

Study Guide: Be a Media Master – “Who’s Getting the Candy?”

Topic: Understanding Motivation Behind Social Media Posts

Grade Level: 8th Grade

Introduction

This study guide helps students explore the idea that every social media post has a motivation or a “why” behind it. By asking “Who’s getting the candy?”, students can learn to think critically about the truth and purpose of online content.

Key Vocabulary

1. **Media Master** - A responsible person who thinks critically about what they post and see online.
2. **Candy** - A reward on social media, such as money, fame, or popularity.
3. **Motivation** - The reason why someone does something.
4. **Truth vs. Lies** - Truth makes the world and the internet better, while lies make it worse.
5. **Good Candy** - social media rewards that help others or are truthful (without being mean).
6. **Bad Candy** - social media rewards that are hurtful, mean, or harm others.

Discussion Questions

1. What does “candy” mean in the context of social media?
2. Why is it important to ask “Who’s getting the candy?” when you see a post online?
3. Can you think of specific examples of posts where people might be trying to get candy like money, fame, or popularity?
4. Are money, fame, or popularity always “good candy” or can they also be “bad candy”?
5. Why is it wrong to post something mean about someone just to get candy?
6. How can asking “Who’s getting the candy?” help us find the truth online?

Activities

1. Motivation Matching - GAME - is it money fame or popularity?

- Materials: Printouts or drawings of these five different types of “social media candy”
 - To earn money
 - To gain popularity

- To become famous
 - To help others
 - To spread truth
- Materials - social media posts that kids will match motivations to. This can be printouts or drawings.
 - Action: Show students examples of social media posts (below) and they must match these with the five social media candies above (to earn money, to gain popularity, to become famous, to help others, to spread truth).

Examples of these social media posts might include:

"Check out my new merch! Limited edition hoodies are selling fast. Get yours now before they're gone! #ShopNow #SupportMyBrand"

To Earn Money 💰

"OMG! I just tried the CRAZIEST challenge! Can YOU do it better? Tag me in your videos! #ViralChallenge #LetsGo"

To Gain Popularity 📈

"Dream come true! Just released my first song—stream it everywhere now! Help me blow up! #FutureSuperstar #MusicLife"

To Become Famous ⭐

"Big Sale Alert! Use code SAVE20 for 20% off my new online course on video editing! Don't miss out! #LearnAndEarn #DiscountDeal"

To Earn Money 💰

"Whoa! This optical illusion will BLOW YOUR MIND! 🤯 Watch till the end and share if you see it! #MindBlown #ViralTrend"

To Gain Popularity 📈

"My dream is to be the next big gaming streamer! Follow me and help me reach 100K subscribers! #RoadToFame #GamingLife"

To Become Famous ✨

"Did you know a smile can change someone's day? Take a moment to be kind today!
#KindnessMatters #SpreadPositivity"

To Help Others ❤️

"FACT: Honey never spoils! Archaeologists have found 3,000-year-old honey that's still good to eat. #ScienceFacts #DidYouKnow"

To Spread Truth 📰

"Just launched my new photography presets! Make your photos look amazing with one click. Buy now! #PhotographyLovers #ShopMyStyle"

To Earn Money 💰

"Only TRUE geniuses can solve this riddle! 🤔 Can you figure it out? Comment below and share with a friend! #BrainTeaser #ChallengeAccepted"

To Gain Popularity 📈

"BIG NEWS! I'm auditioning for a major talent show! Wish me luck and follow my journey! #FutureStar #DreamBig"

To Become Famous ✨

"This family lost everything in a fire. Let's come together and donate to help them rebuild. Every little bit counts! #CommunityStrong #GiveBack"

To Help Others ❤️

"Lightning is hotter than the surface of the sun! ⚡🔥 Science is amazing! #FunFact #StayCurious"

To Spread Truth 📰

"Hey friends, a local animal shelter needs blankets and food for rescued pets. Let's come together and help! #AdoptDontShop #BeKind"

To Help Others ❤️

"Did you know that sea turtles mistake plastic bags for jellyfish? Let's reduce plastic waste to protect marine life! #SaveTheOceans #FactCheck"

To Spread Truth

Extension Activity

Create Your Own Social Media Post

- Students create a pretend social media post (drawing, writing, or acting).
- The class guesses what “candy” the post would earn and discusses whether it’s good candy (like helping others) or bad candy (like spreading lies or being mean).

Wrap-Up

- Recap: Every social media post has a purpose, and asking “Who’s getting the candy?” helps us understand the motivation behind it.
- Share Challenge: This week, when you see something online, ask yourself, “Who’s getting the candy?” and share your findings with the class.

Teacher Note: This study guide encourages students to think critically about online content, understand motivation, and practice empathy. Use discussions and activities to make connections between online actions and real-world consequences.

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