



FEBRUARY - MAY 2017

SMARTPHONE EDUCATION

A Pedagogical Model for a conscious use of the Smartphone

EDUCATIONAL GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP 1 – DIGITAL IDENTITY

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EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP 1 – DIGITAL IDENTITY

Methodological path

Introduction

Adolescence represents a critical moment during the growth process of an individual, during which identity aspects are consolidated and we prepare to become adults. For “digital natives”, also called the “screen generation” by Rivoltella (in 2006), the smartphone and other technological tools are an integral part of their life and represent a “social machine” that works as a mediator in the relationship with the world and with others.

For the younger generation internet and social media are an extension of real relationships and offer an opportunity to confront and compare with others. However, they also entail important risks, such as false identities that can be found on the web or that you may be tempted to assume, contributing to fragment an “I” which is not strong enough; the dependence on the judgment of others, which can be very hard and create existential crisis among adolescents; the excessive attention to appearance, which can turn into narcissism.

If we imagine to look inside the smartphone of a teenager, we will surely find important clues about his / her identity. Through materials stored, APP used, groups and chat we could get an idea of who he / she is, but also of how he / she wants to look like. All these elements have to be added to the actual experiences of real life.

It is important to help the younger generation to become aware of their digital “I” in order to accompany them to a harmonious development of their personality.

Objectives

- To understand positive and negative implications of online identity
- To improve the capacity to understand others’ self-representation
- To improve the capacity to manage and control our own self-representation

Path sheet

DESCRIPTION	Game about the use of the smartphone and viewing of a provocative video which will be the basis for a reflection on our self-representation. Investigation by participants of the contents of their smartphones to verify which image they give of themselves.
KEY WORDS	identity, online identity, selfie, image of themselves and of others, self-representation
TARGET	12-17-years-olds
LENGTH	1 hour
MODALITY	brainstorm, cooperative learning, photography, questionnaires
TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT	Smartphone (at least 1 per group), PC and projector, internet connection, posters or blackboard, cardboard circles

Purpose

This workshop aims to make young people aware of the choices they make about the contents of photos and texts they post and which contribute to create their own self-representation and therefore their digital identity, which can also be not coherent with the real one or with the one they would like to have.

READER Activity: “Open your smartphone”

The teacher / educator starts the workshop proposing a game to understand how much young people are aware of the use of the smartphone they make.

If possible, participants should sit in circle.

Through a fast brainstorm, the teacher / educator asks them to make a list of activities they usually make with the smartphone (for example: to watch a video, to listen to music, to take photos, to chat, to share, etc.). Any activity mentioned by participants has to be written on a poster or on the blackboard.

At this point, the teacher / educator gives to each participant a cardboard circle and ask to divide the circle into segments representing the time dedicated to each activity. This action should last maximum 2-3 minutes.

As long as participants have finished, they compare different answers in an animated and fast way, for example asking participants to move within the room.

The teacher / educator then calls the different activities: all those having the largest slice devoted to listening to the music, have to go to the right of the room; then those having the largest slice devoted to chatting, have to go to the left of the room; and so on with all identified activities.

If you prefer (e.g., if the room is too small), you can ask participants to stand up.

After this game, the teacher / educator asks participants to verify if their perception reflect the reality and, to do that, the teacher / educator invites them to look directly into the smartphone. In particular, they have to look for the consumption levels for the different applications installed: they have to click on “General Settings” and then on “Battery”. Here they can find consumptions divided per APPs and referred to the last week or month.

Is there any correspondence between what they have thought (and written on the cardboard) and what actually results from the smartphone statistics?

USER Activity: “Who are you online?”

To introduce the subject of online identity, the teacher / educator proposes to watch the initial part of the movie “Zoolander 2”, in which the actor and singer Justin Bieber takes a selfie while he is dying (the video lasts about 2 minutes), and invites participants to comment on answering the question: what is the intention of the director in this scene?

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQLNgEgPK0A>

The teacher / educator then asks participants to take some selfies to show and share with others. They have to think also what people they would like to share these photos with, if different targets implicate different kinds of image, on which social media they would like to post them and on what occasion they would like to share them. The activity can be done individually or in groups.

CRITIC Activity “Selfie control”

The activity is the natural critical conclusion of the previous ones. After participants have shown and shared their selfies, the teacher / educator stimulates them to a reflection starting from the specific case and which is therefore based on the following questions:

- Why did you choose that type of representation of yourself in the picture?
- What is the message did you want to communicate?
- Do you normally judge the photos you see on other people's profiles?
- What elements do you base your judgments on?

From here, the reflection continues with a brainstorm, widening the scope of the discussion to more general topics such as:

- What is a selfie?
- What is the difference between a selfie and other types of photos?
- What are the characteristics of a good selfie?

- From what elements do others know you?
- In what way are you presenting yourself through selfies and images posted online?

EVALUATOR Activity "My digital identity"

The final activity aims to make young people more conscious of the self image they give online and if it is different from the identity they have in real life. The activity consists in a verification test that the teacher / educator submits to the class / group and that each participant has to fill out individually.

The questions are contained in the **"My digital identity: verification test"** sheet.

Sheet

"My digital identity: verification test"

What does it mean the word "identity" in your opinion?

From what elements can people identify your identity in the real life?

From what elements can people identify your identity in the digital life?

What kind of images are on your online profile?

What information can be derived from the images you post online?

If someone would open your smartphone, what could he / she understand about you?

Who are you in the digital world?

In collaboration with

