

A Debate: Security vs. Privacy

(created in conjunction with Mandy Galante)

TOPIC: ETHICS

GRADES: 9-12

LESSON DURATION: 2-3 DAYS

SOFT SKILLS: COMMUNICATION, CRITICAL THINKING

Introduction:

- This lesson plan is intended for students to analyze two different aspects of a current cyber question. Students should be assigned to either Mr. Snowden or Mr. Zakaria. As they watch the debate, students should record the man's view on the issue of government access to encrypted messages. As a final assessment, students should voice an opinion and support with evidence, "Should the government have lawful access to all encrypted messages?"

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to articulate the opposing views in the security v privacy debate.
- Students will develop an opinion on this ongoing debate.

Materials:

- Link to Debates of the Century via NYU Wagner <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yoyX6sNEqs&app=desktop>
- Teacher notes:
 - Supporting government access (security): Fareed Zakaria
 - Opposing government access (privacy): Edward Snowden
 - If you wish to meet the moderator, begin at 7:15.
 - To start at speaker introductions, begin at 8:30.
 - The debate can be modified by teacher as he/she sees fit. It is highly recommended that the students see at least the opening and closing statements of each speaker.
 - Results of the pre/post-debate poll are on the next page. The teacher may choose to do an in-class pre/post-debate poll.

Activities:

1. Explain that over the next few days, students will be engaged in learning about a current tech issue; whether the government has the right to access encrypted data. This question was the backbone of the San Bernardino shooting investigation. It is also part of a large debate balancing personal privacy v overall security.

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2. Assign each student a partner. Each partner set should then be randomly assigned to either Fareed Zakaria or Edward Snowden. The group should begin by doing some basic research on each man's background and expertise.
3. Once all students have researched, have a whole class discussion on each speaker so that all know the information.
4. Explain to the class that now they are going to watch a debate between the two men. At this point, the teacher could poll the class on the question of whether the government has the right to access encrypted data. The teacher can also present the stats from the debate audience.
5. Explain to students that they have a task during the debate. They must record and be ready to explain their assigned speaker's view of the topic (the same person they researched). They must also be able to articulate why the man holds that view. Notes are encouraged due to the length and the depth of information. You may also consider having students write down anything that they find confusing.
6. After the class is done watching the debate, have a whole class discussion on the debate contents. Take a post-debate poll of the class. If anyone changed their mind, ask them to share what made them change their mind. Is privacy more important than security?
7. As a summary discussion, the teacher may continue to discuss the fact that this question has grown in importance due to the IoT and the continued connectivity of devices.
8. The teacher could ask shift to a discussion of the irony of the desire to have privacy. For instance, every time you surf the web on public Wi-Fi you are giving away access to your data. Each Facebook survey you take, you are giving up privacy. How is that different than allowing the government access to encrypted data?

Teacher note: There are true answers to some of the issues/topics that may come up. However, it is important that students ask and answer these questions so that they are more aware of the digital world around them.

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