

3. Distinguishing arguments and counterarguments: *Are social networking sites good for our society?*

Match arguments and counter-arguments:

1. Read the arguments related to the value of social networking in Column A. Match each argument in Column A with its counterargument(s) in Column B.
2. Write the best response(s) from Column B in the appropriate space. You may find several counterarguments for one argument. You may find that one counterargument matches several arguments.
3. Compare, discuss and justify your responses with classmates.

Ans	Arguments	Counterarguments
	<p>1. Students who are heavy social media users tend to have lower grades. Students who use social media had an average GPA of 3.06 while non-users had an average GPA of 3.82 and students who used social networking sites while studying scored 20% lower on tests. College students' grades dropped 0.12 points for every 93 minutes above the average 106 minutes spent on Facebook per day. Two-thirds of teachers believe that social media does more to distract students than to help academically.</p>	<p>A. Criminals use social media to commit and promote crimes. Gangs use the sites to recruit younger members, coordinate violent crimes, and threaten other gangs. Offline crime, like home robberies, may result from posting personal information such as vacation plans or stalkers gaining information about a victim's whereabouts from posts, photos, or location tagging services.</p>
	<p>2. Social networking sites facilitate cyberbullying. 49.5% of students reported being the victims of bullying online and 33.7% reported committing bullying behavior online. 800,000 minors were harassed or cyberbullied on Facebook according to a June 2012 Consumer Reports survey. Middle school children who were victims of cyberbullying were almost twice as likely to attempt suicide. Adults can also be victims of cyberbullying, from social, familial, or workplace aggression being displayed on social media sites.</p>	<p>B. Being a part of a social networking site can increase a person's quality of life and reduce the risk of health problems. Social media can help improve life satisfaction, stroke recovery, memory retention, and overall well-being by providing users with a large social group. Additionally, friends on social media can have a "contagion" effect, promoting and helping with exercise, dieting, and smoking cessation goals.</p>
	<p>3. Social networking sites can lead to stress and offline relationship problems. A University of Edinburgh Business School study found the more Facebook friends a person has, the more stressful the person finds Facebook to use. According to a Feb. 9, 2012 Pew Internet report, 15% of adult social network users had an experience on a social networking site that caused a friendship to end, 12% of adult users had an experience online that resulted in a face-to-face argument, and 3% of adults reported a physical confrontation as the result of an experience on a social networking site.</p>	<p>C. Social networking sites allow people to improve their relationships and make new friends. 70% of adult social networking users visit the sites to connect with friends and family, and increased online communication strengthens relationships. 52% of teens using social media report that using the sites has helped their relationships with friends, 88% report that social media helps them stay in touch with friends they cannot see regularly, 69% report getting to know students at their school better, and 57% make new friends.</p>

<p>4. Social networking sites encourage amateur advice and self-diagnosis for health problems which can lead to harmful or life-threatening results. One in five Americans uses social media for health care information. An American Journal of Public Health study revealed that, "Social media may also pose a hazard to vulnerable people through the formation and influence of 'extreme communities'—online groups that promote and provide support for beliefs and behaviors normally unacceptable by the social mainstream such as anorexia, suicide, and deliberate amputation." A North Carolina blogger was criminally charged with "practicing dietetics or nutrition without a license" for offering potentially dangerous nutritional advice about the Paleo diet while posing as an expert. Jeffrey Benabio, MD, searched for "eczema" on Twitter and found, in the first 100 results, 84 were spam and several others gave harmful and sometimes bizarre advice like using toothless fish to eat eczema affected skin.</p>	<p>D. Social media sites empower individuals to make social change and do social good on a community level. Social media shares popularized nine-year old Scottish student, Martha Payne, and her blog, "Never Seconds," which exposed the state of her school's lunch program prompting international attention that resulted in changes to her school and the formation of "Friends of Never Seconds" charity to feed children globally. Jeannette Van Houten uses social media to find owners of photographs and mementos strewn from houses by Hurricane Sandy. Hillsborough, CA freshman varsity soccer goalie Daniel Cui was blamed for and bullied about a losing season until over 100 of his teammates and classmates changed their Facebook profile photos to one of Cui making a save, silencing the bullies and building Cui's confidence.</p>
<p>5. Social networking sites increase voter participation. Facebook users reported they are more likely to vote if they see on social networking sites that their friends did. During the Nov. 2010 elections, Facebook users who visit the site more than once a day were 2.5 times more likely to attend a political rally or meeting, 57% more likely to persuade someone about a vote, and 43% more likely to say they will vote. During the 2012 presidential election, 22% of registered voters posted about how they voted on Facebook or Twitter, 30% were encouraged to vote by posts on social media, and 20% encouraged others to vote via social networking sites.</p>	<p>E. Social networking sites help people who are socially isolated or shy connect with other people. More than 25% of teens report that social networking makes them feel less shy, 28% report feeling more outgoing, and 20% report feeling more confident (53% of teens identified as somewhat shy or "a lot" shy in general). Youth who are "less socially adept" report that social networks give them a place to make friends and typically quiet students can feel more comfortable being vocal through a social media platform used in class. Shy adults also cite social media as a comfortable place to interact with others.</p>
<p>6. Law enforcement uses social networking sites to catch and prosecute criminals. 67% of federal, state, and local law enforcement professionals surveyed think "social media helps solve crimes more quickly." In 2011 the NYPD added a Twitter tracking unit and has used social networking to arrest criminals who have bragged of their crimes online. When the Vancouver Canucks lost the 2011 Stanley Cup in Vancouver, the city erupted into riots. Social media was used to catch vandals and rioters as social networking site users tagged the people they knew in over 2,000 photos posted to the sites.</p>	<p>F. Social networking sites facilitate face-to-face interaction. People use social media to network at in-person events and get to know people before personal, business, and other meetings. Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project found that messaging on social media leads to face-to-face interactions when plans are made via the sites and social media users messaged close friends an average of 39 days each year while seeing close friends in person 210 days each year.</p>

	<p>7. People who use social networking sites are prone to social isolation. Social networking can exacerbate feelings of disconnect (especially for youth with disabilities), and put children at higher risk for depression, low self-esteem, and eating disorders. The "passive consumption" of social media (scanning posts without commenting) is related to loneliness.</p>	<p>G. Social networking sites help students do better at school. 59% of students with access to the Internet report that they use social networking sites to discuss educational topics and 50% use the sites to talk about school assignments. After George Middle School in Portland, OR introduced a social media program to engage students grades went up by 50%, chronic absenteeism went down by 33%, and 20% of students school-wide voluntarily completed extra-credit assignments.</p>
	<p>8. Social media facilitates political change. Social networking sites give social movements a quick, no-cost method to organize, disseminate information, and mobilize people. The 2011 Egyptian uprising (part of the Arab Spring), organized largely via social media, motivated tens of thousands of protestors for eighteen days of demonstrations and, ultimately led to the resignation of Egyptian President Mubarak on Feb. 11, 2011. A July 4, 2011 tweet from @Adbusters with the hashtag #occupywallstreet started the American Occupy movement, which gained traction in Sep. 2011 when protestors gathered at New York City's Zuccotti Park and remained there until Nov. 15, 2011.</p>	<p>H. Social media aids the spread of hate groups. A Summer 2012 Baylor University study examined Facebook hate groups focused on President Barack Obama and found a resurgence of racial slurs and stereotypes not seen in mainstream media in decades like blackface images and comparisons of President Obama to apes. Social networking sites allow hate groups to recruit youth and to redistribute their propaganda. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center the Christian Identity religion, a splinter faction of the white supremacist group Aryan Nations, uses social media to recruit members.</p>

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