

PART I: Internet in the Home

Viewers are introduced to Morris City, N.J., where most teens spend time online talking with friends on social networking sites, playing games and doing homework. Parents appear to be absent from these virtual worlds. Use these questions with the program chapter *Living Their Lives Essentially Online*.

- 1.1. What is your initial reaction to the program? What did you like or dislike about it?
- 1.2. At home, how often are you online? At school, how often are you online? What percentage of the time do you think you spend: Doing homework? Chatting with friends? Updating your profile? Playing games? Surfing/looking up stuff you're interested in? Downloading music? Uploading/downloading videos?
- 1.3. A survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project found that in 2004, 67 percent of parents said the Internet has been a good thing for their children. However, this number decreased to 59 percent in 2006. Why do you think the number of parents who reported the Internet being a good thing for their children has decreased?
- 1.4. In the opening of the program, we see boys gathering to collaboratively play a military-style videogame. What characteristics of a computer make it different from other media in the home, such as television, videogames, stereo/radio, magazines and books? How do these characteristics influence:
 - How the computer is used in the home?
 - Who uses the computer?
 - Where the computer is placed?
 - How much the computer is used?
- 1.5. In the introduction to the program, the narrator says: "This is Morris County, N.J., but it could be anywhere in America. Here, like in the rest of the country, some 90 percent of teenagers are online, a number that's still growing." From what you saw in the film, is Morris County indicative of a typical American community? Why or why not? Is it like your community?
- 1.6. Documentary programs, because they depict real people and real issues, are often framed as "the truth." But documentary producers make decisions about how to tell a story just like producers of other media messages. Remember to take a step back and think about the decisions the producers made. Some questions to consider:
 - Who produced this film?
 - Why did they produce it?
 - Who is the target audience, and what techniques are used to appeal to that audience?
 - Whose voices do we hear in the program; that is, who is portrayed, and what are their stories? Whose voices are left out -- who do we hear less of or not at all?
 - What questions did the producers leave unasked? If you could interview one of the people featured in the documentary, what would you ask?

PART 2: Digital Media in Schools

At school, teachers are dealing with using new technologies in the classroom. Some teachers are eager adopters of technology, while others are hesitant and feel uncomfortable. Use these questions with the program chapter *A Revolution in Classrooms and Social Life*.

- 2.1. More teachers are using tools to try to detect cheating or deter students' inclination to cheat. In the program, we see the use of plagiarism-detection tools like Turnitin.com and writing assignments completed during class time to make sure students do their own work and generate their own ideas. In terms of student writing, what are some different types of "cheating"? What are the elements you would include in your definition of "cheating"?
- 2.2. One teacher in the program says, "We almost have to be entertainers." If we think of an entertainer as an actor, musician, dancer or someone who performs, in what ways is your favorite teacher like an entertainer? In what ways is he or she unlike -- or different from -- an entertainer? What are the positive and negative consequences of expecting teachers to be entertaining?
- 2.3. One student claims he "never reads books" but relies on summaries and annotated notes he finds on Web sites. He confesses that he feels guilty about this, stating, "I feel like I kind of cheated it." Should he feel guilty? Why or why not?
- 2.4. In the program, we see teachers using digital technology for their presentations. How do students use digital media in school? In what grade levels and in which types of classes are students most likely to use digital media for learning? What types of uses are most and least common? Why?

PART 3: Social Networking -- Keeping in Touch

Today, kids "hang out" and talk with friends in virtual spaces through instant messaging, text messaging, chat rooms and social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook. Use these questions with the program chapter *A Revolution in Classrooms and Social Life*.

- 3.1. One teen describes MySpace and Facebook as fun because they are "a section of the Internet that's your own." How is a profile -- an online space -- similar to and different from other parts of the world that are your own, like your bedroom, school locker or diary?
- 3.2. As shown in the program, social networking sites can be used as a way to "talk junk," insult others or hash out conflicts. Is fighting online a relatively safe way to express negative emotions in responding to others (without having to deal with them face to face)? Or does online fighting do more harm than good?
- 3.3. The program describes social networking sites as places where kids post pictures, accumulate friends, post messages to others and describe themselves. What other kinds of things do teens and young adults do on social networking sites that aren't mentioned?
- 3.4. Girls describe how online name calling among different groups escalated to physical violence between girls in a school cafeteria. The event was videotaped by students and posted to YouTube. From the list below, choose three of the following groups. Explain the *similarities* and *differences* in how the fight video would function for each group -- and how these groups might perceive the video.
 - The girls who were fighting in the video
 - The person who filmed it and uploaded it
 - Other students in the school
 - Teachers and administrators at the school
 - Parents of the girls who were fighting
 - Parents of students who were in the cafeteria at the time
 - Law enforcement in the community
 - Teens who viewed the video online -- but are from a different school or area