The False Reality of Social Media: Accepting Yourself | Sophia Shi | TEDxYouth@GranvilleIsland

eslvideo.com Quiz by: teacher_amandinha

1. At what age did Sophia get her first Instagram account?

○ a.) Grade 3

○ b.) Grade 5

○ c.) Grade 7

2. What did Sophia often compare herself to?

○ a.) Her friends

○ b.) Social media influencers

○ c.) Celebrities on TV

3. How did Sophia feel about her own appearance?

○ a.) Confident

○ b.) Humiliated

○ c.) Indifferent

4. What changed Sophia's view on social media?

○ a.) A friend's advice

○ b.) A YouTube video

○ c.) A book she read

5. How many tries did it take Sophia to take a selfie she liked?

○ a.) 20 tries

○ b.) 50 tries

○ c.) 100 tries

6. What did Sophia use to edit her photos?

○ a.) Photoshop 101 app

○ b.) Instagram filters

○ c.) A different editing software

7. What did Sophia realize about other influencers?

○ a.) They are all perfect

○ b.) They also edit their photos

○ c.) They don't care about their looks

8. How did Sophia feel after receiving a lot of likes on her post?

○ a.) Happy and confident

○ b.) Confused and anxious

○ c.) Indifferent

9. What did Sophia learn about social media?

○ a.) It's always real

○ b.) It's often fake

○ c.) It's only for fun

10. What does Sophia challenge her audience to do?

○ a.) Compare themselves to others

○ b.) Celebrate their uniqueness

○ c.) Follow more influencers

Transcript

In my generation, most of us are influenced by social media from a very much younger age than any other generation. I had my first Instagram account when I was only in grade five. From that point on, especially after I got into high school, it changed my life. I saw the influencers, social media celebrities, living their perfect life. I constantly ask myself this one question: what am I doing with my life?

The social media was telling me what everyone else my age was doing: winning national awards, getting a 98 GPA, cultivating a perfect body, luminous teeth, and a flawless skin. They traveled everywhere around the world, from Beijing to Paris, wearing the coolest outfits, living in fancy homes. I think the high life meant traveling from Vancouver all the way to Richmond, wearing a hoodie and buying the best ketchup. I could not measure up.

I remember signing to my Instagram account and staring in horrible as another perfect person would pop up on my screen. Their godlike bodies and blank expressions, brought you by various cosmetic brands, humiliated my own form and face, filled full of acne and spots. The more of their videos I saw, the less confident I became. I dreamed of being one of them, the coolest people on earth, but I woke up to the disappointment of being myself.

For two years straight, I didn't post anything on my Instagram account because I thought I wasn't pretty enough. But one day, a YouTube video completely changed my view on social media. I remember it was a Saturday night. I was sitting in front of my computer, casually browsing on YouTube, and this video called "How to Make Your Instagram Page Stand Out" immediately grab my attention.

So I click on the video and begin watching, and that is probably one of the best decision I've ever made in my life, because that's officially introduced me to one of my closest, most loyal friends of all time, the Photoshop 101 app. I then download the app, recommend the video, and begin my journey as a professional photoshopper, if that's a job.

So following guy in the video, I first took a selfie, which took me 50 tries. But I want to clarify here, right, I didn't take it so many times because my phone cracked or I have an

iPhone 4. I want to have a good photo, like a really really good one. If you're a girl, you probably get this, so don't judge me.

So after I got the picture that I was satisfied with, I click on the retouch button, then the smooth button on the app. Then I saw the retouched photo. Whoa, whoa, whoa, this looks so real. Like I wouldn't think anyone would be able to tell that if it's Photoshop. Like if I showed this to my mom, she wouldn't know that. So I added some eye shadow, made my eyes look rounder, and last but not least, fix my hairline. It really needs some help as you get older.

All set, it looked perfect. So without any hesitation, I posted that on my Instagram account. Then I could envision myself becoming famous and becoming the next Charlie Demilio, and also get invited to all the fancy red carpets and all the fantasy parties because of this perfect picture.

Then I returned back to YouTube and continued watching the next video on the playlist, another video that taught me how to photoshop. I listened carefully, trying to get down every single detail. Then I paused. Wait, is that the girl that appeared on my For You page multiple times? She also photoshopped her pictures.

Then I continued watching. I found out more and more social media influencers who photoshopped their pictures. I paused again. Wait, so if a lot of the influencers out there are also photoshopping their pictures, is it unfair when I compare my own natural look to a well-edited one online?

To prove my beliefs, I went to my Google engine and typed up the keywords "celebrities Photoshop." The countless results of "celebrities Photoshop fail," "celebrities before and after picture," popped up on my screen. At that moment, I realized my best friend just betrayed me. This Photoshop 101 app is not at all an exclusive friend to me, and I was not the only one.

But my surprise did not stop there, though. My Instagram notification blew up on my phone. I just got under a thousand likes. People liked my post, reposted elsewhere, and even sent me questions about my skincare routine. I almost reached the velocity to escape the real world, and I almost thought I look exactly like that picture I've just posted.

But one particular comment brought me back to earth: "You have flawless skin, you're an enthusiastic but misguided fan, I wish I looked like you." This comment reminded me of the Insecurity I had felt when I did not know about Photoshop. When I look at all the influencers and felt sad, wishing I was one of them. But in fact, that perfect photo that got me a thousand likes had taken me 50 tries, and besides that, it took me 20 minutes to Photoshop that one single picture. And that one single picture out of the 50 pictures in my camera roll made other people think that I actually looked that good 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

I have done exactly like what all the other influencers are doing to hide their spots and imperfections. They posted perfect pictures but never revealed that the camera had a filter on it, that had taken them 50 or even 60 tries to get that one single picture. They never confessed that they rented that fancy car, they rented that fancy mention. They never confessed that they only post the best versions of themselves on social media.

I have felt worried and anxious about my look and my life because of the social media, commercials, pictures, posts that have been lying to me. And now I found, discover the truth behind social media. I realized it is okay if I don't have the best body type, the perfect face, nor a flawless skin, because no one is perfect.

And we should never change our look to fit the beauty centers, and we should never change ourselves to make someone else happy, and we should never compare ourselves with anyone, because we never know what happened behind that picture, behind that grade, behind the university acceptance offer, the rejection, the failure, the doubts that those perfect people have also faced.

Because everyone wants to post the best versions of themselves on social media, the best moments of their life on social media. No matter how much you're gonna change, you cannot be like the photo you just saw, because it is not even real in the first place. And we should remember that a real person is imperfect, and a perfect person is never real.

Now I challenge you: stop comparing yourself with other people, celebrate all the unique things you have.