

Hurtful "Like" Dilemma

NAME _____

Directions Part 1: Read the dilemma below.

Hurtful "Like"

Nora saw that one of her friends, Luke, had "liked" an Instagram post. The post showed a long line of refugees walking across a field and the caption said "Breaking Point: The EU has failed us". As soon as she saw the post, Nora felt uneasy. In her town, there were many immigrants and refugees, including Nora herself. The post hit close to home. Plus, everyone could see that Luke had liked it. Luke was their Head Prefect, and the students and teachers had elected him to represent the school. Nora also considered him one of her close friends.

Part 2: Read the dilemma again and use brackets to identify any examples of online hate speech. Then, follow the steps of Feelings & Options to help you think about what the characters in the dilemma can do to respond to hate speech.

Identify: Who are the different people involved in the scenario? What dilemma or challenge are they facing?

Answers will vary.

- Nora: She sees that her friend Luke has liked a post that degrades refugees.
- Luke: He liked a post that is racist but might not be aware that others can see his actions and be offended by them.
- Others: There are other people involved like the person or account that posted the image, the other people that "liked" or commented on the post, and everyone else that can see Luke's online activity (like his social media friends or friends of friends).

Feel: What do you think each person in the dilemma is *feeling*? Why might the situation be hard or challenging for each of them?

Answers will vary.

- Nora may feel hurt, offended or angry. Luke is Nora's friend and she may feel personally disappointed that he liked a post that degrades refugees. She may feel that he doesn't respect her or her family. And she might feel that as Head Prefect, Luke has a responsibility to stand up for all students at the school.
- Luke may be unaware that his liking this post was 1) seen by others, and 2) hurt others' feelings. Unfortunately, the fact that Luke liked this post indicates he is racist. He thinks it is OK to show support for a post that is not welcoming of people from other countries. Also, he is not taking his responsibilities as Head Prefect seriously: he should be demonstrating respect for all students at the school. He also might not be thinking of what his friends would think if they saw he liked the post.
- Others who see the post: it's unclear from the dilemma what others may feel. But we could guess that many will be offended or hurt. However, others might think it's funny. Some might not think anything of it.



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Imagine: Imagine options for how the situation could be handled. Come up with as many ideas as possible (there's no one "right" answer!). Then choose which option might lead to the most positive outcome, where most people feel good or taken care of?

Answers will vary.

- Nora or others could ignore it and not say anything.
- Nora or others could confront Luke by responding online or saying something face-to-face.
- Nora or others could report or flag the post to the site or app.
- Nora or others could tell a trusted adult about the situation.

Say: Thinking more about the idea you chose for handling the situation, what could the people involved say?

First: How would they say it?

☐

In person

☐

Call or FaceTime

☐

Text

☐

Direct/private message

☐

Email

☐

Other: _____

Second: What would they say? Write out the conversation.

Answers will vary.

Encourage students to consider whether they would really use the dialogue they created with a friend or peer. Ask "Do you think Nora would really say that?" or "Could you see yourself actually saying/sending a message like this, if you were the person in the scenario? why or why not?"

Part 3 - Complicate (optional):

Discuss these questions in your group and share responses. Be sure to hear all perspectives -- the more perspectives, the better!

- What if, instead of just liking the post, Luke had reshared it?
- What if Nora learned that Luke was actually the creator?
- What if Luke was himself a refugee student?
- Does it make a difference that Nora is a refugee? Why or why not?
- What if this was part of a pattern -- if Luke was liking posts or memes like this all the time?

