



18. Be Upstanding

According to the [PEW Internet Research Center](#), “90% of social media-using teens who have witnessed online cruelty say they have ignored mean behavior on social media, and more than a third (35%) have done this frequently.” This is unfortunate, because according to [DoSomething.org](#), **more than half the time bullying stops within ten seconds of someone intervening**. It is critical to teach students *what they can do* should they witness cruelty, online or off. In this lesson students learn how to become “upstanders.”

Key Standards—Common Core ELA, 5th: RI.5, RI.5.2, RI.5.4, RI.5.8, RI.5.10, RF.5, RF.5.4, RF.5.4.a, RF.5.4.c, W.5, W.5.3, W.5.3.a, W.5.3.b, W.5.3.d, W.5.3.e, W.5.4, W.5.9, W.5.9.b, SL.5, SL.5.1, SL.5.1.a, SL.5.1.b, SL.5.1.c, SL.5.2, L.5, L.5.4, L.5.4.a, L.5.6. 6th: RI.6, RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.3, RI.6.4, RI.6.7, W.6, W.6.3, W.6.3.a, W.6.3.b, W.6.3.d, W.6.3.e, W.6.4, SL.6, SL.6.1, SL.6.1.a, SL.6.1.b, SL.6.1.c, L.6, L.6.4, L.6.4.a, L.6.4.d, L.6.6. ISTE: 2a, 2b. CASEL: 1a, 1d, 1e, 3a, 3b, 3d, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5f.

Learning Objectives

Students will...

- Understand that many people play a role in cyberbullying.
- Learn the difference between a “bystander” and “upstander.”
- Explore strategies for standing up for others, online and off.



Introducing The Lesson

Remind students that cyberbullying, digital drama, and even teasing, can feel hurtful to the target of these behaviors. But one advantage of the online world is that when bullying happens there, it becomes **visible**. This should make it easier for others to step in to assist the target and/or put a stop to the cruelty.

The Lesson

1. Screen [Video 1]. Review that everyone who witnesses cruel behavior plays a role, even if they are not directly involved. These roles include the following (have students record):

- **TARGET:** Someone being bullied.
- **BULLY:** Someone doing the bullying.
- **BYSTANDER:** Someone who observes bullying (online or off) but ignores it.

The Lesson, continued

2. Though not always present in a cyberbullying situation, there is another very important role:

UPSTANDER

- **Someone not involved with the incident, but who steps in to help anyway.**
- **Someone who empathizes with the target, letting them know they care.**
- **Someone who encourages the target to talk to a trusted adult.**

3. Be sure students understand the meaning of **empathize**. It comes from the word “empathy” and it means **to imagine the feeling that someone else is experiencing** (have them record this definition).

4. Ask students to think of a time when they may have empathized with someone. Ask for volunteers to share examples.

5. Explain that being an upstander does not mean you have to stand up to a bully. For some students it may be uncomfortable to do so, and it might even escalate the situation further. There are other ways to be upstanders. For example, you could show kindness or give comfort to the target. Or, turn to a trusted adult and seek help.

6. Show students an example of an entire school community that *empathized* with a classmate and became upstanders. Screen [Video 2].

Activity

7. Read the story that follows aloud to your class. Ask students to complete the story by either **drawing** OR **writing** an ending to it. Their drawing/paragraph should include all the people who play a role: the target; the bully/bullies; the bystanders. Most importantly, their endings should include an upstander. They should explain/describe what their upstander does. They can do this work in their books or use the Student Packet provided.

Goal

The purpose of this lesson is for students to understand how to be an upstander. They should know that if/when they witness bullying, online or off, they can step in to help by standing up to the bully, giving comfort to the target, or seeking aid from a trusted adult.

How To Be An Upstander

A group of kids in sixth grade like to ride skateboards and some are pretty good at it. But Luke is just a beginner. One day while practicing at home Luke sets up his phone to record himself trying a new trick. Unfortunately everything goes wrong and he crashes, looking pretty ridiculous.

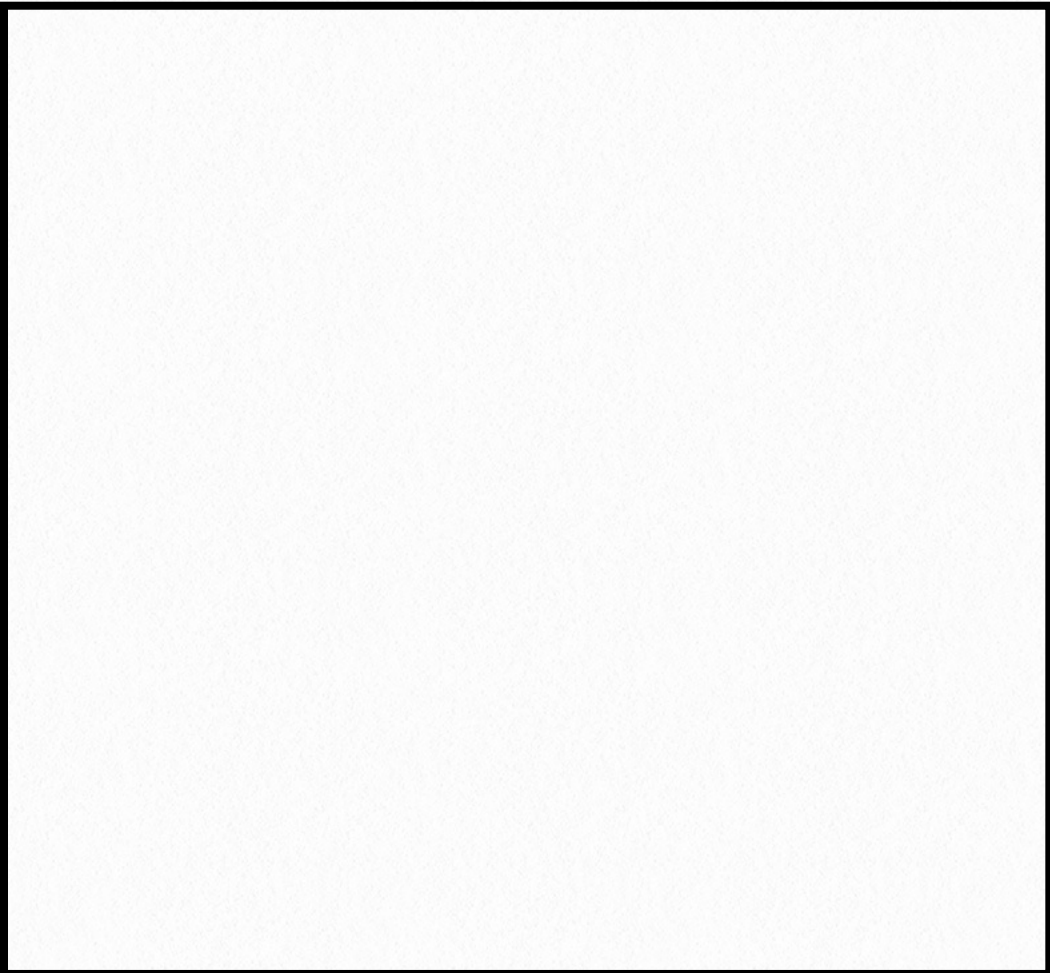
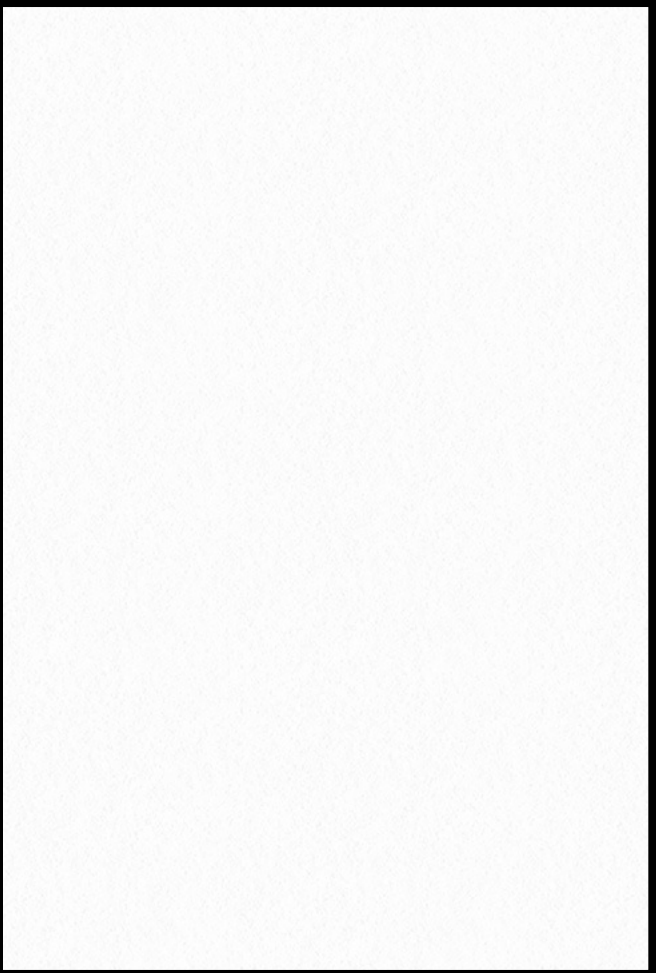
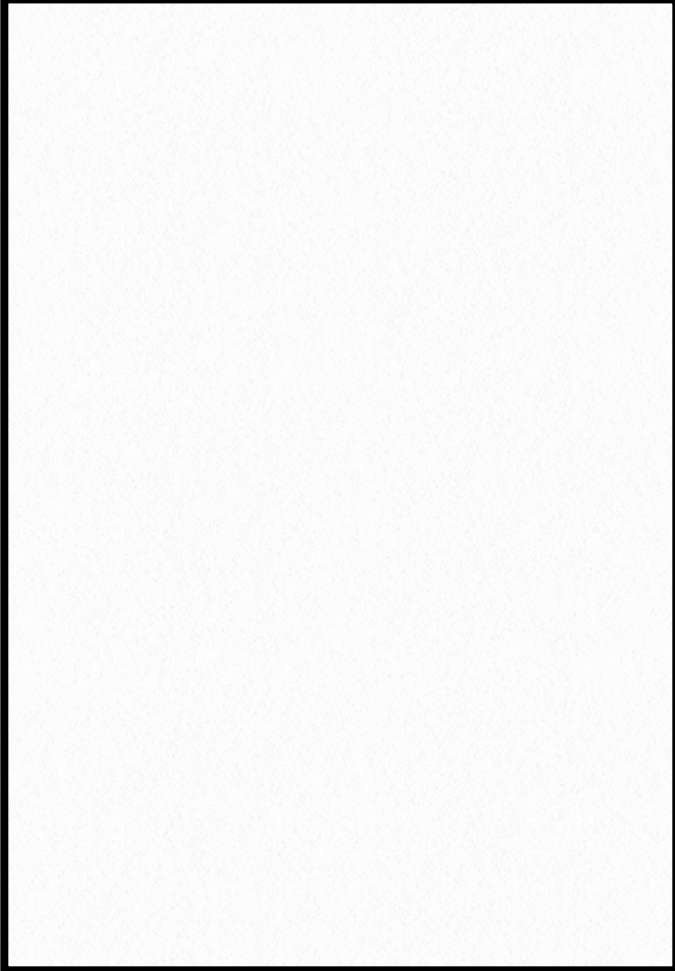
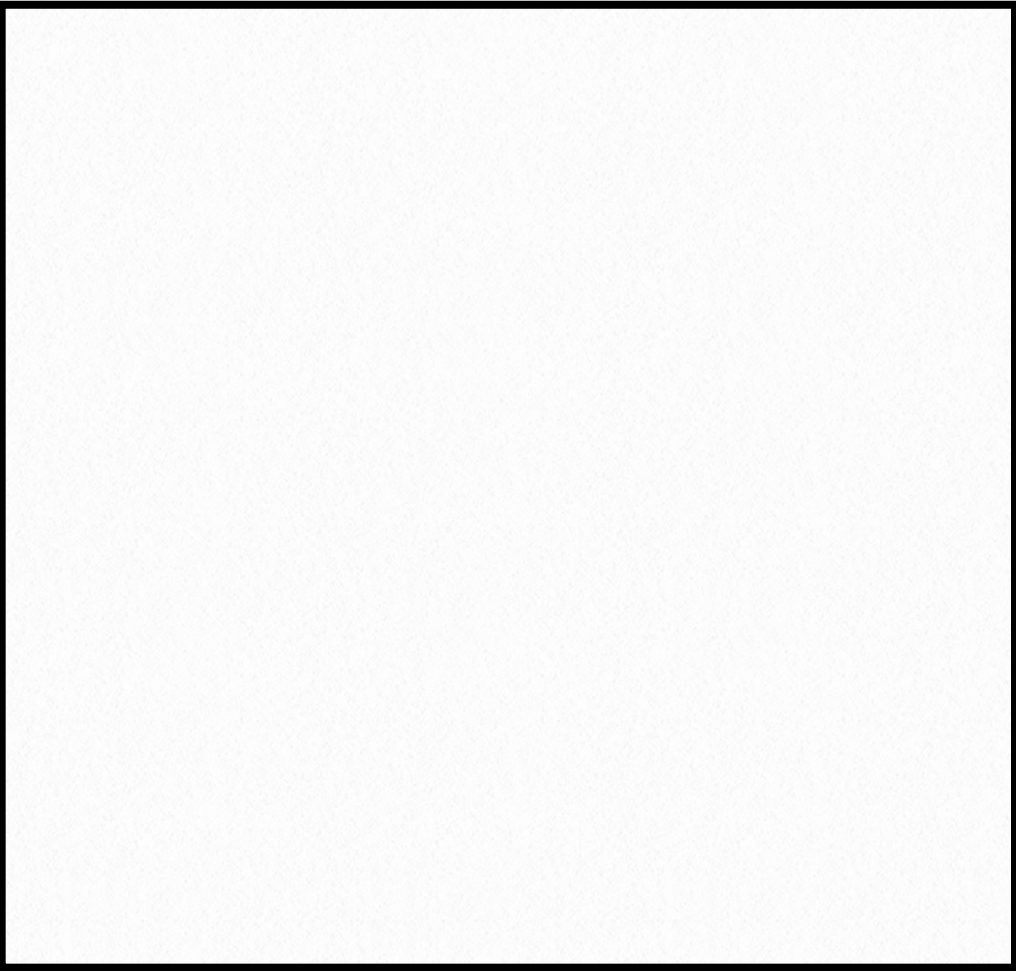
Wondering what he did wrong, Luke sends this video to Jerry. Without asking Luke's permission, Jerry posts the video on a social networking site. Soon a bunch of kids from school, and even some strangers, see the video and post mean comments like "FAIL!" "Lame Luke," "Loser," and more. When Luke goes to school the next day, some kids point and laugh at him. Luke is hurt and embarrassed.

What happens next?

Here is the same story as a cartoon strip (created by Dirk Tiede, Cyber Civics Teacher at Waldorf School at Moraine Farm):



Draw your ending:





TARGET

Someone being bullied.

BULLY

Someone doing the bullying.

BYSTANDER

Someone who observes bullying (online or off) but ignores it.

UPSTANDER

Someone not involved with the incident, but who steps in to help anyway.

Someone who empathizes with the target, letting them know they care.

EMPATHIZE:

To imagine the feeling that someone else is experiencing.