

Teacher Tutorial on Copyright

Student Goals:

- Explain what copyright and fair use is in their own words.
- Correctly identify what media they can and can't use.
- Find and correctly credit legal media sources.
- Make responsible decisions when posting online.

What is copyright?

Copyright is a law that protects someone's original work. When someone creates something new, they automatically own the rights to it.

Some examples of copyrighted material include:

- Photos
- Videos
- Music
- Movies
- Artwork
- Books

A song recorded by Taylor Swift or a movie made by Universal are examples of works that are protected by copyright.

Online Copyright

Students often think that if something is on the internet, it's free to use. This is simply not true. Even media that appears on platforms like Instagram, TikTok and YouTube is still usually owned by the creator.

For example: If a student downloads an image from Google and posts it on a school website, it could be copyright infringement, unless:

- They have permission
- It qualifies as fair use

Creator Rights

Copyright gives creators the right to:

- Copy their work
- Share or publish their work
- Sell their work
- Allow or deny others permission to use their work

For example: A photographer decides who can use their photo in a presentation or on their website.

What is Copyright Infringement?

Copyright infringement is when someone uses a copyrighted work without permission.

Common examples of copyright infringement include:

- Uploading a movie clip to YouTube
- Using a copyrighted song in a video
- Copying an image from Google
- Reposting someone's artwork

Even memes sometimes contain copyrighted images.

What is Fair Use?

Fair use allows limited use of copyrighted works without permission in certain situations.

Common examples of fair use include:

- Education
- Commentary
- Criticisms
- News reporting
- Parody

Examples of fair use in a classroom:

- Showing a short clip from a movie for analysis

- Using a short clip of a song to discuss lyrics

Put emphasis on the fact that fair use isn't unlimited

The four factors of fair use:

- Purpose: Is it educational?
- Amount: How much of the work is used?
- Nature: Is the work creative or factual?
- Market Effect: Does it hurt the original creator's income?

Students don't need to memorize the legal language. Just focus on only using what is necessary.

Creative Commons (Legal Media)

Many creators allow their work to be used through Creative Commons licenses.

Creative Commons media can be legally used if students follow the licensing rules.

Common requirements:

- Giving credit
- Not changing anything about the work
- Not using it commercially

Examples of Creative Commons platforms:

- Wikimedia Commons
- Flickr

How Students can Credit Media

Basic format: Creator – Title – Source

Example: Photo by Jane Smith via Wikimedia Commons

Even when media is free to use, credit is still required in most cases.

Best Practices for Posting Online

Encourage these habits:

- Use your own media: Use your own photos and videos whenever possible.
- Use Creative Commons media: Search for images labeled for reuse.
- Give credit: Always list the original creator.
- Use only what you need: Avoid uploading entire songs or movies.
- Ask permission: When in doubt, ask the original creator if you can.

Discussion Questions

- Why do creators deserve copyright protection?
- Should memes count as copyrighted works?
- How should students responsibly use media online?