

A Creator's Responsibilities

Essential Question

What responsibilities do you have to respect others' creative work?

Lesson Overview

Students reflect on their responsibilities as creators and users of creative work.


Students view and discuss the video vignette, a documentary-style story of a young creator who uses video and music clips to make his own creations. Students then read case studies and discuss the particular ethical challenges that a “cut and paste” digital culture poses with respect to creative work.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- consider ethical questions about real-life decisions young creators make in exercising their creative rights and responsibilities.
- understand that piracy and plagiarism are irresponsible and disrespectful behaviors that have ethical and legal implications.
- brainstorm solutions to dilemmas creators might encounter.

Materials and Preparation

-  Preview the video, “**Henry’s Story – Making Mashups,**” and be prepared to play the video for the class.
- Copy the **A Creator’s Responsibilities Discussion Guide**, one for each student.
- Review the **A Creator’s Responsibilities Discussion Guide Discussion Guide – Teacher Version**.

Family Resources

- Send home the **Respecting Creative Work Family Tip Sheet (Middle & High School)**.

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Standards Alignment –

Common Core:

grade 6: RI.2, RI.3, RI.7, RI.8, RI.10, W.4, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.2, SL.6, L.6

grade 7: RI.2, RI.3, RI.8, RI.10, W.4, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.2, SL.6, L.6

grade 8: RI.2, RI.3, RI.8, RI.10, W.4, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.2, SL.6, L.6

NETS•S: 1a-c, 2a, 2d, 5a-c

Key Vocabulary –

piracy: the stealing copyrighted work by downloading or copying it in order to keep, sell, or give it away without permission and without paying

plagiarism: the copying, “lifting,” or making slight changes to some or all of someone else’s work and saying you wrote it

acknowledge: giving credit to someone’s work you use by clearly stating their name, title of the work, year it was made, and a hyperlink

introduction

Warm-up (10 minutes)

ASK:

Can you remember when you last copied, downloaded, or shared some type of creative work?

Guide students to think about their everyday sharing of copyrighted work. They might not even be aware that they are using copyrighted work every day.

Sample responses:

- Downloaded a video from YouTube
- Bought a song on iTunes
- Cut out a magazine photo and put it in my locker

Can you think of a time when you used someone else's work in something you made?

Guide students to be specific about what work they used, and how they used it. You may also want to ask about whether they acknowledged the sources they used by citing them.

Sample responses:

- Used information from a website in a school report
- Used photos I found in Google Image Search for PowerPoint slides
- Used video clips I downloaded from YouTube in a remix video I made

EMPHASIZE to students that they often use copyrighted work in their everyday lives: (1) they use and enjoy media as consumers, and (2) they incorporate media into their own creations (blogs, mash-ups, etc.). Whether they are just using material for enjoyment or using it to create a new work, highlight to students that they should be responsible and respectful of other people's creative work by providing proper credit.

teach 1

Henry's Story (10 minutes)

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary terms **piracy**, **plagiarism**, and **acknowledge** with students. Ask students to listen for these words in the video they are about to watch.

DISTRIBUTE the **A Creator's Responsibilities Discussion Guide**.

EXPLAIN to students that are going to watch a video about a teen boy who likes to take clips of music and movies and make them into his own creations.

▶ SHOW students the "**Henry's Story – Making Mashups**" video.

DISCUSS the video with the whole group. Use the **A Creator's Responsibilities Discussion Guide – Teacher Version** for guidance about leading the discussion.

EMPHASIZE to students that there are right and wrong ways to use copyrighted work. People who pirate or plagiarize not only risk getting in trouble at school or with the law, but their behavior is also unethical and disrespectful to creators. Students should always show respect for the creative work they use by acknowledging — or giving credit to — the work they use. Provide an example of a citation (e.g., bibliography of a book).

teach 2

Reflection and Discussion of Case Studies (20 minutes)

DIVIDE students into groups of four or five.

HAVE groups choose one or two of the case studies listed in the **A Creator's Responsibilities Discussion Guide**. They should read each case study and answer the discussion questions that follow.

ENCOURAGE students to use the *Ask, Acknowledge, Add Value* steps on the first page of the guide to craft advice specifically for their case studies' characters.

INVITE students to choose a representative from their respective groups to summarize their case studies for the whole class. Then ask the representatives to share their group's advice for the characters in the case studies.

closing

Wrap-up (5 minutes)

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives. You may want to ask students to reflect in writing on one of the questions, using a journal or an online blog/wiki.

ASK:

Why do you think it's illegal for people to pirate or plagiarize other people's work?

It hurts the original creator's ability to receive credit, get paid, and get respect for his or her work.

What are some ways to use and rework copyrighted materials ethically and legally?

Encourage students to recall the *Ask, Acknowledge, Add Value* steps. These questions will help students reflect on the type of copyright they are dealing with, how they might ask the creator for permission to use the original material, how to give the creator credit, and the extent to which they have reworked the material to make new meaning and add something original.

What is something new you learned that helps you be responsible and respectful toward other people's creative work?

Students' answers will vary.

Extension Activity

Have students break into small groups to develop their own real-life stories of ethical dilemmas about respecting creative work, which should be similar in format to the case studies they read. Students might address dilemmas regarding piracy, plagiarism, file sharing, remixing and mashing, or how to comment constructively on other people's work. Students then perform their stories of ethical dilemmas in front of the class. The class then discusses solutions to the dilemma portrayed, emphasizing how to be responsible with others' creative work.

At-Home Activity

Students use the case studies from the **A Creator's Responsibilities Discussion Guide** to interview family members. Students read the scenarios aloud and ask the questions to their family. Students then explain the responsibilities creators have to respect other people's work.

A Creator's Responsibilities

Video Discussion Questions

The following questions correspond with the video, “**Henry’s Story – Making Mashups**,” which is about a boy who creates mash-ups (mixing bits and pieces of songs into a new song) and remixes (mixing video clips together). These questions can be discussed in small groups or as a whole class. The goals of these questions are for students to: (1) reflect on their responsibilities in downloading and using content, (2) understand why pirating material is illegal and how it affects creators, and (3) clarify their rights to fair use.

1. *What are Henry’s rights as a creator?* (Guide students to think about their right to: [1] copyright their own work, [2] use copyrighted material with permission, and [3] apply fair use. Emphasize the importance of always acknowledging the work they use by citing it.)
2. *What are Henry’s responsibilities in using other people’s creative work?* (Guide students to consider how pirating, plagiarism, and illegal sharing on peer-to-peer sharing networks is disrespectful behavior that can have ethical and legal implications. Point out the Ask, Acknowledge, Add Value process at the end of the handout.)
3. *Henry says that pirating material is stealing, no matter how it’s done. What are examples of pirating? Why should you avoid it?* (Emphasize that it doesn’t matter whether the work pirated is in hard copy or digital form, whether it’s for personal use, shared with others, given to friends, or sold for a profit, it’s all piracy.)

Sample responses:

Examples of pirating:

- Illegally downloading copyrighted material like music, movie images, or software
- Downloading and sharing stuff on peer-to-peer sharing sites like BitTorrent or LimeWire
- Going out of your way to get things for free online illegally
- Taking something someone gave you that they downloaded illegally

Why you should avoid it:

- It’s disrespectful to the creator and hurts the creator’s ability to get credit, get paid, and get respect for the work.
- It’s illegal. You can get caught and have to pay fines.

4. *Henry likes to make mash-ups and remixes and put them online. What does he need to do to make this “fair use”?* (Guide students to think about the requirements for fair use.)

Sample responses:

- He should use just a small amount, not the whole work.
- He needs to change it by using it a different way.
- He has to add new meaning and make it original, put it in his own voice.
- He has to use it in a certain situation, like for school, a news report, comedy, or to criticize or comment on something.

Case Studies

Each case study presents a story about making, using, or sharing creative work. In small groups, have students read each case study and discuss the questions. (Note that the actual case studies are listed in the student handout. Below are the questions that accompany each case study.)

Review the Ask, Acknowledge, Add Value process listed below. Ask students to consider how the case study might be different if this process were used. The goal of the case studies is for students to reflect on ways they can use other people's creative work legally, responsibly, and respectfully.

Ask, Acknowledge, Add Value

1. **ASK.** *How does the author say I can use the work? Do I have to get the creator's permission first?*

Guide students to come up with real ways they could perform this step. How would they do it?

2. **ACKNOWLEDGE.** *Did I give credit to the work I used?*

Guide students to come up with real ways they could acknowledge and give credit for work used. What would it look like? How do they do it? Show examples of citations from books, slideshows, or videos. Check out technology and education expert David Warlick's Citation Machine (www.citationmachine.net), a tool to help students learn how to properly cite.

3. **ADD VALUE.** *Did I rework the material to make new meaning and add something original?*

Guide students to consider two main things: (1) the ethics of using someone else's work as a way to help them say something in their own words, and (2) their right to fair use by using and reworking copyrighted material without permission to make something new and original.

case study 1

Emilio's Amazing Squirrel Photo

1. *If you were Emilio, how would you feel?*

Guide students to put themselves in Emilio's shoes and reflect on why some people might be more strict about their copyrighted work than others.

2. Do people using Emilio's photo have a responsibility to ask permission before they use his work? Should they give him credit for his work?

Guide students to reflect on their responsibilities when they download, cut and paste, share, or use other people's work. The main thing they should do in all cases is look to see how the creator indicates he or she wants to share the work. If nothing is indicated, they must ask the creator for permission to use it, and then acknowledge the creator by giving credit. This not only obeys copyright law, but it also is a sign of responsibility and respect.

3. Is there a difference between a person selling Emilio's photo, and a person using the photo just because he or she likes it? Is it different when the people using the photo are Emilio's friends?

Guide students to consider the intent of the user. Are they out to make money? Are they showing their appreciation for the work? Emphasize that in all cases they should ask permission to use the work, even if they are friends of the creator.

4. If Emilio was concerned about the copyright of his photo, what could he do?

Guide students to consider what they could do to protect their work. Show examples of Creative Commons licenses on Flickr (www.flickr.com/creativecommons) to illustrate different types of photo licenses.

case study 2

Paul the Pirate

1. Why should Paul care about his behavior?

Guide students to consider the following implications of pirating: legal risks, disrespect to the creator, it's just like stealing from a store, etc.

2. How does pirating affect creators?

Guide students to consider the many ways that creators can be either rigid or flexible about sharing their work. Some artists release their work for free, while others hold tight to their copyright protection. Emphasize to students that it's their obligation to respect the creator's copyright license and to follow exactly how the creator indicates the work can be used.

Sample responses:

- It's disrespectful to the creator, and it doesn't matter who they are, or how much money they make.
- It hurts new artists trying to get their work out.
- It's like saying you don't care enough about their work to pay them, or give them credit for it.

3. *What are honest ways Paul could obtain music and movies he wants?*

Guide students to discuss how they can legally purchase works or download them legally for free.

Sample responses:

- Go to a trusted online store like iTunes.
- Listen or watch online on streaming sites, like Pandora or Hulu.
- Take advantage of free (legal) downloads on sites like mp3.com, LastFM, or special freebies on artists' websites.

case study 3

Marissa's Music Video

1. *If you were Marissa, how would you feel?*

Guide students to think about how Marissa might feel embarrassed or even angry that the audio she used in her video was blocked on YouTube. She might feel confused about what to do. In this case, because Marissa used an entire copyrighted song without permission, unless she alters her video so that it's fair use, she cannot really do anything until she gets copyright permission. It does not matter if she cites the work, because she still does not have copyright permission. She might want to read YouTube's copyright policy and contact someone there who could advise her about what she could do.

2. *Why do you think YouTube muted the audio but didn't block the video?*

Guide students to consider the copyrighted parts of this video: the copyrighted song, and Marissa's video footage. Marissa holds the copyright to her video footage but not to the song.

3. *If you received mean comments about something you uploaded online as Marissa did, how would you feel?*

Guide students to reflect on how they feel when they get negative or mean comments about their work. How should they respond? How can they practice commenting constructively and respectfully on other people's work? Explain how commenting constructively is actually more valuable for everyone involved because it helps users celebrate good work and also helps creators improve their work.

1. *How could Marissa rework her video to claim fair use?*

Guide students to reflect on fair use, and how they can add value by reworking the original work into something new. For more on fair use, see the 411 for Creators Student Handout from the lesson “A Creator’s Rights” (Unit 1).

Sample responses:

- She could have used a little bit of the song, not the whole thing.
- She could have had her friends sing the song aloud, not lip-synch. That would make it more original.
- She could remix it into something else, making it more of an original creation.

case study 4

Copy and Paste Cici

1. *Is Cici’s behavior plagiarism? Why or why not?*

Guide students to reflect on why Cici’s behavior is an example of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes direct copying and pasting without direct quotes or without citing the author. But also emphasize that just changing some words of text you copy and paste is also plagiarism, even if you give the author credit. Explain ways to avoid plagiarism, such as paraphrasing and using quotation marks to indicate direct quotes. Compare this situation to students copying a photo and saying they photographed it, or copying a song and saying they wrote it.

2. *Why might Cici’s teachers care about what she did?*

Guide students to take a teacher’s perspective on plagiarism. Explain why it is important for students to cite the work they use, and express their ideas in their own words.

3. *Would it make any difference if Cici copied and pasted things from the Internet, or if she lifted it from a book?*

Stress to students that it does not matter whether they copy and paste digital content from the Internet, or whether they lift text from books and magazines, it all counts as plagiarism.

A Creator's Responsibilities

Henry's Story Discussion Questions

1. *What are Henry's rights as a creator?*
2. *What are Henry's responsibilities in using other people's creative work?*
3. *Henry says that pirating material is stealing, no matter how it's done. What are examples of pirating? Why should you avoid it?*
4. *Henry likes to make mash-ups and remixes and put them online. What does he need to do to make this "fair use"?*

Use Common Sense! To be a responsible creator, follow these steps:

1. ASK

How does the author or artist say I can use the work?
Do I have to get the creator's permission first?

2. ACKNOWLEDGE

Did I give credit to the work I used?

3. ADD VALUE

Did I rework the material to make and add something original?

Case Studies

case study 1

Emilio's Amazing Squirrel Photo

When he was at the park, Emilio took an amazing photo of a squirrel hanging with one paw from a tree branch. He uploaded this photo to his Flickr photo-sharing website. He also entered it in the school's photography contest, and it won first prize! Soon people at school visited his Flickr site to download his funny photo. His friends posted the photo on their profiles, blogs, and webpages. Some people at school printed out the photo and posted it in their lockers. Someone in art class used the photo in a collage. Someone else from another school made T-shirts with the photo and sold them.

1. *If you were Emilio, how would you feel?*
2. *Do people using Emilio's photo have a responsibility to ask permission before they use his work? Should they give him credit for his work?*
3. *Is there a difference between a person selling Emilio's photo, and a person using the photo just because he or she likes it? Is it different when the people using the photo are Emilio's friends?*
4. *If Emilio was concerned about the copyright of his photo, what could he do?*

case study 2

Paul the Pirate

Paul spends a lot of time online illegally downloading (pirating) music, movies, and games. He then uploads the files and shares them with friends and even on peer-to-peer sharing websites. “I’m spreading the wealth,” he says. One day his older sister finds out what he is doing and tells him, “It’s illegal, it’s stealing!” Paul says, “I don’t care. Why should I have to pay for something when I can get it for free? Besides, these artists and the record companies make tons of money.” His sister then asks, “If you made a song or a movie, would you want people to just get it for free, and without giving you credit?”

1. *Why should Paul care about his behavior?*
2. *How does pirating affect creators?*
3. *What are honest ways Paul could obtain music and movies he wants?*

case study 3

Marissa’s Music Video

Marissa loves to make videos with her friends and upload them to YouTube. She made a video in which she and her friends dressed up and lip-synched to the latest hit song. In the video, they sang the whole song. A few days later, Marissa saw that the music on the YouTube video had been muted. There was a message saying, “This video contains content from Sony Music Entertainment, who has blocked it in your country on copyright grounds.” People could still see the video image but not hear sound. Marissa also saw that some mean comments about her video had been posted, such as “Where is the song? Stupid!!!” and “Smart move.”

1. *If you were Marissa, how would you feel?*
2. *Why do you think YouTube muted the audio but didn’t block the video?*
3. *If you received mean comments about something you uploaded online as Marissa did, how would you feel?*
4. *How could Marissa rework her video to claim fair use?*

case study 4

Copy and Paste Cici

Cici has a big report due for social studies class about the history of the Olympics. But she put it off until the last minute. So she goes online and researches the topic. She copies and pastes information from several different websites into her paper. She then changes a few of the words to make it seem like she wrote it. She doesn’t give credit to the websites she used.

1. *Is Cici’s behavior plagiarism? Why or why not?*
2. *Why might Cici’s teachers care about what she did?*
3. *Would it make any difference if Cici copied and pasted things from the Internet, or if she lifted it from a book?*

A Creator's Responsibilities

1. Ben downloads songs from a website that doesn't make you pay for songs that normally cost money to download. What Ben is doing is called:

- a) Plunking
- b) Plagiarism
- c) Piracy

2. Which of the following is an example of plagiarism?

- a) Filming your friends acting out a play you wrote, and sharing the video online
- b) Writing an email
- c) Copying parts of an essay you found online into your book report for school

3. Layla designed T-shirts online for her debate team. The design used a copyrighted image. Her friends liked the T-shirt so much that Layla decided to sell it to the public online. Selling the T-shirts online was:

- a) Legal because Layla designed the T-shirt herself
- b) Illegal because Layla made a profit from someone else's copyrighted work
- c) Illegal because Layla's friends already have the T-shirts

A Creator's Responsibilities

1. Ben downloads songs from a website that doesn't make you pay for songs that normally cost money to download. What Ben is doing is called:

- a) Plunking
- b) Plagiarism
- c) Piracy**

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **c**. Piracy is stealing copyrighted work by downloading or copying it in order to keep, sell, or give it away without permission and without paying.

2. Which of the following is an example of plagiarism?

- a) Filming your friends acting out a play you wrote, and sharing the video online
- b) Writing an email
- c) Copying parts of an essay you found online into your book report for school**

Answer Feedback

The correct answer is **c**. The Internet is a great resource, but you should always give credit to other people's work if you use it.

3. Layla designed T-shirts online for her debate team. The design used a copyrighted image. Her friends liked the T-shirt so much that Layla decided to sell it to the public online. Selling the T-shirts online was:

- a) Legal because Layla designed the T-shirt herself
- b) Illegal because Layla made a profit from someone else's copyrighted work**
- c) Illegal because Layla's friends already have the T-shirts

Answer Feedback

The correct answer is **b**. It is not legal to profit from something that uses someone else's copyrighted work without permission.