



MODULE 5

CYBERSECURITY AND ONLINE SAFETY



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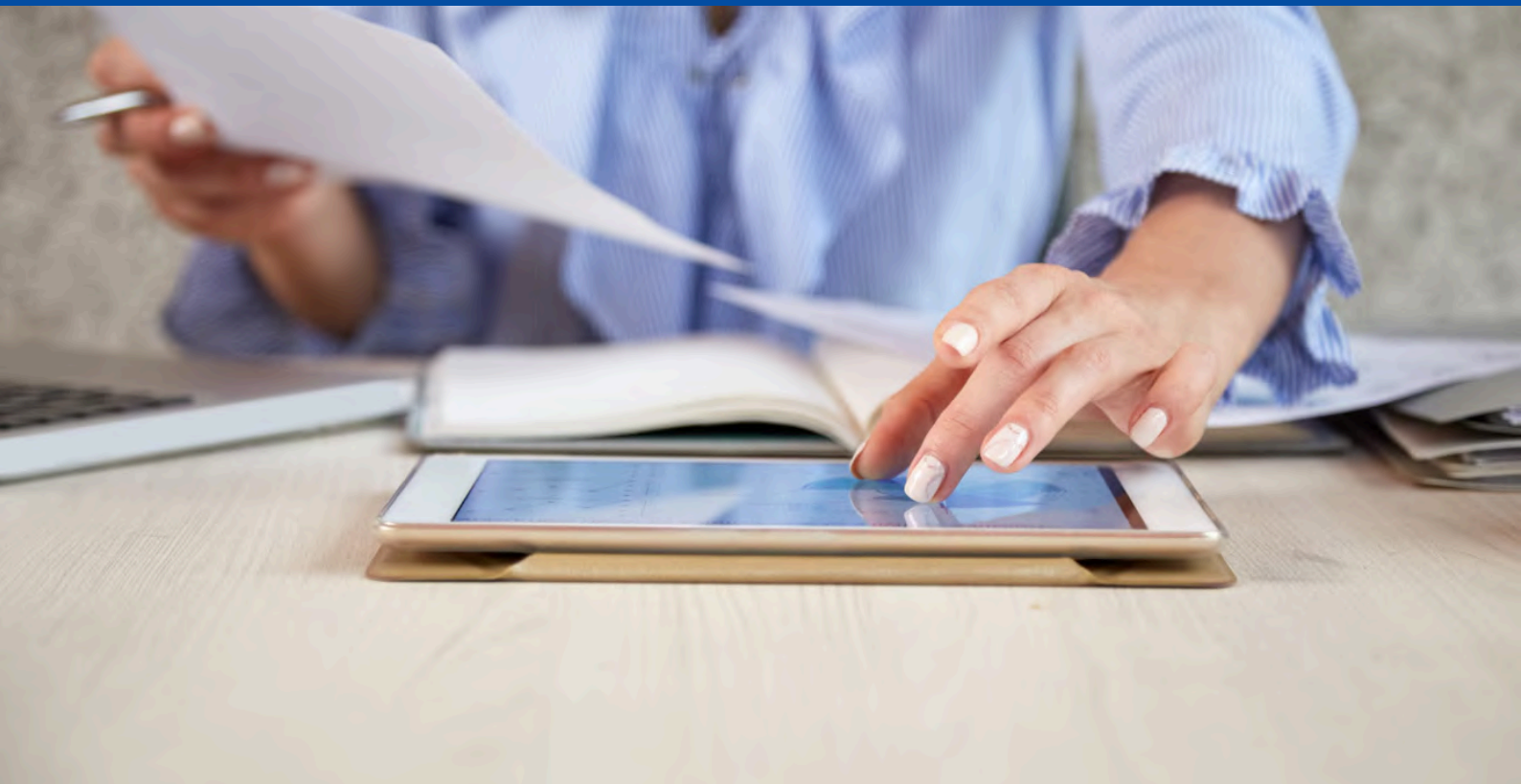


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Lesson 5.3

Legal Aspects of Online Behaviour



ERASMEDIAH

Educational Reinforcement Against
the Social Media Hyperconnectivity



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Legal Aspects of Online Behaviour

Objectives:

- To develop a clear understanding of the legal frameworks governing online behavior, including key concepts like digital rights and intellectual property.
- To identify illegal online activities, and understand their consequences in both civil and criminal law.
- To foster a responsible and informed approach to online actions by recognizing legal risks, promoting respectful behavior, and ensuring compliance with digital laws.

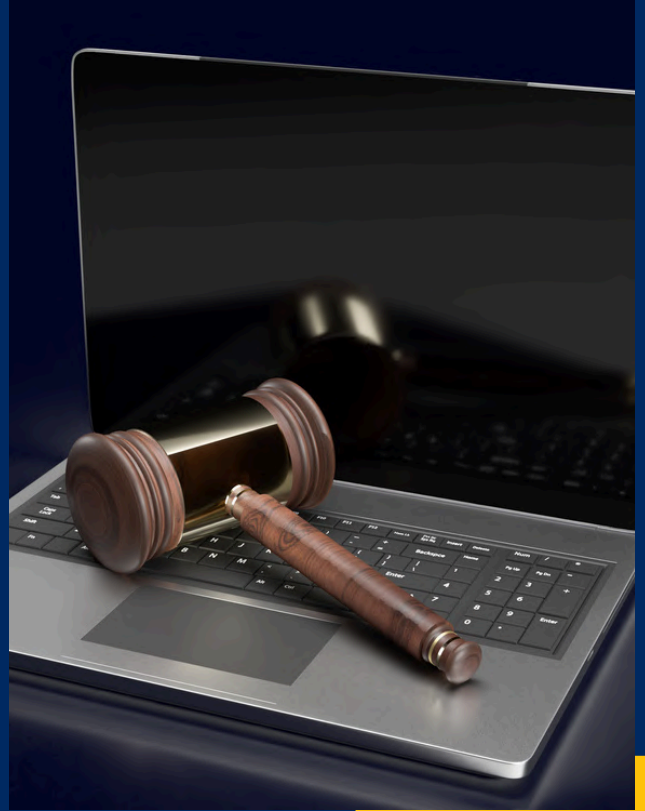
Key Message(s):

- Posting, sharing, or downloading content without understanding the law can lead to fines, lawsuits, or even criminal penalties.
- Being unaware of digital laws doesn't excuse illegal behavior. Educating yourself ensures you avoid unintended violations.
- From a comment to a share, your digital activity leaves a footprint. Think before you act to avoid unintended legal consequences.



TYPE OF LESSON:





Lesson Overview

With digital interactions being central to our lives, understanding the legal landscape of online behavior is critical. This lesson highlights key legal concepts and explains how common online actions - like sharing content, posting comments, or misusing data - can result in serious consequences. By exploring real-life cases and practical strategies, you'll gain awareness of their responsibilities in the digital world and learn how to protect themselves and others from legal risks.

The workshop is organized into 4 steps:

- 1: Identifying legal risks in the digital world (10min)
- 2: Lessons from real-life online missteps (15 min)
- 3: Strategies for staying legally compliant online (10 min)
- 4: Final reflections and actionable insights (5 min)



Step 1

Identifying legal risks in the digital world

Although today's digital world offers many opportunities, it also brings with it legal risks that can have serious consequences. It is important that you learn to recognize them and avoid the problems that can arise from acting unknowingly online. Here you will find some key areas to watch out for:

- When you use content available online - photos, videos, music, texts - make sure you do so legally. Downloading material from illegal sources or using someone else's content without permission can lead to legal liability. Remember: "free access" does not always mean "legal access"!
- Whatever you publish on the Internet stays there for a long time. Inappropriate comments, offensive memes or ill-considered posts can lead to violations of the law, such as in the context of defamation or hate speech. Every word you say has consequences.



Step 1

Identifying legal risks in the digital world

Have you ever read the app's terms and conditions before accepting them? Probably not, but that's where the information about how your data is used and what responsibilities you assume is hidden. Knowing these provisions is the basis for avoiding unpleasant surprises.

Now, you will receive a sheet of paper with several situations related to online activities. Your task is to decide whether each action described is legal or illegal and write your justification in one sentence directly on the sheet.

You have 5 minutes to complete this task. Once everyone is finished, we will collect your sheets and discuss the correct answers together.



Identifying legal risks in the digital world

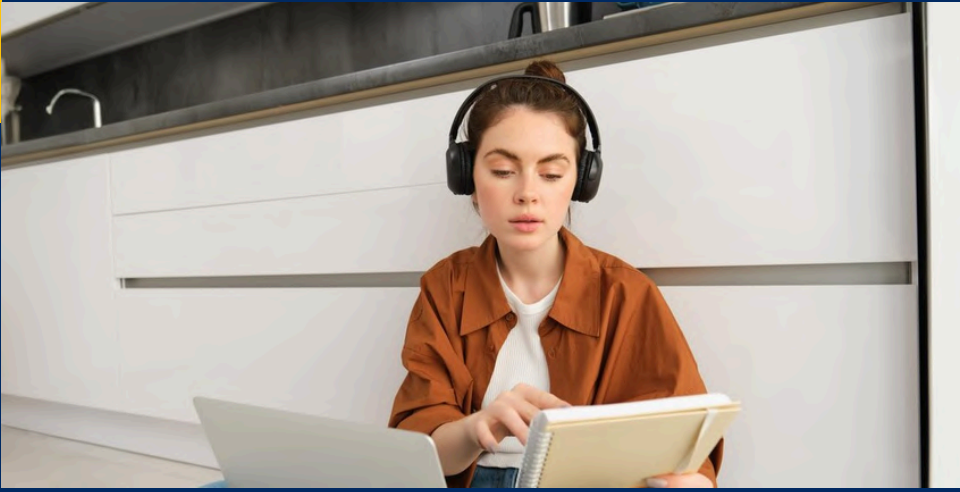
YOU DOWNLOAD A VIDEO FROM AN UNKNOWN WEBSITE BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT TO PAY FOR A STREAMING PLATFORM.

YOU POST AN IMAGE FOUND ON GOOGLE TO YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING THE SOURCE.

YOU CLICK ON A LINK FROM AN EMAIL THAT PROMISES FREE ACCESS TO GAMES, BUT REQUIRES YOUR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION.

YOUR COLLEAGUE INSULTS SOMEONE IN A FACEBOOK COMMENT USING VULGARITIES.

YOU USE AN APP THAT ASKS FOR ACCESS TO YOUR LOCATION, EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T NEED IT TO FUNCTION.



Step 2

Lessons from real-life online missteps

Let's take a real-world example to understand how small online decisions can lead to big consequences. Please, read this case study carefully and think about what went wrong.

A student's social media post

Anna, a university student, wanted to share her thoughts about a professor she didn't like. Frustrated after receiving a poor grade, she wrote a public post on social media, calling the professor "unfair, lazy, and unqualified to teach". She tagged the professor's name to make sure everyone knew who she was talking about. Within a week, Anna received a formal notice from the university. The professor had filed a complaint for defamation, stating that Anna's post damaged their reputation. Anna argued it was "just her opinion" and didn't mean any harm. However, the legal consequences were real: she had to apologize publicly, delete the post, and attend a mandatory session on online behaviour.



Step 2

Lessons from real-life online missteps

What can we learn from this?

1. Freedom of speech has limits: Sharing opinions online is allowed, but statements that harm someone's reputation can cross into illegal territory.
2. Think before you post: Even posts made in frustration or as a joke can have serious consequences.
3. Public versus private: Public posts are visible to everyone and can spread quickly, leading to greater impact.

Your turn:

What could Anna have done differently to express her frustration in a more constructive and legal way? Think about her actions and share with others one or two alternative approaches.



Step 3

Strategies for staying legally compliant online

The Internet gives you amazing tools for learning, communicating, and sharing, but it also comes with rules you must follow to stay on the right side of the law. Let's look at some key strategies to help you navigate online spaces safely and legally.

1. Always check if you have permission to use images, music, or text. Free doesn't always mean legal. Look for Creative Commons or other licenses.
2. Don't overshare online and avoid giving out sensitive information unless it's absolutely necessary. Always use secure websites (look for "https").



Step 3

Strategies for staying legally compliant online

3. Comments, posts, and messages should be respectful. Avoid content that could be seen as harmful, defamatory, or discriminatory.
4. It might seem boring, but skimming through the key points of any platform's rules can save you from breaking them unknowingly.
5. Be cautious about suspicious links or offers. Phishing scams and malware can lead to legal trouble if they affect others.

Exercise: Create your own code of conduct

Working in pairs, your task is to create a short "Online code of conduct" with 4-5 key rules that ensure safe and legally compliant behavior online.

Steps:

1. Discuss the biggest risks people face online (e.g., copyright issues, sharing personal data, harmful language).
2. Based on your discussion, write 4-5 clear, practical rules that anyone could follow to stay legally safe online.
3. Be creative! Use language that is easy to understand, like a list of "**Dos and Don'ts**".



Step 3

Strategies for staying legally compliant online

Example to inspire you:

- **Do:** Always check if content is free to use before sharing or posting.
- **Don't:** Share personal details like your address or bank account online.

Time to complete: ~7 minutes

Once everyone finishes, we'll read your codes aloud and discuss which rules are the most practical and why. This way, we'll create a classroom-approved "Online code of conduct"!

Step 4

Final reflections and actionable insights

Throughout our session, we've delved into the importance of being mindful and legally compliant online. From understanding how small missteps can escalate to significant consequences, to creating your own rules for safe online behavior, you've gained tools to approach the digital world responsibly. Remember, every action online leaves a footprint, and making thoughtful choices protects not only you but also the people and platforms you interact with.

Being proactive, asking questions, and thinking critically about your behavior online can help you stay on the right side of the law while creating a positive online environment for others.

Question to consider

How can you encourage others around you to be more mindful of their online actions?





Key Takeaway Summary

- **Always verify the legality of the content you use or share online.**
- **Protect your personal data and think twice before sharing sensitive information.**
- **Use respectful language, even in moments of frustration - words matter.**
- **Stay curious and cautious about the platforms, apps, and websites you engage with.**



Instructions for youth workers, educators, and teachers

Objective:

This lesson aims to raise awareness among participants about the legal frameworks governing online behavior. By engaging with real-life examples, valuable discussions, and practical activities, participants will learn to recognize legal risks in digital spaces, understand the consequences of illegal actions, and adopt strategies to stay legally compliant online.

Materials Needed:

- Printed sheets with examples of legal and illegal online actions
- Whiteboard or flip chart with markers for brainstorming and summarizing key points
- Pens or pencils
- Blank sheets of paper for note-taking or completing activities
- Access to tools like *Terms of Service; Didn't Read (ToS;DR)* for simplifying terms of service





Step 1: Identifying legal risks in the digital world (10 min)

1. Engage learners with a relatable example. Start by asking participants, “Have you ever shared a post, downloaded a file, or clicked on a link without considering its legality? What risks might these actions carry?” Use this question to introduce the topic of online legal risks.

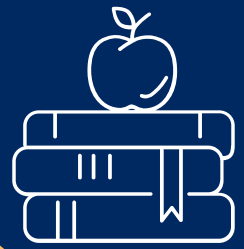
2. Explain learners the importance of understanding legal risks. Highlight that actions like downloading content without permission, sharing harmful comments, or ignoring terms of service can lead to legal consequences. Stress that knowing the rules is the first step to avoiding violations.

3. Activity – Decision-making exercise:

- Distribute a sheet with scenarios related to online activities (provided in the module).
- Instruct participants to decide whether each action is legal or illegal and write a one-sentence justification.
- Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

4. Discussion and clarification: Collect responses and discuss the correct answers. Use this opportunity to clarify misconceptions and explain the legal implications of each scenario.





Step 1: Identifying legal risks in the digital world (10 min)

Explanations:

1. Downloading content from unauthorized sources violates copyright laws. Even if it's free or convenient, it doesn't make it legal.
2. Images found on Google are often protected by copyright. Sharing them without proper attribution or permission infringes on intellectual property rights.
3. Clicking such links could lead to phishing or scams, which are illegal activities. Sharing credit card information in this context could also make you a victim of fraud.
4. Posting offensive or defamatory comments online can breach laws regarding hate speech or defamation, depending on the context and severity.
5. Granting unnecessary permissions isn't illegal, but it puts your privacy at risk. Always evaluate why an app needs certain access to your data and deny permissions when they're unnecessary.





Step 2: Lessons from real-life online missteps (15 min)

1. Present learners a case study. Share the story of Anna, a student whose social media post led to legal consequences. Ask participants to reflect on what went wrong and why her actions were problematic.
2. Facilitate small group discussions:
 - Ask participants to brainstorm alternative ways Anna could have expressed her frustration legally and constructively.
 - Each participant should identify 1-2 strategies Anna could have used.
3. Share insights. Bring the groups together to share their ideas. Highlight key takeaways, such as the importance of respectful communication and the distinction between private and public posts.





Step 3: Strategies for staying legally compliant online (10 min)

1. Introduce practical strategies. Provide an overview of key strategies for staying compliant, such as:

- Checking copyright permissions before using content.
- Reviewing terms of service for platforms and apps.
- Avoiding defamatory, discriminatory, or harmful posts.
- Being cautious about sharing personal or sensitive information.

2. Activity – Create a code of conduct:

- Pair participants and ask them to draft a short “Online code of conduct” with 4-5 practical rules for safe and legal behavior online.
- Encourage creativity and simplicity in the rules (e.g., “Do: Always verify content permissions. Don’t: Share personal details publicly.”).

3. Group sharing. Have pairs present their codes and discuss which rules are the most practical and why. Compile the most effective rules into a classroom-approved code of conduct.





Step 4: Final reflections and actionable insights (5 min)

1. Ask participants to reflect on one habit they will change or adopt to improve their legal compliance online. Examples might include regularly reviewing privacy settings or thinking before posting sensitive content.
2. Discuss how participants can share what they've learned with friends or family, emphasizing the importance of spreading awareness about online legal risks.
3. End with a memorable reminder. For instance: "Your digital actions have real-world consequences. Staying informed and cautious helps protect not just yourself, but also the wider online community".

Key Takeaways:

Emphasize to participants that understanding the legal aspects of online behavior is a crucial skill for navigating the digital world responsibly. Use the lesson's key points to highlight how recognizing legal risks, such as copyright infringement or defamatory comments, and adopting preventative strategies, like reviewing terms of service and respecting intellectual property, can help avoid serious consequences. Encourage participants to adopt a proactive mindset by setting achievable goals, such as adjusting privacy settings or verifying permissions before sharing content. Reinforce these takeaways through follow-up discussions and activities that revisit these ideas, ensuring participants remain informed and committed to legally compliant online habits.





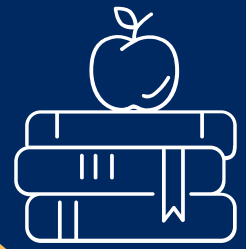
Follow-Up and At-Home Activities:

Encourage participants to review their social media profiles and adjust settings or delete problematic content. Assign them to explore tools like Creative Commons License Chooser or ToS;DR and report how these tools improve their understanding of digital law. Ask them to evaluate permissions on a frequently used app and share findings with peers. Finally, prompt them to teach a friend or family member one key takeaway from the session, such as the importance of respecting intellectual property.

Tips for Teachers:

Use relatable examples, such as cases of copyright infringement or social media oversharing, to show participants how online actions can lead to legal consequences. You can also incorporate visuals like screenshots of privacy settings, copyright symbols, or examples of phishing emails to make concepts clearer. Foster open discussions where participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts or questions without fear of judgment. Demonstrate practical tools like Creative Commons or privacy checkups to help participants understand how to stay compliant online. Reinforce the importance of responsible behavior by revisiting these topics regularly and encouraging simple, everyday habits like checking app permissions or thinking twice before posting content.





Tools

Creative Commons License Chooser



This tool helps users select the appropriate Creative Commons license for their work, ensuring proper attribution and legal sharing of creative content. It's an essential resource for understanding how to legally share and use content online.

creativecommons.org

Terms of Service; Didn't Read (ToS;DR)



This platform simplifies and summarizes the terms of service of popular websites, highlighting potential risks and rights violations. It's a great tool for understanding the legal implications of agreeing to online terms and policies.

tosdr.org



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QUIZ

1. Which of the following actions aligns with copyright laws?
 - A. Using an image licensed under Creative Commons with proper attribution
 - B. Downloading a video from an unauthorized streaming website
 - C. Sharing a song file with friends via a public link
 - D. Copying an entire blog post into your own post without permission

2. What is considered a responsible way to express frustration online?
 - A. Posting public comments naming individuals and using harsh language
 - B. Privately discussing the issue with trusted friends or professionals
 - C. Writing a public post venting frustration without using specific names
 - D. Creating a meme criticizing a person and sharing it widely

3. Why is granting unnecessary app permissions risky?
 - A. It slows down the app's performance
 - B. It might lead to excessive notifications
 - C. It ensures apps work only within the intended region
 - D. It can expose personal data to misuse or security breaches





QUIZ

4. What makes a public social media post potentially illegal?
- A. Sharing personal photos with friends
 - B. Posting generic opinions about daily life
 - C. Publishing defamatory or harmful statements about someone
 - D. Complaining about a public service without naming individuals
5. Which habit best ensures compliance with online legal standards?
- A. Ignoring terms of service agreements
 - B. Reviewing permissions and legal requirements before sharing content
 - C. Allowing apps to access all requested data for convenience
 - D. Posting anonymous opinions on public platforms





Solutions

Question 1: A

Question 2: B

Question 3: D

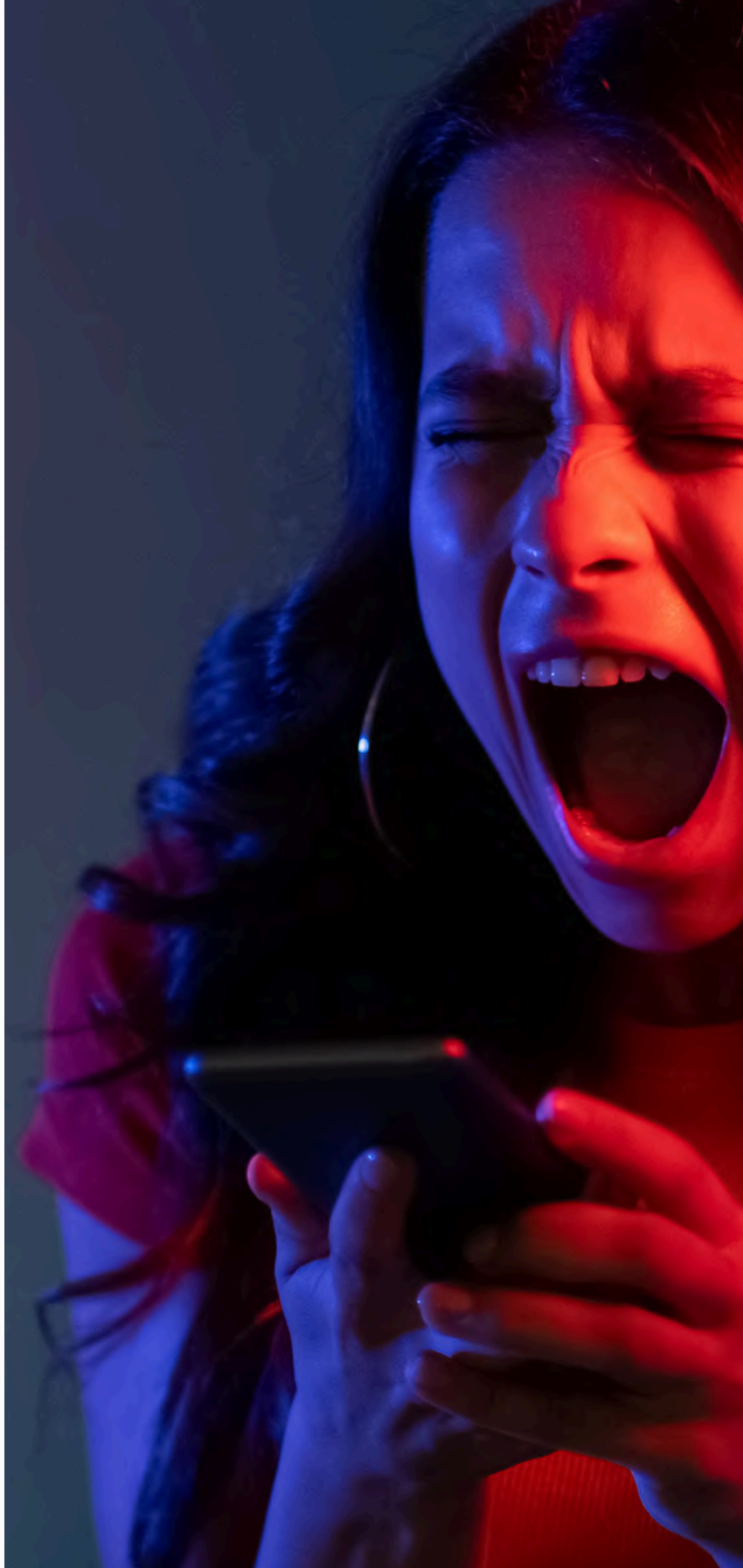
Question 4: C

Question 5: B





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