Craigslist 101

srp 1.1

A student understands the basics of navigating craigslist, including what is contained in each section (focus on housing, personals, for sale & jobs). A student also understands the basics of searching, posting and replying to posts safely.

Lesson Objectives

The student will understand and can accomplish these tasks at the end of the lesson:

- Search entire site and specific sections for posts
- Identify legitimate ads and avoid scams
- Post an ad
- Reply to an ad

Lesson Prep Work

(30 min, at a minimum, prior to student arrival)

- Load up https://www.onguardonline.gov/ phishing videos and/or games to play with the class
- Open "How to Sell Furniture" (found in the last page of this lesson plan)
- Open email account to show how to reply to posts, and to demo email received from craigslist when posting an ad

Lesson Prerequisites

- Basic computer skills including mousing and keyboard.
- Email address required to use website, but okay to attend class without one.

Lesson Outline

The lesson is completed in one 90-minute class session.

- (10 min) Introduction
  - Introduce instructor, students.
  - State/show order in which class will happen. Explain that the class is intended to be an overview of craigslist - not an in-depth tutorial
  - Go around the room and have students share what they want to learn about craigslist.

- (70 min) Activities
  - (20) Section 1: What is craigslist?
    - Explain that craigslist is an online version of classifieds in newspaper
    - Local sales, rentals, services, discussions
    - No charge except for job postings in certain large cities, brokered housing in NYC, and therapeutic services ($10)
    - Navigate to http://philadelphia.craigslist.org and have students follow along
    - Explain how craigslist is organized
      - Almost everything is a hyperlink
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- Show post, my account, help & search in top left corner of page
- Nearby cities on right
- Higher level categories - go through and explain what they are - ask class what they think as you do (housing, personals, for sale, etc.)
  - Sub-categories, or specific types of posts within them
  - Show steps to navigate to a sub-category and have students follow along
    - Open a post and show that they are chronological, starting with most recent
- Explain that students can refer to back of handout when they work on their own. (Navigation tips!)
- Demonstrate how to click on “craigslist” in thread, anywhere on page, or click back button to navigate site
  - Explain that we’ll come back to posts, but first safety!

  - (15) Section 2: Safety
    - Class shares fears they have, ask questions about safety
    - Review front of handout (“buying & selling safely” and “meeting people”) - ignore the rest!
    - Navigate to safety portions of website and have students follow along
      - avoid scams & fraud
      - personal safety tips
      - help, faq, abuse, legal
        - what is “phishing?” - discuss
    - Show www.onguardonline.gov phishing video, or play phishing game
    - Wrap up safety, answer questions from students

  - (10) Section 3: Searching
    - Ask students to name something they’re searching for, and show how while they follow along
    - Search from home page with drop-down menu
    - Search by specific type of ad and section
    - Limit by price, images, number of bedrooms, etc.
    - Show maps, pets, etc. at bottom of housing posts
    - Explain flags, flagging and show where to flag on site

  - (15) Section 4: Posting
    - Create an account or don’t create an account?
    - Worthwhile if you will post frequently, or if you post paid ads
    - You’ll need an email address to post, and, most of the time, to reply to ads
    - Demonstrate steps for posting an ad using email account, including:
      - To anonymize (hide your real identity) or not to anonymize? Probably best to anonymize!
        - Show on web form.
      - Phone verification - must enter code (from text or voice) to post ad
      - CAPTCHA – for verifying a poster is human and not a spamming machine
    - Show options to edit or delete, or to undelete
● Explain “posting & reposting” rules on handout
● Review phishing (ads or messages that try to steal your passwords or financial information) and possible scamming replies to posts
● Discuss creative ways to describe your items – get suggestions from students
  ○ Show “How to Describe Furniture,” talk about language, providing lots of information about items (kind of a joke, kind of not!)
  ○ Be aware of words people might use to make posts more appealing
○ (10) Section 5: Reply to ads
  ■ Pull up multiple posts (one at a time) to show various ways people asked to be contacted (focus on jobs section)
    ● If there is no phone number, reply via email
    ● Does poster want you to apply in person?
    ● Read ENTIRE post!
    ● Show actual or anonymized email on a live post
    ● How much do you want to disclose about yourself? (email address shows in reply, caller ID when you call, etc.)
    ● Do not wire money
    ● Exchange service or item for cash with only local sellers

● (10) Conclusion
  ○ Go over handout, review material, and emphasize contact info & further resources on handout.
  ○ Any questions? Final comments?
  ○ Remind participants to practice; assign take-home-practice - remind them they can ask for help