

## COVER UP

Anika is introverted and keeps to herself most days. She feels that most kids in her grade already have their groups and she has a hard time inserting herself into a new situation. Anika participates in class, does her work, but becomes quiet during group work and is unsure of herself in large social settings like lunch.

Anika got home from school and rushed upstairs to her computer, grabbing the peanut butter jar and an apple on her way up. As she ate her snack, she set up the equipment in her bedroom. She carefully laid out the makeup sets, turned on the correct lights, and rehearsed her introduction. She sat down at her desk chair, wiped the peanut butter from her hands, and hit “record”.

“Hello there my makeuppies, it’s Anika! Today we are going to learn how to do cat eyes for that school dance coming up! Meow-ow! First you need to cover up the face. Let’s get our foundation out,” she said in a sing-song voice.

As Anika continued, she made jokes on camera and acted silly and care-free. She loved saying ridiculous things on camera and knew that it brought in more views. Once finished, she hit “upload” and watched the views come in while doing homework. The comments section was filled with fans thanking her, asking follow up questions, and requesting more videos. One comment popped up that caught her attention.

“Whoa ... you’re different at school. Cat’s out of the bag on your double life... Me-uh oh”

Anika felt sick. This account was hard to find and she didn’t think anyone she knew watched them. She never thought anyone from her own school would find her.

The next day at school she was getting looks. People had clearly seen the video. Three girls came by her locker at lunch, all with cat-eye makeup.

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“Thanks for the tip ... You’re good at makeup. Come sit with us!”

Anika followed them into the cafeteria and took a seat at their table. They bombarded her with questions.

“Do the makeup companies pay you?”

“Where did you learn the tips?”

“You’re weird online! Who knew you were so crazy?”

“We thought you were shy ... you’re actually the class clown!”

“...but better makeup than a clown!”

Anika felt overwhelmed. The girls were nice, but she knew they weren’t the people she should hang with. They got in trouble at school and were not known to be nice to people outside their group. She didn’t like the spotlight on her and preferred to be known as the quiet, good kid. She got up from the table without explanation and moved to sit alone.

The next day one of the girls from the group caught her after class. She asked Anika why she wouldn’t talk about her channel.

“I don’t want any attention for it. Please, it makes me feel awkward.”

The girl rolled her eyes. As she left she said, “Seems weird for someone who doesn’t want attention to post videos online for people to watch. Why post the videos then if you don’t want to be seen?”

She didn’t want attention but she did want to make the videos. The girl had asked a good question. Could she be in and out of the spotlight at the same time? She didn’t have an answer.



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### Guiding Questions:

- How are Anika's online and offline worlds different?
- Why did Anika not want her videos shared at school?
- What are the costs and benefits of living two different lives?
- How do we act when someone we know or are associated with achieves fame, even if it's online?

**Topic: Online Identity, Privacy and Security**

**Age: Middle School**