

Fair Share

Written by Beth Thornton

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It's a pretty solid guess that your students participated as consumers and producers of media during their summer break, and it's also likely that they shared materials without understanding copyright laws and permissions. Since we are all media producers these days, it's important to know the guidelines around sharing and re-mixing existing content. Understanding copyright and fair use go hand in hand with being media literate.

Introduce copyright and fair use, and how it might affect the choices students make.

AHA! There is more to sharing than clicking a button!

Grade Level: 6-9

Materials: Copyright video, large screen, smart phone

Key Question #1: Who created this message?

Core Concept #1: All media messages are constructed.

Key Word #1: Authorship

Key Question #5: Why is this message being sent?

Core Concept #5: Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.

Key Word #5: Purpose

Activity: Open the conversation by asking your students if they know about copyright and the laws around respecting existing materials found online i.e. music, videos, photos, art, writing, or anything else created by someone else. Review the Key Questions, Core Concepts, and Key Words.

Show the video *Creativity, Copyright, and Fair Use for Ethical Digital Citizens* by iKeepSafe.org
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B44ApZf7tqOVM3FDLWtDV2prbjQ/view>

After the video, bring out your own phone and play a popular song that your students will recognize – one you have legally downloaded. Ask these questions:

Who created this song? Who is the artist/**author**?

How do you think I got this song onto my phone? (paid for the download).

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Now that I have paid for it, can I just give it to all of you because you're my friends? (no, they must also pay for it to protect the author's creative rights).

What if we want to use this song for a specific class project? For example, as background music in a video or slide show, can we? (yes, under Fair Use for education).

What if you later decide you want to use the same song in a video outside of school, can you? (no, the song is copyrighted, you would need to pay or get permission. Fair Use allows for educational/classroom purposes only. The **purpose** of how the material is used, is of the utmost importance.)

If you created artwork or recorded a song, would you mind if other people used it on the internet? Would it depend on their purpose? What if their purpose is to make money off of it? Do you see how copyright laws protect the rights of artists, creators, and producers of media?

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