

The Digital Bridge

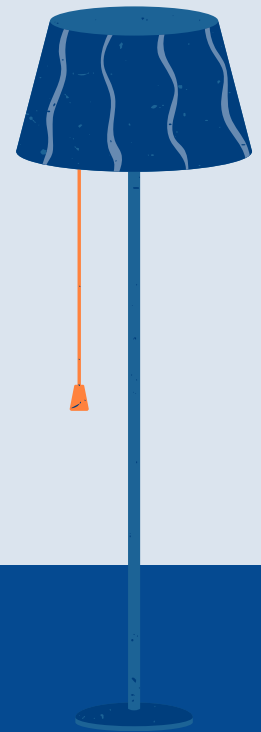


It was a bright Monday morning at Green Valley School. Leo, Maya, and Sam stood in the hallway after their English class. "Did you hear the news?" Leo asked excitedly. "Our next project is about the evolution of communication. We need to work in a group!" Maya smiled and nodded, but Sam looked a bit nervous. Leo suggested, "Why don't we have a live chat tonight to start our project?"



That evening, Leo sat down at his desk. He opened his favorite web browser and went to the group's chat site.

"Time to work," he whispered to himself. He carefully typed his username and clicked the button to log in. He sent a digital invitation to Maya and Sam: "Hey guys! Join me for a live chat to discuss our communication project!"





Seconds later, Maya's face appeared on the screen. "I'd love to join! That sounds great," she said. But Sam was having trouble. He sent a quick text message to the group: "I'm sorry, but I can't join you right now. My internet is broken. My connection is very slow today." Leo sighed. "Don't worry, Sam. Try to reset your modem!"

While they waited for Sam, Leo and Maya started talking about the project. "Do you think teenagers prefer writing to talking?" Maya asked. Leo thought for a moment. "I think so. We use instant messaging all the time. It's easier than a phone call, but sometimes we lose the personal touch." They discussed how the internet has changed the way people share their feelings.



Suddenly, Sam's video feed popped up! "I'm back!" he cheered. . "I had to sign up for a new account because I forgot my old password, but the connection is finally working!" Leo and Maya cheered. "We're glad you could join us, Sam. Let's look at the advantages and disadvantages of social media for our digital poster."



"One big advantage of social media is that we can learn about new cultures," Maya said. "And it's the cheapest way to keep in touch with friends far away," Sam added. They looked at a website together to find facts about how many people use the internet globally. They were amazed at how the world felt so small because of the digital bridge.



Leo looked serious. "But there are risks, too. We have to be careful about sharing personal information." Maya agreed, "Exactly. You should never give your address or phone number to people you don't know. We must tell our classmates to keep their accounts private." They decided to make a "Safety First" section for their project.



"What about people who spend too much time online?" Sam asked. "My brother is almost an internet addict. He plays games for six hours every day!" Leo nodded. "That's a disadvantage. It can make people feel isolated. We should remind everyone that the real world is just as important as the digital one."



It was time to finish the poster. Sam found a great image of an old telephone and started to upload it to their shared folder. "I'm sending the file as an attachment now," Sam said. Maya clicked the link to download the file. "Got it! I'll add it to the center of the poster," she said. They were working perfectly as a team.



On Friday, the trio stood in front of the class. Their digital poster was colorful and full of great information. Mr. Aris, their teacher, was very impressed. "Great job, team! You used the internet to learn about the internet," he said. Leo, Maya, and Sam high-fived. They had built a bridge of communication, both online and in person.



Discussion Questions

- In the story, Leo and Maya discuss whether teenagers prefer writing to talking. Which do you prefer when connecting with your friends—sending messages or calling them? Why?
- The characters mention the risk of "internet addiction" and the importance of privacy. If you had to add one rule to their "Safety First" poster to help students stay healthy and safe online, what would it be?



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