How Much Is Too Much?

Overview
Students read the webcomic, “How Much Is Too Much?” Students participate in a round-robin discussion about the webcomic covering the topics of cyberbullying and giving away personal information online. Students then write dialogue for a comic panel of their choice (provided). Upon completion, students will understand how to better protect themselves against cyberbullies.

Materials / Preparation
• “How Much Is Too Much” webcomic (found at http://www.nsteeens.org/comics/ )
• Computer lab or classroom computers that students may share
• Attachment 1 - Discussion Questions
• Attachment 2 - Possible Answers
• Stopwatch or clock with second-hand
• Chart paper and markers
• Attachment 3 - Comic panels

40-45 minutes

Introduction
Have students read the webcomic, “How Much Is Too Much?” You may either print it out for each student, or print out one copy for each group so that they may refer to it when answering the round-robin discussion group questions. You may also choose to have students at individual computers, or read the comic aloud as a class.

Activity
Post each discussion question (see attachment 1) on a different piece of chart paper around the room. Assign students to groups making sure there are six groups total. Each group is assigned to a station where there is a topic, question, or issue to be addressed and chart paper and markers for writing down responses. Let students know that everyone will have the opportunity to get their ideas heard and written down. Have groups start answering their station’s question for 3-4 minutes on the chart paper using short answers. Assign someone who will not participate in the activity to be the time keeper, or keep time yourself, and signal when it is time for the groups to change stations (bell, flicker lights on and off) As time expires, move the groups clockwise (Group 1 moves to Station 2, Group 2 moves to Station 3, etc) until they have answered all of the questions.

At each station, groups will read what other groups have written and then add on to or expand on an idea. This will continue until all groups are back at their original station. After the groups are back at their original starting station, have them summarize the responses and report back to the class. During the activity, move around the room, making sure groups stay on task. Be available to answer any questions if need be.

Follow-Up
Pass out copies of the comic panels (see attachment 3). Have students pick three comic panels and write corresponding dialogue for the characters in the boxes provided. (Students can check out the bios of the NS Teens at http://www.nsteeens.org/bios to help them understand the characters’ personalities.) This is a good opportunity to discuss different writing styles. You may set guidelines on what kinds of things should be addressed in the dialogue, such as cyberbullying, Internet safety, or safer online practices.
Discussion Questions-Write one on each

1. Why was the twins’ Web page offensive to Lolo? What was Lolo afraid would happen?

2. How do you think Reese and Riley were able to get pictures of Lolo to use on their Web page? How can Lolo protect herself in the future?

3. What is cyberbullying? Have you ever been cyberbullied? Talk about your experience. How was it different or similar to Lolo’s experience?

4. Lolo had Slick to help with her problem; what are some other ways Lolo could have handled the cyberbullying had Slick not been around? What steps would you take if you were cyberbullied?

5. How did Reese’s and Riley’s Web page affect their social life? What consequences could they face in the future? Why do you think people cyberbully?

6. Discuss what kinds of personal information you should and should not share on a profile, blog, or website.
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Possible answers

1. The twins’ Web page was offensive because anyone who viewed the page would see embarrassing photos of Lolo that made fun of how she dressed. Lolo was upset because she was worried about her reputation, she didn’t want to be alienated from others at school, and she didn’t like being the focus of hurtful comments.

2. Reese and Riley could have secretly taken those pictures with their cell phone or copied those pictures off of Lolo’s profile or Webpage. In order to better protect herself, Lolo could make sure that she has no photos of herself on the Internet that she wouldn’t want others to see, and she should make sure that only her friends can view her profile by setting it to private.

3. Cyberbullying is the sending or posting of harmful or cruel texts or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices. This question should have multiple answers, but if possible, have students discuss their experiences and in an open forum.

4. When cyberbullied, it is important to ignore the messages, block the users, save the evidence, report it to a trusted adult, and in some cases the authorities. Sometimes people change their phone number, e-mail address, or profile, to evade the cyberbullies. It is very important that you do not respond to harassment or threats.

5. Reese and Riley were alienated because of what they did to Lolo. People saw what they did and reacted in Lolo’s favor because many people feared they would be the next ones to be made fun of. Reese and Riley could face consequences at school for harassing and cyberbullying another student, and could even be rejected from colleges or jobs based on their profile. Cyberbullies use the Internet to say and do terrible things because there is no face-to-face contact, and they don’t see the immediate consequences to their cruel actions.

6. For this question, you should mention the specific personal information that should NOT be shared online, such as location, birthdate, name, family and friends’ names, name of school, phone numbers, e-mail address, IM screen names, etc. Also discuss personal information that is okay to share such as opinions (as long as they aren’t inflammatory), favorite sports, movies, and other generic information.