DIGITAL IDENTITY: CREATING AN AVATAR

COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION > 2.6 MANAGING DIGITAL IDENTITY

TARGET GROUP	AGE GROUP	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	FORMAT	COPYRIGHT	LANGUAGE
School drop outs, Students (primary school), Students (secondary school)	Children, Teenagers	Level 1	Activity sheet	Creative Commons (BY-SA)	English, French

During this activity, participants (children) will create their own avatar using online tools (faceyourmanga, dudfactory etc). This creation of their "digital me" will invite them to understand the notion of digital identity. The educator will be able to sensitize them to the importance of controling and protecting their digital identity.

General Objective	Awareness building
Preparation time for facilitator	less than 1 hour
Competence area	2 - Communication & collaboration
Time needed to complete activity (for learner)	0 - 1 hour
Name of author	Marion Piecuck
Support material needed for training	Computers/tablets-Internet connection
Resource originally created in	French

WORKSHOP DIRECTIONS

1 Introduction

By creating their own avatars, participants will become familiar with the concept of digital identity. This will develop a sense of the importance of being in control of one's online self-presentation.

Facilitation tips*:* This workshop is planned to last 20 minutes if you suggest to the kids (aged 8-12) to choose a site and create one avatar. It could last up to 40 minutes if you allow them to create several. We recommend you quickly familiarise yourself with the avatar-creation tools in advance. These are simple to use. For more information on personal data and digital identity we advise you to see the workshop 'Personal Data'.

2 What is digital identity?

Ask the kids if they like dressing up. As what, and why? As they are answering, try to steer them towards the following:

- To be someone they look up to – having qualities they admire (a superhero for their strength or because they want justice, they fight for a cause etc.)
- Just to become someone or something completely different (like a monster)
- To dress up as something they like (a cat or an anime character)

An **avatar** is a virtual costume (seen in video games or online). It allows us to present ourselves how we want to be seen and to highlight traits we like (hair colour, freckles, tastes etc.).

Show some examples in the annex (to give ideas of what it's possible to do). Avatars are an instance of digital identity. They are in a way extensions of our personality. They are an online representation of ourselves – the way we want to be seen.

3 Creating an avatar

Suggest several ideas for creating realistic or in an anime style (manga, human or non-human etc.). You can use these sites (there are even more options beyond these!):

- https://face.co/ for creating relatively realistic avatars
- https://www.faceyourmanga.com/ for creating avatars in manga style (possibilities are wider than face.co)
- http://www.dudefactory.com/view-avatar.aspx is quite a hoot. We can add accessories to represent our interests (be aware that this one's not just for kids and you might find a glass of beer or cigar)
- http://www.buildyourwildself.com/ created by the New York Zoo allowing users to create animal versions of themselves
- http://turnyournameintoaface.com/?name=Albert this is a quick example that generates an avatar for you based on your first name
- https://hype.my/2014/28620/13-best-sites-to-create-avatars-of-yourself/ and finally a page that gives several other examples of similar tools

Finally, here's a site that allows you to create an avatar that will attach itself to many of your various online interactions (forums, blogs, social networks etc.): https://en.gravatar.com/

Presentation Everyone displays their avatar for the group and the others need to guess its meaning. It could be a good idea to project them all simultaneously and have the group guess which one belongs to whom. The groups should then discuss how they chose to represent themselves, what characterises their avatars and why. This will get them thinking about notions of identity and representation (see 'What is Digital Identity (Explained to a Young Audience').

Facilitation tips: Don't hesitate to adapt the sites you show based on your group's profile

4   Conclusion

Have a discussion on the general ideas of the workshop and these key points:

- The meaning of digital identity and the ways to control, model and curate it – online, we can be who we want
- Controlling our self-presentation online also allows us to protect ourselves

Facilitation tips: You can extend the idea by suggesting creating other avatars for example on Scratch and then creating games based around them. They could also try representing their avatars physically

by going to a 3d printing workshop (Fab lab), etc.

5 Annex

- We can represent ourselves as we are (face.co)

- But also as things or figures related to our interests (dudefactory/faceyourmanga)