

Name: _____

Date: _____

Social Media Influence



Social Media Sleuths: MagicSchool AI Activity

Social media is full of **influencers**, **algorithms**, and **sponsored** ads. These tools are designed to keep you watching and clicking. Today, you'll use MagicSchool AI to learn how these systems work and how to be a smart digital citizen!



Vocabulary Check:

- **Algorithm:** The rules apps use to decide what videos or posts you see next.
- **Sponsored:** Content that a company paid for to sell a product.
- **Clickbait:** Tricky titles or images used to make you click a link.



MagicSchool AI Quest

Log in to your MagicSchool AI student platform and open the AI chat. Ask the AI the questions below, read its response, and then write your answer in your own words!

1. Ask the AI: *"What are 3 sneaky ways social media influencers try to get kids to buy things?"*

Which of the three ways surprised you the most, and why?

.....

.....

2. Ask the AI: *"How can I protect myself from being tricked by clickbait and algorithms online?"*

List two great tips the AI gave you to stay smart and safe online:

.....

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3. Ask the AI: *"How does an algorithm decide what video I should watch next?"*

According to the AI, what are two pieces of information the algorithm tracks about you?

4. Ask the AI: *"What is the 'infinite scroll' feature and why do apps use it?"*

Explain why this feature makes it hard to stop using an app:

5. Ask the AI: *"Why do some social media influencers use beauty filters on their faces?"*

How can seeing filtered photos every day affect how a person feels about themselves?

6. Ask the AI: *"What is a 'targeted ad' and how does the computer know what I like?"*

Give an example of a targeted ad you might see after searching for something online:

7. Ask the AI: *"Why is it important to take 'digital breaks' or time away from screens?"*

What is one healthy activity the AI suggests doing instead of being on social media?

8. Ask the AI: "What are 3 red flags that a social media post might be fake news or a scam?"

Which red flag do you think is the easiest to spot?

9. Ask the AI: "How does social media use 'likes' and 'comments' to keep people coming back?"

How do you feel when you get a 'like' on something, and why does the app want you to feel that way?

The Algorithm Trap

Algorithms track everything you do on an app (what you watch, skip, like, and share) so they can feed you more of the same and keep you glued to your screen.

1. If you watch three videos about skateboarding in a row, what will the algorithm probably show you next? Why?

2. Why do social media apps want you to stay on their app for as long as possible?

a) So you can learn more facts

b) So they can show you more ads and make money

c) Because they care about your entertainment

d) To help you make friends

True or False?

Read each statement below. Write **TRUE** or **FALSE** in the box below it.

3. Influencers always use the products they advertise in real life.

5. Social media posts usually show the very best parts of someone's day, not the whole truth.

4. If a video has millions of views, it proves that the product is the best.

6. An algorithm's main job is to try to guess what you want to see.

Answer Key



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Answers will vary based on the AI's response, but students might mention things like using filters, faking excitement, or creating a false sense of urgency.

1. Look for #ad or #sponsored tags to know when someone is being paid. 2. Set a timer to avoid endless scrolling caused by algorithms.

It tracks things like what videos you watch all the way through, what you 'like', what you share, and how long you spend looking at a specific post.

Infinite scroll means new content keeps loading so you never reach the 'end' of the page. It's designed to keep you watching without a natural stopping point.

Filters can make people look 'perfect' in ways that aren't real. This can make regular people feel like they aren't good enough or that they need to look like the filter to be pretty/cool.

If you search for 'cool sneakers,' the computer remembers that. Later, while you are playing a game or on social media, an ad for those exact sneakers might pop up.

Digital breaks help your brain rest and your eyes relax. Suggested activities might include playing outside, reading a physical book, or talking to family.

Red flags might include: too many exclamation points, asking for personal info, or claims that sound 'too good to be true.'

Likes trigger a happy feeling in the brain (dopamine). Apps want you to feel that way so you keep posting and checking the app to get more of that feeling.



The Algorithm Trap

More videos about skateboarding. The algorithm thinks you like them and wants you to keep watching.

- b) So they can show you more ads and make money



True or False?

FALSE

TRUE

FALSE

TRUE