

## Item Details

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**Title:** Instant Messaging

**Unit:** Communicating Online

**Estimated**

**Time:** 15 Minutes

**Type:** Lesson

**Tool:** Instant Messaging Software

**Desc.:** This lesson teaches students how to use instant messaging (IM) software to collaborate and communicate clearly, safely, and successfully online.

### Primary Objectives

Student demonstrates a sound understanding of the nature and operation of instant messaging systems.

Student becomes proficient in the use of instant messaging.

Student practices responsible use of instant messaging systems, information, and software.

Student uses instant messaging to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

Student uses instant messaging to help solve problems and make informed decisions.

Student learns about Internet safety.

Student learns to only IM people that they know.

Student learns to never IM personal information.

Student learns to ignore and reject unexpected links, files, and invitations, to only click if they know who sent it and why.

Student learns to never meet someone offline if they only know them online.

Student learns to use netiquette, use punctuation marks and emoticons to communicate emotion, to never type in all caps.

Student learns to think before they type, to never type anything they wouldn't say in person.

Student learns to how to create a strong password.

Student learns to only add people they know to their IM contact list.

### Secondary Objectives

Student understands, manages, and creates effective communication.

Student accesses, analyzes, manages, integrates, evaluates, and creates information.

Student express voice in text messages.

### Teacher Notes

In this lesson, students add an avatar to their IM profile. To help expand this skill for real-world application, you might want to show students how to crop and resize graphics to be 100 x 100 pixels or less. Then, allow students to practice this skill if time permits.

Many IM acronym lists are available online. If desired, conduct an Internet search to find acronyms that students might find useful in their online communications. Share the acronyms with the class.

### Extension Ideas

Using paper and pen, students can fine-tune their Instant Messaging skills. Begin by having the class brainstorm as many known IM abbreviations as possible. If necessary, support the brainstorming session by providing some examples (such as BRB, LOL, G2G, and so forth) found online after conducting an Internet search. List the common abbreviations on the board to serve as a reference. Then, have student pairs simulate an instant messaging session by silently passing a notebook or piece of paper back and forth. Instruct student pairs to work together to solve a specific logic puzzle or riddle, create a plan (such as choosing a research topic), or complete an assigned task of your choice. Tell students they must solve their problem using only one side of the sheet of paper. Recommend that they limit each turn to a maximum of two sentences, and remind them that they may use abbreviations if desired. The goal is to communicate as clearly and concisely as possible.

While most Instant Messaging programs offer similar capabilities, their interfaces vary widely. For example, in Windows Live Messenger version 8.1, you access the menus by clicking the small down-arrow in the upper-right corner. Furthermore, many interfaces offer a large collection of emoticons (many more than the basic emoticons introduced in the lesson). You might want to point out some features in the IM program used in your school if necessary.

The underlying theme throughout this unit is the role of effective writing in all walks of life throughout the world and throughout history. The lessons are presented against a backdrop of music festivals held around the world, and the accompanying activities are based on Shakespearean works. Note that music compositions and plays draw heavily on many basic writing and communication principles and skills. By exploring words in the context of music and poetic discourse, students can expand their perceptions of the multipurpose and cross-cultural aspects of written communication.