

Hour 6: Cheating and Ethics  
PWMS/HS Digital Citizenship Lesson Plan

**Purpose:**

During this lesson, students will debate various cheating scenarios. As educators, we often assume students have a clear understanding of what is cheating; however, as students are encouraged to work more in collaboration together and with the ease of finding information online, the line between acceptable and not is unclear to many students.

**Objectives:**

- Students will be able to debate the grey area between cheating and acceptable use of information.
- Students will be able to recognize teacher expectations of what is acceptable based on the teacher's instructions to students.
- Students will be able to understand the importance of using reliable online sources of information AND the importance of properly citing sources.

**Activity 1 (5-8 minutes):**

Students will be given a [short assignment](#) in which they will first be instructed to work on as individuals. After 2-3 minutes, they will be told to work with a partner. After 2-3 minutes, ask students to evaluate their answers: Are there any students with exactly the same answers? Is this cheating? What is the difference between cheating and working together? What kind of instructions do students need to hear/read that make teacher expectations clear?

**Activity 2 (20-25 minutes)**

Pairs of students will be given the following questions to consider. Not all students will have the same questions, although each question should be answered by at least 2-3 pairs of students. Give students appx. 5 minutes to formulate their response. Discuss each question as a whole group. The pairs of students with the same questions will lead the debate for that assigned question.

(Teachers: follow [this link](#) to a document that offers a nice explanation of most of the following questions. This link is background info for you and does not need to be shared directly with students. This document can be attributed to Jodi Caler).

Student Instructions: You and your partner should determine if the following is an example of cheating. Justify your answer (explain why).

Q1: If I write the answers to a test on my hand (or any other surface visible to you) prior to taking the actual test, is it cheating?

Q2: If I glance over at my neighbor's test, is it cheating (even if you don't write anything down)?

Q3: If I am assigned to do work in a group and I don't actually do the work, is this cheating (even if my group is ok with my lack of help)?

Q4: If I am assigned to work in a group and I do the entire project alone, is it cheating if I allow everyone else to take credit for the assignment? I don't mind doing all the work. I want to make sure we get a good grade.

Q5: If my teacher says it's okay for me to work with a partner on an assignment, would it be cheating if I copied my partner's answers?

Q6: If my teacher says it's okay for me to work with a partner on an extra credit assignment, would it be cheating if I copied my partner's answers?

Q7: If I am given a take home assignment and I work on it with someone else, is this cheating?

Q8: If a friend and I "work together" on an assignment, is it cheating?

Q9: If I find a good website that perfectly explains a point I'm trying to research, is it cheating if I copy and paste the answer then change some of the words to make it my own?

Q10: If I send a classmate a copy of an assignment digitally, is this cheating? Is there a difference if it is just the answers to only a few questions?

### Activity 3 (10 minutes)

Summary Presentation--show students the [linked](#) google presentation that summarizes the main points discussed in Activity 2. This presentation also includes:

- a short screen-cast of a teacher busting a suspected plagiarist
- a brief reminder about the reliability of online sources
- a brief reminder about the importance of proper citation
- a summary of the student handbook consequences for cheating and plagiarism
- the 5 end of lesson assessment questions

Assessment Questions:

#1--True or False: It is cheating if the teacher doesn't tell us that we can work together on an assignment, and I work on it with my neighbor. **ANS: True**

#2--The 2nd offense for cheating or plagiarism can include the following consequences:

- a. 0 grade on the assignment
- b. Loss of status in the National Honor Society, Student Council or other clubs
- c. Out of school suspension
- d. **All of the above**

#3--True or False--It is not plagiarism if I copy and paste a paragraph from a website, and change a few of the words to make it my own work. **ANS: False**

#4--True or False: I can be suspended for more than 11 days for cheating/plagiarism. **ANS: True**

#5--Which of the following is NOT an example of cheating:

a. Looking at my neighbor's paper during a test

**b. I make changes to my paper as a result of feedback from a peer editing exercise.**

c. I do most of the group project because I want to make sure it gets done correctly.

d. We have been given the teacher's ok to work together, and I copy my partner's

answers