

situation. When you have made your choice, take one of your lights and place it face down in front of you.

3. Wait until all group members have made their choices, and then flip your papers over. Discuss the choices you made, and decide as a group which one is best.
4. After each story, write down the choice your group made and why.



<p>Stop! Too dangerous to proceed.</p>	<p>The person you are talking to is clearly acting inappropriately, and the conversation needs to end.</p>
<p>Slow down, be cautious – and be prepared to stop.</p>	<p>Something about this conversation makes you feel uncomfortable. You're alert for any signs of inappropriate or suspicious behavior.</p>
<p>Coast is clear (but look both ways!)</p>	<p>You feel safe and enjoy interacting with this person online. But you also remember that all conversations can take unexpected turns, so you're prepared to put the brakes on if you need to. You have not provided any private information.</p>

ALLOW students 10 to 15 minutes to complete the activity. Then reassemble the class.

DISCUSS each story, inviting students to explain the choices their groups made. Although the students should think critically about their choices, it is important for them to understand that there sometimes are truly correct answers, especially when it comes to “red light” and “yellow light” situations. You may also use the following material to guide class discussion:

Abby's Story

Abby is 14. Yesterday was her friend Ivan's bar mitzvah, and Abby chatted with some of his relatives at the party. Today, Abby logs on to the social networking site MyFace and sees a friend request from Ivan's uncle. She doesn't know him very well, but they did chat a little bit about school at the dessert buffet.

Discussion: YELLOW – SLOW DOWN, BE CAUTIOUS. Abby should think twice about this one. The best thing she can do is ask her parents what they think about the situation. If they think it's fine, Abby should also let Ivan know and ask for his permission. If everyone gives her the thumbs up – and she feels comfortable being the uncle's friend on MyFace – then it's probably all right to accept his request. Abby should consider putting him on a limited profile setting so that he can't see her personal information or tagged photos. She should also check out their mutual friends.

Additional Questions: *What if Ivan's aunt asked to be Abby's friend on MyFace instead? Would the situation feel different? Why or why not? Do you have adult friends on Facebook or MySpace? If so, what made you decide to let them be your online friend?*

Vince's Story

Vince is 12 and loves playing *EscapeGo* – a fantasy combat MMORPG (massive multiplayer online role-playing game). When he first started playing, another avatar was nice to him and helped him learn the ways of the game. Since then they've been good friends online, completing quests together and protecting each other during combat. Once, one of their teammates asked them how old they were during a quest. "Enough small talk, dude. Nobody cares, just play the game," Vince's friend said in response.

Discussion: GREEN – COAST IS CLEAR (BUT LOOK BOTH WAYS!) It sounds like Vince's friend has his mind set on *EscapeGo* and not much else. This is a good sign. It's exciting to be able to collaborate and strategize with other players in real time, too – that's the beauty of MMORPGs. Vince should still be aware that he's interacting with strangers online, and that it's never a good idea to reveal private information in these kinds of settings.

Additional Questions: *What if Vince's friend asked him how old he was later on? What if he wanted to meet Vince in person to talk about gaming?*

Keyanna's Story

Keyanna is 13 and she often plays *Whatville*, a virtual world for middle school kids like herself. One day, another avatar throws a heart her way. Keyanna knows that throwing hearts is a common way to flirt on *Whatville*. She also knows he's not a newbie, because it takes someone with a lot of experience to design the kind of appearance that his avatar has.

Discussion: GREEN – COAST IS CLEAR (BUT LOOK BOTH WAYS!) Flirting online can be fun, as long as it's in a safe setting. And it's a popular thing to do in tween/teen virtual worlds like *Whyville* and *Habbo Hotel*. Keyanna can choose to throw a heart back or not – it's her decision. It's also a good sign that the other avatar doesn't look like a newbie. It takes a lot of time, energy, and youth-to-youth knowledge to make a trendy-looking avatar on *Whatville*. However, you can't always judge a book by its cover. If Keyanna starts feeling uncomfortable in any way, she should stop contact with this avatar immediately.

Additional Questions: *What if the male avatar started interacting with Keyanna in *Whatville* and no one else? Do you think that's a warning sign?*

Catherine's Story, Part 1

Catherine, who is 15, logs on to a chat room for teenagers. Her screen name is *CathyKisses15*. A guy called *MikeyMike99* said hi to her a few days ago, and they've talked every day since. He's really easy to chat with, and she likes venting to him about things that annoy her at school and at home. She hasn't told him anything too personal yet. "U seem so mature. Ur 15 right? I'm 20," *MikeyMike99* says.

Discussion: YELLOW – SLOW DOWN, BE CAUTIOUS. And definitely consider coming to a complete stop. Catherine should be aware that her screen name makes her a potential target for inappropriate contact in the chat room: it's flirty, indicates her age, and even says her name. It's good that Catherine hasn't divulged too much personal information to *MikeyMike99*. That said, she should be cautious about treating him as her confidant. Some people (older teens or young adults, more commonly) develop inappropriate relationships with younger teens online over time, establishing feelings of trust and affection at first in order to make their advances seem more normal.

Additional Questions: *Catherine insists she hasn't told *MikeyMike99* anything too personal. From your perspective, what does that mean?*

Catherine's Story, Part 2

Catherine is back online with MikeyMike99, and they've been talking for about a week now. He's starting to flirt with her, and she's flattered because he seems pretty mature. After all, Catherine's not really into any of the guys at her school, so she likes flirting with Mike online. She's pretty good at it too. And yeah, he said something that might have been kind of sexual once or twice. Today he writes, "Can I show u a pic?" Before she types a response, he says again: "Keep this private ok? I like u, Cat. I hope u like me 2."

Discussion: RED – STOP! TOO DANGEROUS TO PROCEED. Catherine has found herself in a sticky situation, whether she knows it or not. Talking sexually with people online is risky, especially if you know that person is older. There's a good chance that MikeyMike99's picture is inappropriate, and Catherine should feel uncomfortable that he is asking her to keep something private. Even though she's gone too far already, the power is still in her hands. Catherine should stop talking with Mike entirely. Even if it's a little embarrassing, she should talk to friend or parent about what happened, too.

Additional Questions: *What are some ways in which MikeyMike99 tries to make Catherine feel comfortable? (He uses a nickname (Cat) affectionately; he also appears to make himself vulnerable by telling her that he likes her, hopes she likes him too.)*