

THE MEME ACCOUNT

Vihaan and Louis loved memes. They were both creative and decided to make a meme account about their classmates and teachers just to have some fun. Every meme they made was meant to poke some fun at everyone without doing any harm.

They started an account on Instagram, and within a week they had 100 followers, and their memes were popular. Most of them were harmless and about students. Then other students started sending them memes to post. Some were good and would be used on their page.

The two boys were not popular and liked this newly found popularity as their account soared past another hundred followers.

Then the memes about teachers started to flow in. These were the most popular memes because the students knew that the teachers were not following the account, didn't know about it and they felt they could complain about their teachers on this platform. The memes were meant to be funny but some of them were a bit mean even though they were funny too. The memes used pictures the teachers did not know were taken and the comments were going after the teachers.

By this time the account had 300 followers, and some teachers had found out about it. It was the talk of the school and even though 90% of the memes were innocent and friendly, the rest were just downright mean and so were the comments. Someone turned the account in.

Vihaan and Louis were called into the principal's office with their parents. The worst meme was the reported meme, making fun of a gay teacher. The students had taken a picture of him in spandex biking shorts (he rode his bike to school) and it was a very bad and close up view of his bottom in the shorts with comments about his partner that were just out of line. The boys were suspended for three days, and it was going in their permanent record — the worst part; the boys didn't make that meme. It had been sent to them. The principal argued,

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“You are the admins of this account and could have chosen not to post this meme. Therefore you two will be punished.”

Both teachers and parents were arguing about the situation. There were three camps.

“These boys were just being creative, and they are not homophobic. Look at their exemplary behavior in school.”

The other camp stated, “These boys crossed a line. They are old enough and should know better. They deserve to be punished.”

Then there were some students, “Okay, we get that they took it too far but you adults need to stay out of our space. You don’t get it. It was just a joke.”

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Guiding Questions:

- Do you understand all three camps? Which one would you have chosen and why?
- Who was to blame? Should the boys have been punished or not?
- How can you enjoy memes and make sure you stay safe?
- If you have a meme account, how do you manage it so that you don't cross that line?
- As a class take some time to look at memes, offensive and non-offensive, and talk about why some memes are more offensive than others. Listen to your teacher's voice. They might have some different opinions on memes, and you should understand how different generations view your humor.

Topic: Digital Literacy, Privacy and Security, Online Identity

Age: Middle and High School