raisin in the Sun, The Grapes of Wrath, A Tale of Two Cities, The Hunger Games.*

### Key concepts
- The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides individuals with important personal freedoms.
- Students have the ability and right to express themselves and be heard.
- Minority viewpoints should be respected and be allowed expression, though we may disagree with them.
- Individual, social and political action reduces the gap between the ideals of our American society and the realities.

### First principles
- Free expression is the foundation -- the cornerstone -- of democracy.
- Other people have rights, too, even to express ideas and opinions we don't agree with or like.
- When rights collide, government must balance them.
- The First Amendment helps us make choices.


### First moments

One of the primary themes in *To Kill a Mockingbird* is that people should live with sympathy and understanding toward others. This is expressed when Atticus gives advice to his daughter, Scout, about Boo Radley, saying she should "climb into his skin and walk around in it." At the end of the book, Scout is able to understand Boo Radley's perspective, which provides a sense of optimism despite a dark outcome of the central plot.

Divide the class into groups of nine students each (if class size permits). Place the following quotations on a class blog so students can reflect in writing on them. Students should answer two questions each, either at school if technology permits, or at home. Their responses should be at least 100-200 words each and should be written in formal, academic language. They also should comment briefly on one or two other students'

responses by adding information, examples or analysis (not simple opinions, such as "I liked this").

1. "Atticus, are we going to win it?"
   "No, honey."
   "Then why--"
   "Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win," **Atticus, Chapter 9.**
   - Respond: What is the point of fighting a losing battle such as Atticus does when defending Tom Robinson? He knows the jury is biased. Do people really take up "hopeless causes" today? What examples can you share, either from your own experience, from people you know or from current events? How did your "losing" battle turn out and what did you learn?

2. "It was times like these when I thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars, was the bravest man who ever lived," **Scout, Chapter 11.**
   - Respond: What kinds of injustice might people today try to stand up against, even though it might seem hopeless? Why do they do it? What are recent examples of this, either from an individual or a group? Why don't people stand up to injustices they see? Are some people inherently brave or do they just rise to the circumstances?

3. "They're certainly entitled to think that, and they're entitled to full respect for their opinions… but before I can live with other folks I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience," **Atticus, Chapter 11.**
   - Respond: Are people really entitled to "full respect for their opinions?" Why is this so? Do we see this in reality? What protects our right to express our opinions? Are their limits to this right?

4. "You goin' to court this morning?" asked Jem. […]
   "I am not. 't's morbid, watching a poor devil on trial for his life. Look at all those folks, it's like a Roman carnival."
   "They hafta try him in public, Miss Maudie," I said. "Wouldn't be right if they didn't."

   "I'm quite aware of that," she said. "Just because it's public, I don't have to go, do I?" **Chapter 16**
   - Respond: What trials in recent years have seemed more like a "Roman carnival" than serious judicial procedures? Why does this happen? Why might a judge need to limit public participation, such as TV coverage or public attendance, at trials? Finally, how do you think the rights of a defendant might be affected if a trial turned into a "circus"? [Note: For an interesting perspective on criminal trials and media coverage, see the online educational handout "Should the Coverage Fit the Crime?" by the Columbia Journalism Review.]

5. "First of all," he said, "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better than all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you

consider things from his point of view … until you climb into his skin and walk around it in," **Atticus, Chapter 3.**

- Respond: Why is empathy so important to Atticus? Who is expected to be empathetic in our society? Is there a role for government to be empathetic? Why or why not? Give examples.

Choose the most thoughtful blog "threads" or responses—one from each of the five quotes—to share with students in classroom to spark a whole-class discussion.

**Introducing the project**

1. Explain to students that Americans have inalienable rights that are guaranteed under the First Amendment: freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. Review the 45 words of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Discuss the meaning of each of the five rights. Which is most important to students in the room at this time in their lives? Why? Which is least important?

2. Break students into their five small groups and have them brainstorm places in the novel where characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird* exercise free speech to express opinions that might be unpopular or "a minority view." (e.g., Scout's opinion of the Cunninghams; Atticus standing up to the mob that wants to lynch Tom Robinson; the classmates who call Scout a "nigger-lover").

3. Discuss the examples of free speech the students found and compare the communication tools that the characters in the book had during the Great Depression (e.g., their voices, newspapers, books, telephones and letters). Make a list of the ways that students today express their ideas, opinions and complaints. (i.e., texting, messaging, chatting, videoing, photography, blogging, etc.). Do these opportunities give students today more or less power to be heard? Some of these methods are private and some are public; what difference does this make? Is it all just becoming noise? Should students have the same rights at school as they do at home to express themselves? Do the students in *To Kill a Mockingbird* have more or fewer rights in the classroom than students today?

4. Tell students they will be doing a creative project using social media to try to "climb into the skin" of the novel's characters, interact according to their stated values and help them express their points of view through words, images and media. Each group will get a set of nine Role Cards (Worksheet A) or as many Role Cards as there are students if the groups are smaller. Each student gets one role card. Teachers might allow students to form their own groups and choose their own roles. Or they might assign roles based on considerations such as maturity of students to assume a more sensitive role or student interest and ability to lead. For smaller groups, not all of the roles need to be assigned.

5. After the groups have assigned character roles and analyzed the core values of their characters and their own preferred form of expression, teachers should hand out the Social Media Options, Requirements and Presentation Prep Form (Worksheet B) and let the groups decide how they will interact with each other (e.g., Facebook group, as Twitter followers, on a Tumblr blog, through a Vyou site, etc.). Teachers are encouraged to allow students to decide which technology they want to try and to have faith that students will work out any difficulties along the way. The social media sites listed on the sheet are free and relatively simple for teenagers to use without adult help. It is not necessary to give in-depth lessons on the sites. At least some students in the class will be familiar with them or can learn quickly how they work, and they can help each other. The best part of this kind of lesson for students is the problem-solving and creativity that accompanies publishing their ideas online.

6. One student should be chosen from each group to serve as the host. The host models the online behavior that the group should show: careful reading, interesting or informative posting, relationship building, acknowledgment of people by name, offering help, being slow to anger, apologizing when wrong, politely asking for clarification, exercising patience. A host is also an authority, enforcing whatever rules there may be. The host serves as the group liaison to the teacher, communicating any issues or problems. The host can set up the central social media site or another student can volunteer to do so.

**Students work independently, teacher monitors project**

1. Give students plenty of time to create and interact with their characters. This might be in class if your school has the technology and does not block the social media sites. Or it might be done for homework. A week gives students time to develop their interaction and grow their social community without losing interest. Characters must participate in eight areas of discourse:
   a) Why did Atticus decide to defend Tom and what did people think about his choice that they maybe didn't say aloud?
   b) Why didn't Mayella just tell the truth about the scene with Tom in her room?
   c) What is the reaction to the jury's verdict?
   d) How do people feel about Tom's death?
   e) Atticus' parenting style.
   f) The mystery of Boo Radley and what he really is like behind closed doors.
   g) Scout's behavior.
   h) The way things are and the way things should be.

2. Students should make their sites public from the beginning and should provide you with the URL so that you can check in on their progress and monitor the following requirements:
   a. Students should be staying true to the character's central concern or belief. Students will need to infer how the character might act or what they might

say, but they should not deviate from what the character would actually believe, agree or disagree with.

b. Finding places where the characters can and should disagree and express this. Arguments should occur but they should be respectful and school-appropriate. (Language in *To Kill a Mockingbird* may be problematic, and teachers should decide ahead of time whether to allow certain offensive terms that are used freely in the novel. This might lead to an interesting discussion about student rights to free expression in a school setting and how they are limited compared to outside of school. See Tinker  v. Des Moines, Bethel School District v. Fraser and Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier.)

c. Adding links to other sources of information or free expression. These could be videos, music, art, poetry, blogs, news articles, surveys, etc. that students either find or create. Each student should be responsible for having his or her character add three links to relevant information.

d. Interacting daily for one week so that the social network site grows more complex and rich over time.

e. Speaking out when they see injustices.

f. Being tolerant of the ideas of others; allowing others to speak their minds.

g. Using words to fight against ideas and actions with which they, as their character, disagree.

h. Having confidence in their ideas; not being afraid to express them.

3. Teachers should take a few minutes of class time over the course of the week to highlight the student communities that are flourishing. Find an insightful blog post, a spirited Facebook exchange, an interesting link from a student and discuss with the class. Encourage students to check in on other group's social networks but not to interact unless asked by the group.

**Students present and reflect on their learning**

1. After approximately one week of interaction, students should present the social network sites they have developed. Teachers are advised to have the groups "turn in" the project before presentation day so they can be screened. On presentation day groups should have filled out the Presentation Chart (Worksheet C). Students must be able to identify:

a. Areas of their social media site that are most interesting and offer new insight into the characters.

b. Areas of the most conflict: what are the conflicting motivations of the characters and how did they express them?

c. Areas where characters showed vulnerability, empathy and understanding with each other, in spite of their differences.

d. Areas where they most wanted to have the power to suppress another character's opinion.

e. What they learned from respecting the right of the person to state it.

f. Each character's vision of how life should be, summed up in one sentence.

g. Areas of conversation that might never have been allowed without the First Amendment right to free speech (e.g., a strong minority view).

h. Top two links to other sources.

2. During the presentations, members of groups who are not watching should write down questions. At the end of the group's presentation, leave time for a few questions. (Have students turn in their questions for credit at the end.)

**Formal narrative writing assignment**
- Narrative Writing Assignment: Students will write a 700-to-800-word story from the point of view of their character. The story can take place either during the novel or after it ends. For example, a student could write a first-person account of what happens to Tom Robinson during the last few hours of his life. Another student might write about Scout on her 16th birthday meeting Dill, who has changed. Atticus might meet the woman of his dreams and get married against Scout's wishes. Jem could get his first job and confront an injustice on his first day.

The prompt:
> Write a 700-to-800-word, first-person story from the point of view of a character in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The character should face a problem, go through a series of events and reflect on his or her experience. The events may be set during the time period of the story or after the story ends. Pay attention to details, dialogue and sensory language.

- The narratives should:
  a. Have effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
  b. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation or observation, establishing one or multiple points of view and introducing a narrator.
  c. Create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
  d. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection.
  e. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting and/or characters.
  f. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed or resolved over the course of the narrative.

**Open-ended, thoughtful discussion to synthesize understanding**
- Socratic Seminar: Merge two or more groups together to discuss the eight focus areas of the project. Students are not in character for the seminar, but are speaking as readers with new insight into the author's intentions. This is a way for students to synthesize the insights gained through the social media, presentation and writing pieces of the project. The eight areas and some possible questions to explore are:
  a) Atticus' decision to defend Tom even though it was a hopeless cause. What good did it do?

b) Mayella's choice not to tell the truth. Why do people lie?
c) The jury's decision. Why didn't they have the courage to side with the truth?
d) Tom's death. Was it inevitable?
e) Atticus' parenting style. What strengths and weaknesses did he have as a parent and what were some outcomes of these?
f) The mystery of Boo Radley. What would happen to a "Boo Radley" in today's society?
g) Scout's behavior. What social norms are there for girls today that she might rebel against?
h) The way things are and the way things should be. Where is America falling short of an ideal socially, politically and culturally today?
i) What First Amendment rights find expression in *To Kill a Mockingbird?* Would Harper Lee have been able to write this book without her right to free speech?

**Extension and enrichment:**
1. Show students parts or all of the 1962 Academy Award-winning movie "To Kill a Mockingbird" and have them use cell phones to tweet observations or reactions as it plays, including significant ways the movie was changed from the book. The next day, use Storify with the class to "curate" the tweets into a narrative, allowing students to decide which tweets to use and in which order.

2. Have students read [“A Call for Unity,”](#) a letter from eight ministers who believed the Rev. Martin Luther King should not organize street protests but pursue civil rights justice through the court system. Which characters in the novel would agree with them? How would Atticus respond? How would Calpurnia? Write a letter of protest from one of them and post on a class blog. Then students should read King's [“Letter from a Birmingham Jail,”](#) which states: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly… Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider…" What would Walter Cunningham write back to King? What would Aunt Alexandra write? Examine the rhetorical devices used in each letter (e.g., ethos, pathos, logos). Which is stronger in this letter? Why might King have weighted his letter toward one of these devices?

# On the web:
- [Harper Lee biography](#)
- [Related readings](#)
- [Tweeting "The Wizard of Oz:](#)
- [“Speaking up in class, silently, using social media”](#)
- [Using blogs and wikis in the English classroom](#)
- [“The Art of Hosting Good Conversations Online”](#)
- [How to Create a Twitter Account](#)

# National Standards:

**[Common Core Standards for English Language Arts (9-12)](#)**

- **Writing 3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events, using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.
- **Writing 6:** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- **Writing 9b.** Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.
- **Reading 3:** Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters and advance the plot or develop the theme.

**[National Standards for Civics and Government](#)**

**Recognize disparities between ideals and reality in American political and social life:**
- Americans should establish ideals in political life and insist on comparing current practices with these.
- Americans should recognize discrepancies between the ideals and the realities of American social and political life; e.g. the ideal of equal opportunity and the reality of unfair discrimination.
- Americans should be able to explain how discrepancies can be reduced by individual action, social action and political action.

# Worksheet A. Mockingbirds and minority opinions. Role cards.

*[Note to teachers: Prepare a sheet like this for each of these characters: Scout, Atticus, Bob Ewell, Arthur "Boo" Radley, Jem, Mayella Ewell, Calpurnia, Dill, Tom Robinson.]*

Directions: You will communicate from the perspective of **Scout.** Complete this role sheet to help you identify the character's values, relationships and preferred form of expression.

Essential character traits; evidence:

> *Example: Scout is intelligent. She learns to read before beginning school.*

- 

- 

- 

Essential worries; evidence:

- 

- 

Overall outlook on life; evidence:

- 

- 

Essential relationships with other characters in the novel; who is this character for/against?

- 

- 

- 

Core values; infer two ideas the character cares most about.

- 

-

Preferred form of communication (this is your own preferred way to convey what is important to you). Circle one:

- Visual/art

- Kinesthetic/video

- Writing/text

- Spoken word/audio

# Worksheet B. Mockingbirds and minority opinions. Social media options.

**Focus of group interaction:** Each group must address each of the following events, ideas or questions from the novel. (Note: These are the ideas that the whole town would have been talking about behind closed doors. Social media allow quiet people a voice and let the people of the town discover what they most want to know.)
1. Why did Atticus decide to defend Tom and what did people think about his choice that they maybe didn't say aloud?
2. Why didn't Mayella just tell the truth about the scene with Tom in her room?
3. What is the reaction to the jury's verdict?
4. How do people feel about Tom's death?
5. Atticus' parenting style.
6. The mystery of Boo Radley and what he is really.
7. Scout's behavior.
8. The way things are and the way things should be.

**Social Media Options:**
Now decide how to express yourselves. Here are some free options. You can use one or more as long as there is a single central means of connection, sharing and interaction. You need to agree on an online meeting place.
1. Facebook Group; then use Storify to arrange and organize FB posts into a narrative for presentation
2. Twitter with a common hashtag; then use Storify to arrange and organize tweets into a narrative for presentation
3. WordPress blog (writing)
4. Tumblr blog (writing)
5. Pinterest (collage)
6. 8tracks (music) then post links on blog, Twitter feed, etc.
7. Vimeo (music) then post links on blog, Twitter feed, etc.

**Requirements of project:**
- Each character will interact and share daily, staying true to his or her own values, concerns and outlook on life. It is not necessary to write in a Southern dialect, though you can if you choose.
- Each character will post 3 to 5 links over the course of communication that add to the richness of the conversation and help show his or her values, concerns and outlook. This is in addition to regular interaction and commentary.
- The site will provide a mix of visual and text-based communication (images, video, words).
- Groups will present their social media site to the class on _____ (date).

# Worksheet C. Mockingbirds and minority opinions. Presentation chart.

**Presentation Chart:** Work together to complete this chart to get ready for your presentation.

| | |
|---|---|
| What areas of your social media site are most interesting and offer new insight into the characters? | |
| What areas show the most conflict?<br><br>What are the conflicting motivations of the characters and how did they express them? | |
| Where do characters show vulnerability, empathy and understanding with each other, in spite of their differences? | |
| In which areas did you, as contributors, most want the power to suppress another character's opinion? | |

| | |
|---|---|
| What did you learn from respecting the right of the person to state their opinion? | |
| Describe in one sentence each character's vision of how life should be: | |
| Two areas of conversation that might never have been allowed without the First Amendment right to free speech (i.e. a strong minority view) | |
| Top two links to other sources. (Describe and be prepared to show us) | |

# Lesson Plan 2

# Disparate Voices, Common Threads: Tweeting the immigrant experience

**Level:**      **High School**
**Subject:**    **Social Studies, Government**
**Duration:**   **End-of-unit project, one week or longer. Flexible depending on work
                assigned outside of class**

**Overview:**  Students will explore First Amendment rights as they imagine immigrant life
by assuming a role based on a chapter of Jacob Riis' 1890 book *How the Other Half Lives* and
other historical sources. Using Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, they will express hopes,
dreams, sorrows, concerns, values and experiences of an imaginary immigrant on one day
of his or her life in a New York tenement building during the 1890s. Using Storify, students
will analyze and curate their social media streams into narratives that show commonality
among different immigrant groups.

## Introduction

This lesson assumes that students have studied the history of immigration beginning in the
1870s and have knowledge of the era's social patterns and demographics. This lesson
provides students with a deeper understanding of the immigrant experience while
providing an overview of First Amendment principles that draw many immigrants to the
United States.

Students will gain understanding of cultural diversity inherent in immigration patterns
taking place after 1870. Using historical sources and social media, they will imagine and
assess the challenges, opportunities and contributions of the different immigrant groups.

While this project focuses on material from *How the Other Half Lives*, teachers can adapt the
methods and ideas explained here to any first-person, primary-source documents, such as
diary or personal histories from the time period.

## Key Concepts
- The First Amendment provides individuals with important personal freedoms,
  including freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition.

- These individual rights are rare in other countries and are one reason that America is so attractive to immigrants.
- Free expression promotes understanding of the diversity of the American experience, including the challenges, opportunities and contributions of different groups of people.
- The Constitution protects the rights of immigrants, and everyone else in the United States, to speak up and share their views.
- Social media increase the power and scope of American's First Amendment rights.

**Introducing the Project:**

Write the following quotation on the board:

> "Long ago it was said that 'one half of the world does not know how the other half lives.' That was true then. It did not know because it did not care. The half that was on top cared little for the struggles, and less for the fate of those who were underneath, so long as it was able to hold them there and keep its own seat." (Introduction to [How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York, by Jacob A. Riis. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897)](#)

Ask students to write about or discuss the reasons for widespread poverty among immigrant populations in the late 1800s and early 1900s. This type of poverty was common to new immigrants in big cities across America.

Review the major "push" and "pull" reasons that people migrate:
- Push: economic dislocation, social turmoil, population pressures, religious persecution, denial of political rights.
- Pull: job opportunities, land opportunities, higher wages, political liberty, religious liberty, family.

Remind students:
- From 1865 to 1918, America experiences an unprecedented stream of immigrants, 27.5 million in all.
- They come from diverse countries and many settle in major cities, such as New York City. In 1892 the government establishes Ellis Island to handle the immigration process.
- Many settle into tenement housing, apartments that are dark, poorly ventilated and prone to contributing to widespread illness such as cholera, tuberculosis and small pox.
- A five-story building might have 22 rooms, housing 10 people each. It likely includes a saloon in the basement, but no indoor restrooms or running water for the residents.

Introduce Jacob A. Riis' groundbreaking book, written in 1897, that documented the lives of people living in tenement housing. The book was considered "muckracking" journalism, and the public awareness that it raised over substandard housing and widespread poverty eventually led to the creation of laws, including the New York State Tenement House Act, which required tenement owners to improve housing or receive sanctions.

Read a page out of the book so students can understand the conditions Riis reported. Teachers could instead have students listen to an online NPR report that summarizes the central issues in the book, "Jacob Riis: Shedding Light on New York's Other Half." Teachers might also take students on an online tour of a tenement house, The Lower Eastside Tenement Museum: A Virtual Tour.

Ask students to imagine how it would feel to live in these conditions. If they found themselves living in conditions such as these today, what might they do to build awareness and call for reforms? Why might new immigrants not be able or willing to stand up against social injustice? What risks would there be to speaking out?

Guide them to a discussion of the power of social media to document and share experiences inexpensively with a worldwide audience. Share current articles, such as "Using Social Media to Promote Social Justice" from the Chicago Tribune and "Social Justice and Social Media: A Beautiful Thing" from St. Joseph's University. Another site to share is "25 Ways to use Facebook, Twitter & Storify to improve political coverage" from the Poynter Institute.

Ask students to state what gives people the right not only to complain about conditions but to publish their complaints and views without fear of reprisal by the government. Guide them in a discussion or mini-lecture of the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment, explaining that these freedoms are major reasons life in America is, and has been, so appealing to people in other parts of the world.

- **The First Amendment affirms the freedom of the individual**. American government is based upon the concept that all human beings are born with certain rights or freedoms. The First Amendment guards these rights by prohibiting the government from denying citizens their rights. The government does not give us our rights. Its role is to guard the rights that we already have.

Tell students that they are going to bring two time periods together for a creative project: giving immigrants from the 1890s the power of Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to share about their lives and advocate for change.


**Students work independently, teacher monitors progress**

1. Assign students, or pairs of students, a chapter from Riis' book. The book is available as an electronic text through Bartlby.com, and it is legal for teachers to print it out and use with students. Or students can read their assigned chapter online. Students should take notes as they read to help them create a character who would embody the type of person described.

Ask students to be alert for racial, religious and gender-based stereotypes that Riis' used in this reporting, something the First Amendment permits but that most likely would be forbidden by well-regarded newspapers or book publishers today. (Note: one of the national history standards [Historical Thinking Standard 2] states students should be able to appreciate historical perspectives while "avoiding 'present-mindedness,' judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values"). There are passages in Riis' book that are clearly offensive by today's standards but that would have been merely sensational by the norms of Riis' day.

Tell students that they will be imagining one day in the life of an immigrant living in the neighborhood that Riis writes about. They must create all of the details that bring this character to life (name, age, occupation, ethnicity, appearance, religion, family size, values, fears, hopes, dreams, reason for moving to America, date of entry to U.S., people left behind in their homeland).

2. Students will use this information to create a Facebook page for their character. They can use the online sources listed near the end of this lesson  to gather photos and more details about immigrant experience. Teachers are encouraged to provide students with their own favorite resources, especially first-person immigrant accounts from the time period. The more details students gather, the more realistic their Facebook page will be. Teachers should decide in advance the minimum effort required of students for the page (e.g., a profile photo, complete information page, number of "friends," number of posts, etc.). Encourage students to have their characters "friend" other immigrant characters from class and to interact with them online.

3. Students now should create on paper a Twitter timeline that will guide them when they begin to tweet about their day. This will be a series of 16 tweets, one per hour, that take the immigrant from the beginning of his or her day to the end when they go to bed. The tweets can be no more than 140 characters, including spaces between words, and they each must provide details, opinions or thoughts concerning the immigrant's:
   - Challenges on this day
   - Opportunities on this day
   - Contributions to society on this day
   - Values
   - Hopes
   - Fears
Students should scour the chapter from the Riis book to gather realistic details to incorporate into their tweets. It is also important for students to ensure that each tweet fits one of the above categories because the tweets will later be curated into Storify narratives that are grouped thematically.

Additionally, each tweet must have a common hashtag. This is a word or phrase that allows tweets to be organized. The entire class must use the same hashtag starting

with a number sign (e.g., #otherhalf1). Teachers who teach the same subject more than once should decide if they want students from all classes to have the same hashtag or if they want to assign unique hashtags by period. Some teachers find it raises excitement and interest among students to have more tweets (i.e. the entire 10th grade) attached to one hashtag.

4. Choose a day for students to begin tweeting their immigrant's experience. This could be a school day if cell phones and/or Twitter are allowed on campus, or it could be a weekend day. Some students may not be able to tweet once per hour and should be allowed to post all of their tweets at one time if necessary (this will not affect the outcome of the Storify project). Students should have accounts specifically for their characters, with a profile photo that fits, similar to their Facebook pages.

5. On the tweeting day, students can present their Facebook pages to the class to share the characters they have created. This might be an informal presentation or the teacher might decide to make it a structured activity.

6. A fun optional extension to this project is to have students create a one-minute video and post it to YouTube with the hashtag in the description. Students could impersonate their immigrant telling something about his or her day in more detail. Or they could play music or sing a song from the time period, record it in an audio file and post to SoundCloud, an audio sharing site.

7. When students have completed the Facebook, Twitter and optional YouTube portions of the project, it's time for them to explore the media stream that they have created as a class. Show the class Storify.com and briefly explore one or two of the top stories posted on the Storify homepage. These are generally current events and are of high quality. This will give students an understanding of the potential of this "curating" tool.

   Then open a new Storify document and briefly show how they can search social streams to pull tweets, images and videos, etc. into a narrative. (Note: Storify is still being developed, and pulling Facebook feeds is doable but not easy at this time, so teachers should be prepared for students to have trouble with Facebook).

   Divide students into six groups:
   1. Challenges
   2. Opportunities
   3. Contributions
   4. Values
   5. Hopes
   6. Fears

   Working together, students in the groups should read through all of the social streams to find elements of a story that will fit into their theme (Challenges, Opportunities, etc.). Students can collaborate on the same Storify article by having

one student go into his or her account and click: Settings>Editor and then authorize editors by their account names. This will allow them to work together from home, if necessary.

8. Teachers should plan for one class period at least when student groups will share their Storify articles. Teachers can set up a blog and embed the Storify articles there, or students can show the articles from their own Storify accounts.

The focus of the presentations should be for students to explain commonalities they notice among immigrants' stories. For example, they might identify common threads in the Challenges category that include language barriers, racism, sexism, negative affects of living condition on health, happiness, comfort.

The idea is to see how the immigrant experience was both an individual one, located in a specific time and place for each person, as seen in the Facebook and Twitter accounts, but that it was also a collective experience with common experiences and that it is ongoing for each generation of immigrants.

## Formal Writing Assignment

In-class analytical essay (700 to 800 words). Students should answer the following prompt:

How might the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment have impacted immigration to America at the start of the 20th century? Discuss the ways these rights made America attractive to millions of people and also how they contributed to the beginning of the Progressive movement, in which reformers sought to improve living conditions for new immigrants.

Note: Teachers may wish to turn this assignment into a Document-based Question (DBQ) and provide a number of relevant documents (charts, newspaper excerpts from the time period, sermons, diary entries) for students to use during the essay.

- Students should write arguments focused on discipline-specific content:

a) Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), reasons and evidence.

b) Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

c) Use words, phrases and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d) Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e) Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.

# On the web:

- [“Aspiration, Acculturation, and Impact: Immigration to the United States, 1789-1930,”](#) Harvard University
- [“Key Dates and Landmarks in United States Immigration History,” Harvard University](#) (timeline)
- [New York Public Library Digital Gallery, Immigrant Photos](#)
- [The Library of Congress: Immigration, American Expansion, 14 collections of photos](#)
- [Immigration: The Living Mosaic of People, Culture and Hope](#)
- [On the Trail of the Immigrant, by Edward A. Steiner: a Digital Photo Album](#)
- [Guided Readings: The Huddled Masses](#)
- [The Lower Eastside Tenement Museum: A Virtual Tour](#)
- [“Filtering the Social Web to Present News Items,”](#) New York Times
- [How to Create a Twitter Account](#)

# National Standards

[U.S. History Content Standards 5-12, Era 6, Standard 2:](#) *Massive immigration after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity.*

- The student understands the sources and experiences of the new immigrants.

- Assess the challenges, opportunities and contributions of different immigrant groups.

[Historical Thinking Standard 2](#)

- **Read historical narratives imaginatively**, taking into account what the narrative reveals of the humanity of the individuals and groups involved -- their probable values, outlook, motives, hopes, fears, strengths and weaknesses.

▪ **Appreciate historical perspectives** -- the ability to (a) describe the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts and the like; (b) consider the historical context in which the event unfolded -- the values, outlook, options and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoid "present-mindedness," judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

## National Standards for Civics and Government

**Recognize disparities between ideals and reality in American political and social life:**

- Americans should establish ideals in political life and insist on comparing current practices with these.

- Americans should recognize discrepancies between the ideals and the realities of American social and political life; e.g., the ideal of equal opportunity and the reality of unfair discrimination.

- Americans should be able to explain how discrepancies can be reduced by individual action, social action and political action.

# Lesson Plan 3

# Beyond Google:
# Using social media
# to make sense of the news

**Grade Levels:**  **8-12**

**Subject:**  **Language Arts, Social Studies, Technology, Health, Government**

**Length:**  **Flexible: 3 days to 1 week.**

**Overview:** Students will interact with a current event news story in a social media environment, enhancing their inquiry process and practicing responsible free expression, while learning about the benefits of a free press. Using Twitter, Storify, CNN.com and Google, students will learn to create higher-level questions that spur deeper levels of critical thinking.

**Introduction:**

This lesson can be used in many contexts. Literature or history teachers could use it as an extension for a unit where current events can help students make relevant connections between fiction and reality, or the past and today. Health and technology teachers can adapt this lesson to fit curricular units where topical information adds an additional layer of understanding.

Teachers are encouraged to choose an issue-oriented article that is very current and is value-based, one that may be controversial depending on one's views. This will lead to the most interesting questions, debate and analysis.

**Key Concepts**

- The First Amendment allows for a free press, providing individuals with many sources of information and the ability to use new knowledge to improve their lives and address social issues.

- In order to draw accurate, meaningful conclusions by which to make decisions, students must learn to develop and refine a range of questions and to research relevant answers
- Sharing knowledge and participating actively and ethically on social networks is an important way of gathering and sharing information and practicing free expression.

**Introducing the Lesson:**

Begin the discussion by reviewing the 45 words in the First Amendment, highlighting the importance of a free press:

> "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Depending on your students' experience with digital media, you might wish to show an eight-minute video from Newseum.org "What's News?" which shows how news affects nearly every aspect of our lives, or "Getting it Right," which explores media accuracy and the role of the press. [Note: Teachers need to register online to see the videos -- a free, instant process.]

Ask students to name reasons why a free press could improve opportunities and help people face challenges in their lives. Answers might include avoiding financial mistakes by learning from other's errors, staying healthier by reading about the latest scientific findings, or choosing the safest, most respected products. It also helps a democracy by allowing citizens to learn information necessary to vote wisely.

If your students are not familiar with Costa's Three Levels of Questioning, spend the rest of the period teaching them this metacognitive technique that helps students create questions that lead to higher level thinking and innovative ideas. If they are familiar with it, remind them that they will need to be using Levels Two (Processing) and Three (Evaluating) for the next activity. [For an excellent introduction to Costa's questioning technique see the article "Stirring Students to Ask Tougher Questions" by Heather Wolpert-Gawron on Edutopia.org.

Show students a brief paragraph from a current event and practice creating all three levels of questions with it.

An example might be:
> "The filthiest area in a restroom (and therefore in the whole mall) isn't the toilet handle or the doorknob -- it's the sink, our experts say. Bacteria, including E. coli, fester on the faucet and handles because people touch those surfaces right after

using the toilet, explains panelist Charles Gerba, Ph.D., a professor of environmental microbiology at the University of Arizona." From "The 8 Germiest Places in the Mall" by Cari Wira Dineen, Health.com.

- Level One: What is E. coli? What makes the sink so dirty?
- Level Two: Wouldn't washing hands with soap kill the germs? Why are professors studying malls?
- Level Three: Will knowing this information make people avoid restrooms or will it make them wash their hands more thoroughly after using the toilet? Imagine a product that would help people realize they have germs on their hands; what would it be?

**The Lesson:**

1. Now move on to the focus of this project. Tell students they will be using Twitter to tweet Level Two and Three questions about a news story you will read together in class. Each student will need to have a Twitter account (free, easy to set up ahead of time). Students with smartphones or laptops can tweet directly from their Twitter accounts, if not blocked at school. Other students with cell phones and unlimited texting plans can text to Twitter if they set up the Twitter accounts to accept texts. Teachers may need to help students set up accounts, depending on student experience with Twitter. Students may need to partner up depending on devices available in the class. Students will need to use a common hashtag that relates to the chosen article, such as #cheffeeds or #violencemars or the class period. Choose something unique. This will allow teachers and students to gather the tweets easily.

2. Choose a current event that is interesting, immediate and value-based. CNN.com has a variety of issue-based news articles on its home page every day. Use a projector to show students the prescreened article, such as "California Chef feeds Children for Free." Other examples from November 2011 include: "Violence Mars Black Friday" or "Chewing Tobacco and a Major League Dream."

3. Read the article together, watch the video clip if available, and ask students to tweet their questions. You may need to read the article twice in order to give students more time to think of and tweet their questions.

4. Next, project Storify.com onto the screen and click "create story." [Teachers need to set up a free account, which is simple to do instantly. You might wish to briefly explore one or two of the top stories posted on the Storify homepage. These are generally current events and are of high quality and will give students an understanding of the potential of this "curating" tool.].

5. Place the hashtag into Storify's Twitter feed and decide as a class which questions are the most interesting or relevant. Choose only the most provocative or

interesting questions. Drag these into a narrative. You may wish to search in the Google feed for the article itself and drag it into the top of the narrative.

Ask students to pair or group up to identify a central question from the Storify list, one that will become the focus of research. They should also identify the core issue and the values that surround the issue.

For example, for "California Chef feeds Children for Free," the central question might be "Why are so many children going hungry?" or "Whose job is it to feed children, families: charities or government?"

The core issue might be "poverty" or "the economy," and values might be "responsibility," "irresponsibility," "generosity," "hard work" and "laziness."

Discuss the students' ideas as a whole class and come to an agreement on the central question, core issue and main values. Write these on the board so everyone remembers for the duration of the lesson.

6. Next students should identify what it is they don't know. Using Twitter and the same hashtag, have students attempt to answer the central question. These will be guesses but will lead to a discussion of gaps in understanding and should lead to a series of other questions. Tweet this answer/question process.

7. The next step is for students to use Google to research additional news articles that help to put the issue into a bigger context. These might not answer the central question directly, but they provide additional, related information that students can connect, or they could answer the earlier questions. Remind students about the difference between searching on the Google website and the Google News aggregator, which offers the most recent news articles. Also teach them the difference between blogs or opinion pieces and objective news stories. The seven-minute Newseum video "Bias" explores the difference between hard news versus opinion.

Each student or student pair should come up with a relevant article and they should tweet the article link and a summary of the article with the same hashtag. They should shorten their links on websites such as bitly.com or tinyurl.com since tweets can be only 140 characters, including spaces.

8. Next students will go online to look up the linked articles and read them. This might be done at home or in class. Have the class vote on the top four articles that were most helpful in understanding the issue. You could do this informally through a show of hands, or have them vote online using a simple Google survey. You might offer extra credit for students whose articles are chosen.

9. These articles become the basis for a document-based question analytical essay. Teacher prints them out for class.

10. **In-class Writing Assignment:** Students answer the central question that they developed earlier, using the four documents as evidence to show their thinking.

> **Students should write arguments focused on discipline-specific content:**
>
> a) Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
>
> b) Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
>
> c) Use words, phrases and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
>
> d) Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
>
> e) Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.

11. Students should then tweet the main argument or thesis of their essay using the same hashtag. Only one tweet allowed per student. This will require them to really focus their central argument.

12. The next step is for students to research organizations that work to address the core issue of the article. In the case of child hunger, this might be a variety of local charities or national organizations. They should tweet the links to these websites on Twitter, using the same hashtag. And they should also find the Twitter usernames for the organizations and tweet support or questions using the @ symbol to be sure they are received.

    An example of this would be to tweet @ConAgraFoods, which runs the "Child Hunger Ends Here" campaign. (Sample questions: What would it take for your organization to double its effectiveness? What is the biggest cause of this issue? How can students help locally?) Students should monitor their Twitter feeds to see if they get a response and should retweet the response with the class hashtag.

13. Finally, use Storify again to add to the original list of questions, curating all the tweets from entire project into a final cumulative Storify article. You might wish to

embed the Storify article onto a class website or have students tweet the link out. Save this article to show next year's class as a model, or even to use in a lesson about the topic with other classes.

**Optional extension:**

Students can create one-to-two-minute videos, Pinterest collages, 8tracks.com playlists or other projects that will inspire others to get involved and learn more about this issue. YouTube videos and SoundCloud audio projects can be added to the Storify narrative at the end.

# On the Web:

- "Social Media in the Classroom" Instructor Dave Copeland uses Storify to share his experience with social media use in his Introduction to Journalism students
- "5 Unique Uses of Twitter in the Classroom," U.S. News & World Report
- "6 Ways Social Media is Changing Education," KQED News
- "Twitter Goes to College," U.S. News & World Report
- "Tweeting for Teachers: How can Social Media Support Teacher Professional development?" Pearson Centre for Policy and Learning
- Newseum Digital Classroom offers a variety of short videos on media issues
- "The Twitter Experiment: Twitter in the Classroom," video about University of Texas professor Dr. Monica Rankin.
- "How to Create a Free Online Survey Using Google Docs" (video)
- "How to Create a Twitter Account"
- "Filtering the Social Web to Present News Items," New York Times

# National Standards:

American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards for the 21st Century Learner:
- **Inquire, think critically and gain knowledge, 1.1.3:** Develop and refine a range of questions to frame the search for new understanding.
- **Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge, 2.1.5:** Collaborate with others to exchange ideas, develop new understandings, make decisions and solve problems.
- **Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society, 3.3.6:** Use information and knowledge in the service of democratic values.
- **Pursue personal and aesthetic growth, 4.1.7:** Use social networks and information tools to gather and share information.

# 10 Quick Ways to Use
# Social Media in Class

Creative, simple ideas you can add to existing lessons

1.  Assign the class to watch a political debate or presidential speech on TV at home and have the students post their comments real-time on Twitter. Have the students use a hashtag. (A hashtag example for Our Town High School seventh period history could be #OTHS7hist or any variation, just so they all use the same one.) You and the students can follow the Tweets from home as they appear online by using [TweetDeck](#) or another Twitter application. The next day, project the Tweets to the class and discuss reactions, questions.

2.  For a history simulation in class (e.g., have groups of students assume the role of various nations in World War I alliances) assign some students to use their smart phones to capture the simulation activities for their group through photos, quotes and questions -- even brief 15-second video clips -- and post them from the classroom to a Facebook group page for the class to view later. This can be done by using [a Facebook app on the phone](#). Require students to reflect on the activity by writing comments on the page that evening at home.

3.  After students watch a particularly powerful video clip, such as one about the Holocaust or slavery, have them reflect in writing for 10 to 15 minutes. Then have them select their best or most powerful sentence and tweet it using a common hashtag. The teacher can project the Tweets as they appear online, streaming them with [TweetDeck](#) or another Twitter application. [Storify](#) can be used to organize the lines and create a living "found" poem.

4.  As an extension for a literature circles activity, tell students they will write book reviews of the books they have read and discussed. Ask them to go onto Amazon.com and find the book. [Review the top-rated reviews for the book](#), both negative and positive. Ask them to analyze what elements make up a useful reader review. Have them write their own review and post online to add to the commentary.

5.  After reading a class novel, or as an extension for literature circles, have students create "book trailers" on video, similar to the ones that [publishers have started to create for young adult fiction.](#) Post these videos to YouTube, Vimeo, TeacherTube or

any other video sharing site and have students present them to the class. Have the class, or other classes, watch and make comments.

6.  When reading a novel or play that is particularly difficult or dense for students, start a book club on Facebook or Google+. Add your students and assign student leaders to answer class questions, post discussion topics and best quotes, and offer insights as the class works through the book. Teachers can monitor from afar or join right in. Students can be assigned a certain number of required posts or you might offer extra credit for participation

7.  In math, ask students to come up with a one- to two-minute video that teaches a particular concept. Create a YouTube or Vimeo channel to host the course videos and build a library of tutorials that students can turn to in future years when they need review. Organize your channels by math concept so they are easy to search. See www.kahnacademy.org for high-quality, professional examples.

8.  Assign students to use Google Maps to create a map that reflects the intersection of history and human rights issues. For example, when studying the Civil Rights Movement, students could track the route of the Freedom Riders on a map of the United States. They should add at least 10 place markers that contain original text and a link to other online media, YouTube clips or websites. The map should tell a story that readers access by clicking on the placeholders.

9.  For a foreign language class, ask students to create and add to a class wiki about the language, using the language they are studying. One way to organize the wiki is by having students explain the language's grammatical rules (negation, conjugation) in English and provide examples in the foreign language. They could create a vocabulary list and add synonyms or antonyms. Students can link to websites from other parts of the world that show examples of the language in action.

10. As a creative extension activity to review for history at the end of the year, make a list of the most significant people studied and have students work in small groups to create a "Most Famous Tweet" for each figure. For example, if Thomas Jefferson had Twitter, what would be his most famous, most remembered tweet? His last tweet? What might King Louis XVI have tweeted about Marie Antoinette just before their capture? Have students tweet their lists with a common hashtag and present them to the class. Give awards for the best Tweet by each historical figure. Students could also create a quiz of famous Tweets and have other students guess who said them.

# Knight Foundation Study on Students, Social Media and the First Amendment

While social media have been blamed for teen ills from narcissism to cyberbullying, a new study offers an inspiring perspective: as social media use has grown in the United States, so has students' appreciation for the First Amendment.

The national study was released Sept. 15, 2011 to coincide with the celebration of Constitution Day. It was funded by John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

"This is the first generation in history that can text, tweet and blog to the whole world – it's great news that their support is growing for the freedoms that let them do it," said Eric Newton, senior adviser to the president of Knight Foundation. "But the bad news is that teachers aren't nearly as excited as students about social media or student freedom."

The Future of the First Amendment study found:

- **Both social media use and First Amendment appreciation are growing among high school students**. More than three-quarters of students use social media several times a week to get news and information. Meanwhile, the percentage of students who believe "the First Amendment goes too far" in protecting the rights of citizens dropped to a quarter (24 percent) in 2011 from nearly half (45 percent) in 2006.

- **There is a clear, positive relationship between social media use and appreciation of the First Amendment.** Fully 91 percent of students who use social networking daily to get news and information agree that "people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions." But only 77 percent of those who never use social networks to get news agree that unpopular opinions should be allowed.

- **Still, many teachers believe social media harm education. Most teachers also do not support free expression for students.** Only 35 percent, for example, agree that "high school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities." In addition, teachers are more inclined to think that the emergence of the newest forms of digital media have harmed (49 percent) rather than helped (39 percent) student learning.

"For many, the First Amendment is an abstract concept, but this new study tells us that social media bring the importance of free speech home to young Americans," said Ken Paulson, president of the First Amendment Center. "The vibrancy of worldwide

communications today, fueled by social media and engaged users, is in effect exporting First Amendment values to a new and global generation."

The study, conducted through interviews with 12,090 students and 900 teachers nationwide, was written by Dr. Kenneth Dautrich, a senior researcher at The Pert Group. It is the fourth Future of the First Amendment study done by Dr. Dautrich for Knight Foundation since 2004.

Madison Davis, a senior at Branham High School in San Jose, Calif. who took the survey, said she thinks using Facebook several times a day has given her a greater appreciation for the First Amendment and freedom of expression.

"It has taught us early on that we have a right to say whatever we want without worrying," Davis said. "Because we have an easier outlet to express our views, we're more likely to. All it takes is going online and typing in a post and we've already expressed ourselves to 400-plus people."

Alexander Richter, a senior at Branham Senior High School, said expressing himself on social media makes him more likely to do the same in person.

"If you can go on Facebook and easily post your opinion, you appreciate your rights to do it in a protest or outside of the Internet more," Richter said. He recently found himself arguing online over national economic recovery plans, and felt more confident to make his case the next day in school.

"I knew what I wanted to say, I was prepared to say it, and I was already attached to the issue because of Facebook," he said.

As a response to the survey findings, Knight Foundation and the First Amendment Center released this classroom guide to social media and the First Amendment as a way to foster discussion and appreciation for both. The guide was unveiled at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. on Dec 15, 2011 in celebration of the Bill of Rights' 220th birthday.

For more information about activities celebrating the First Amendment, follow the First Amendment Center's 1 for All campaign on Twitter @1forAllus.

For more on the Future of the First Amendment Survey, visit http://www.knightfoundation.org/press-room/press-release/twitter-facebook-and-co-good-teens-and-first-amend/


**About John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation believes that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged. For more information, visit KnightFoundation.org.