

## Lesson Skill: Selecting evidence to support the main idea

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**Strand** Reading--narrative nonfiction

**SOL** 6.5  
7.5  
8.5

### Materials

Copies of the attached essay *Cyber Bullies: How to Avoid Them* by Jared Pierce

Copies of the attached Paired Reading Guide worksheet

### Lesson

The attached Paired Reading Guide worksheet will help students organize information they glean from their own reading and/or get from another student. It can be used to manage and organize information in the pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading stages.

1. Distribute copies of the two handouts listed above. Give a brief overview of the essay, teach terms as needed, and elicit students' background knowledge about the topic of cyber bullies and the Internet. Organize this information on the board in the form of a concept or word map.
2. Have one member of each pair read the essay softly aloud while the listener makes notes about the main idea—how to avoid a cyber bully—in the “My Notes” column of his/her worksheet. Halfway through the reading, students should switch roles as reader and note taker.
3. After they complete the reading, have each student elaborate on his/her notes by adding the notes of his/her partner in the right-hand column. They should ask their partners to recall detailed evidence to support the main idea.
4. Hold a class discussion in which students share what they learned from their partners in recalling the evidence for the main idea and summarizing the essay. Be sure that they cite the evidence in the text to support the main idea. Record their responses on the board or chart paper for all to see.



## Cyber Bullies: How to Avoid Them

By Jared Pierce

Middle school can be tough. You are expected to get good grades, make new friends, and stay out of trouble. Not everyone will do well at all three, but it never hurts to try. If there is one overriding cause that can keep you from reaching these goals, it is a bully. A bully is out to hurt your self-esteem, keep you from making new friends, and get you into trouble. Unfortunately, bullies are unavoidable. Gone are the days when their activities to terrorize others were confined to the school building. Now, they have the ability to become cyber bullies and use the Internet to pick on and mock other kids. Knowing effective ways to get rid of these types of people will make being a kid fun again.

Cyber bullies' top priority is to make your life tough and in the process make themselves feel better. The two most common ways they will harass you is through instant messaging and e-mail. What they do is learn your screen name or e-mail address and begin to send you threatening or annoying messages. They use all sorts of tricks to be mean. Some cyber bullies send hateful e-mails and possibly attach offensive things to them. Others might constantly instant message you and call you names or say hurtful things. Sadly, there seems to be a large stream of these types of people waiting to take advantage of new technology.

How can you combat cyber bullies? Be sure to give out your screen name or e-mail address only to your closest friends and family. Just because you are friends with someone at school does not mean you want to talk to them online. If bullies want your address, they most likely are not going to ask you directly. They will ask your friends or perhaps your friend's friends. Knowing who has your online information is a start to keeping cyber bullies away from you.

If you already have someone bullying you but do not want to change your e-mail address or screen name, you can block the bully. Blocking certain users is a simple process. The only drawback to this particular action is that a cyber bully could get a new e-mail or screen name account and start the process all over again. It is still a good idea to block bullies, as this will send a clear message that you are not going to take their abuse.

If blocking does not stop the abuse, you can report the cyber bully to the service provider. AOL Instant Messenger allows users to "warn" other users if they are being abusive or offensive. The warning level will be visible to other AIM users, and if the level reaches a certain point, AOL can remove the user. This service will also allow you to pick

and choose who can send you messages. By selecting the group of individuals that can see you are online and send you messages, you limit cyber bullies' ability to harass you.

E-mail is different from instant messaging in that you will usually not be present when the e-mail is received. The cyber bully can send you vulgar images or hateful e-mails in hopes your parents will see them and punish you. It is best to ignore messages from individuals you do not know. When it comes to e-mail, the best defense is secrecy. Do not give out your e-mail address to everyone, and respond only to those you trust.

The online world is an amazing place. Cyber bullies exploit it and make being there no fun. Just as bullies do in schools, they limit your ability to perform the way you would like. By remembering that it is okay to fight back, you will decrease the impact a cyber bully can have. Knowing how to fight back effectively is half the battle. Keep the above tips in mind if you are faced with this situation, and you can make the online world a fun place to be.

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**Paired Reading Guide**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Partner's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Notes**

**My Partner's Notes**

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Chapter summary

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