

Seventh Grade ELA Study Guide

Video Title: *The Rubber Band Rule*

Theme: Online actions have lasting impact — thoughtful digital behavior matters.

Grade Level: 7th Grade

Time Needed: ~45–60 minutes

Goal: Students will critically analyze a digital media message, evaluate consequences of online behavior, and compose thoughtful arguments and narratives about digital responsibility.

ELA Standards Addressed (7th Grade)

- **RI.7.2** – Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze development.
- **RI.7.3** – Analyze interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text.
- **W.7.1** – Write arguments with logical reasoning and relevant evidence.
- **W.7.3** – Write narratives that engage the reader and develop real or imagined experiences.
- **SL.7.1** – Engage in collaborative discussions with prepared ideas and respectful dialogue.
- **L.7.4** – Determine the meaning of words/phrases in context.

Step 1: Watch the Video – "The Rubber Band Rule"

Pre-Viewing Prompt: "What's a 'digital footprint'? How do our online actions create one, even when we think they're private or deleted?"

Post-Viewing Discussion Questions:

- What is the main message or central idea of the video?
- How does the rubber band metaphor help explain the impact of online behavior?
- What are examples of things that might "snap back" on someone?
- What choices does a Media Master make that others might not?
- How do personal responsibility and digital identity connect?

Key Takeaway: Thoughtless actions online — even deleted ones — can follow you. A Media Master always thinks before posting, liking, or sharing.

Step 2: Cause, Effect & Impact Map

Activity: Students chart the short-term and long-term consequences of one social media decision.

Starter Scenario: “A 7th grader posts a video making fun of a classmate, then deletes it.”

Map Out:

- Immediate impact on peers
- Possible adult or teacher response
- Emotional consequences for others
- Long-term effects on school, reputation, or future goals

Repeat with a *positive* choice scenario:

“A 7th grader posts a video celebrating classmates’ creativity.”

Focus: Show how choices ripple out in both directions.

Step 3: Argumentative Writing Prompt

Prompt: “Should schools discipline students for things they post online outside of school?”

Students should:

- Clearly state a claim
- Provide at least 3 supporting reasons
- Use logical evidence or real-world examples
- Acknowledge opposing viewpoints
- End with a thoughtful conclusion

Tip: Discuss “freedom of speech” vs. “freedom from consequences.”

Step 4: Narrative Writing – Snap Back Story

Prompt: Write a short narrative from the perspective of a student who experiences a major *Snap Back Moment*. The student must:

- Make a decision online that has unintended consequences
- Navigate conflict or embarrassment
- Reflect and learn something about digital responsibility
- End with a changed attitude or growth as a Media Master

Encourage voice, tension, emotional depth, and clear structure (intro, rising action, climax, resolution).

Step 5: Structured Class Debate

Debate Topic: “Once something is deleted online, it’s gone for good.” Agree or disagree?

Divide class into small groups or two sides:

- Side A: Argue that digital posts never truly disappear
- Side B: Argue that people should be allowed to make mistakes online

Use accountable talk prompts:

“I respectfully disagree because...”

“Evidence from the video suggests...”

“This connects to real life because...”

Step 6: Design a PSA Slide or Infographic

Project: Students create a Google Slide or paper PSA poster that promotes *The Rubber Band Rule*. Must include:

- A powerful slogan
- A clear graphic or symbol (rubber band, boomerang, etc.)
- At least 3 clear DOs and DON'Ts for online posting
- A tagline like “Be a Media Master – Think First”

Optional: Present posters to the class or display around school.

Wrap-Up: Snap or Not? Rapid Fire Game

Teacher reads out example digital situations. Students respond with:

- “Media Master Move” (safe and smart)
- “Could Snap Back!” (think again!)

Examples:

- Posting a silly photo of yourself
- Commenting “lol” on someone’s fail video
- Liking a mean meme about a teacher
- Sharing a petition for a good cause
- Deleting a post after it’s shared

Use hand signals, paddles, or quick write-and-pass for engagement.

Optional Extensions

- **Literature Tie-In:** *Restart* by Gordon Korman (themes of digital identity and second chances)
- **Podcast Prompt:** “If you could send one message to your future self about how to behave online, what would it be?” Record or write.
- **Family Homework:** Interview a parent or older sibling: “Has anything you posted online ever snapped back on you?”

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