



## Student resource - Em, the bystander



**Topic:** Positive bystander behaviour



**Target age group:** Middle secondary / Upper secondary



**Lesson duration:** 10 - 45 minutes



### Lesson overview:

The lesson focuses on the role of the bystander in cyberbullying situations. Using an interview with the character 'Em' from the Tagged resource, this activity explores how a person can influence cyberbullying situations by being a positive or negative bystander. Students identify practical and safe solutions for helping others affected by cyberbullying.



### Lesson outcomes

**The lesson will allow students to:**

- Understand the role of the bystander in cyberbullying situations
- Understand different types of bystander behaviour (positive and negative)
- Understand that the bystander can have a pivotal role in affecting outcomes
- Identify ways a bystander could respond to cyberbullying



### Australian Curriculum

**This lesson plan supports a number of general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum. These include:**

- Ethical understanding
- Personal and social capability
- Information and communication technology capability

ACTIVITY	SUBJECT FOCUS	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DURATION	PAGE
1 Teacher introduces concept of cyberbullying behaviour Students complete Worksheet 1 questions	Cyberbullying and bystander behaviour	Worksheet 1 – What is cyberbullying?	5 mins	4,8
2 Teacher guides students through an analysis of bystander categories Students complete Worksheet 2 questions	Types of bystander	Worksheet 2 – What is a bystander?	10 mins	4,8
3 Teacher guides students through one of the worksheet activities	Positive bystander behaviour	Choose from one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet 3 - Em's reflections</li> <li>• Worksheet 4 - Em's choices</li> <li>• Worksheet 5 - Why should I be a positive bystander?</li> </ul> <b>Video resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Em—Character reflection interview accessed via <a href="https://esafety.gov.au/tagged">eSafety.gov.au/tagged</a></li> <li>• Tagged accessed via <a href="https://esafety.gov.au/tagged">eSafety.gov.au/tagged</a></li> </ul>	20 mins	4-6, 9-11
4 Teacher highlights the positive bystander tips Students complete Worksheet 6 Share concluding statements with the class	Positive bystander strategies	Worksheet 6 – Your bystander experience.	10 mins	6, 12-13

### External links included in lesson

Tagged video and Em—Character reflection interview: accessed via [eSafety.gov.au/tagged](https://esafety.gov.au/tagged)

### Technology and terminology referred to in this lesson

Bystander, cyberbully, target, positive bystander, negative bystander, witness, comfortable, help, trusted adult, report, step in, act, empathy, support.

Visit [esafety.gov.au/educators](https://esafety.gov.au/educators) for more lesson plans dealing with cyberbullying behaviour.

## Background

This learning resource supports the Em—Character reflection interview and is part of the Tagged cyberbullying resource. It's useful for students to have previously viewed the main Tagged video.

The focus of this lesson is exploring cyberbullying and analysing the role of the positive bystander. Students are required to reflect on the difference between positive and negative bystander behaviour and the benefits of intervening to help someone who is being cyberbullied – the target. The Em interview acts as a stimulus to assist students in identifying practical and safe strategies to help targets of cyberbullying.

This lesson includes four activities. Teachers have the option to choose a single activity or multiple activities, depending on available time and student capabilities. It may result in students disclosing personal welfare issues. Teachers may need to consider if appropriate professional support is required.

### Activity 1

This activity introduces the topic and prompts students to consider what constitutes cyberbullying behaviour. Students are required to complete questions on **Worksheet 1**.

**Teacher's Note:** the correct answer to questions 1 and 2 in Worksheet 1 are:

Question 1: f) not accepting a friend request. While this may be upsetting, a one-off action is not considered to be cyberbullying.

Question 2: the person doing the cyberbullying. The cyberbully may feel empowered to continue the hurtful behaviour if nobody objects or intervenes.

### Activity 2

This activity explores the different types of bystander roles in cyberbullying situations. Students are required to follow the instructions in **Worksheet 2**.

**Teacher's Note:**

**Positive bystander behaviour sample answers may include:**

Speak up; report; encourage the target to get help; talk to the target; tell an adult; report to website administrator.

**Negative bystander behaviour sample answers may include:**

Resending, sharing or liking hurtful texts/messages/photos/posts; joining in; contribute negative comments; participate in negative polls about someone else; don't report; don't give support to the target.

### Activity 3

This activity uses the Tagged video and Em character reflection interview as stimulus material for the accompanying **Worksheets 3, 4 and 5**. Teachers are able to choose a task best suited to their students in order to help them understand how to be a positive bystander.

### **Activity 3, Worksheet 3 — Em’s reflections**

This requires students to focus on questions relating to Em’s experiences and consider the underlying motivations for her behaviour. Students are required to follow the instructions and respond to questions in **Worksheet 3**.

**Teacher’s Note:** sample answers to Worksheet 3 questions

**Question:** Why did Em chose not to stand up to Kate?

**Reasons may include:**

Fear of being the next target; losing face in front of peers; losing Kate’s friendship; being too much of a follower of Kate; not thinking for oneself; feeling manipulated by someone else; wanting to stay out of the ‘drama’; not feeling confident to confront a bully directly; not knowing what to do.

**Question:** What is the main message you take away from the Em interview?

**Responses may include:**

Kate is now feeling confident to intervene in future cyberbullying incidents; the importance of intervening if you witness cyberbullying; doing what you feel comfortable doing when trying to stop cyberbullying or helping a target; seeking help from parents, teachers, school counsellor; supporting the person being cyberbullied; stop and think about the negative consequences of cyberbullying for the target and the perpetrator – such as loss of friendship group, getting into trouble at school, loss of privileges and damage to reputation.

### **Activity 3, Worksheet 4 — Em’s choices**

This focuses on pivotal points in the Tagged video involving Em and her responses to cyberbullying. Students are asked to answer questions in **Worksheet 4** about whether Em’s behaviour was helpful or not.

**Teacher’s Note:**

**Sample responses to questions 1, 2 and 3 in Worksheet 4**

**Question 1:** Em was a negative bystander as she actively encouraged Kate to post a false rumour about Chloe on the blog. This was not helpful to the targets, as false and hurtful rumours were spread about Chloe, implying she was two-timing her boyfriend Jack (with Ben). These rumours were damaging to Chloe’s reputation and later erupted into physical violence between Jack and Ben.

**Question 2:** Em’s behaviour was helpful because she backed up Raz’s plea for Kate to remove the video of the fight between Jack and Ben from the blog. This is an example of positive bystander behaviour.

**Question 3:** Em was a negative bystander when Kate both threatened to post online humiliating photos of Raz from Jack’s party and to inform Raz’s parents about the

images. Em did not intervene to persuade Kate not to carry out this threat, or to let Kate know that her actions were out of line and hurtful to Raz. Em's silence may have given Kate the message that she agreed with her threats about Raz. When Em approached Raz in the library about the incident, she appeared to downplay Kate's threat to publish the photos with her comment 'Kate didn't mean it'. Kate did not offer any support to the target, Raz.

### **Activity 3, Worksheet 5 — Why should I be a positive bystander?**

This activity prompts students to think about the value of being a positive bystander. Students are required to put themselves in Em's shoes and to answer the question posed in **Worksheet 5**.

**Teacher's Note:** Sample responses to the question in Worksheet 5

**Question:** What do you think might motivate someone to help a person who is being unfairly targeted online?

**Sample response might include:**

Taking steps to prevent cyberbullying from continuing; putting yourself in someone else's shoes and valuing peer support; keeping harmony in a friendship group; standing up for what is the right thing to do; desire for people to be treated with fairness and respect; help create a safe online environment for everyone.

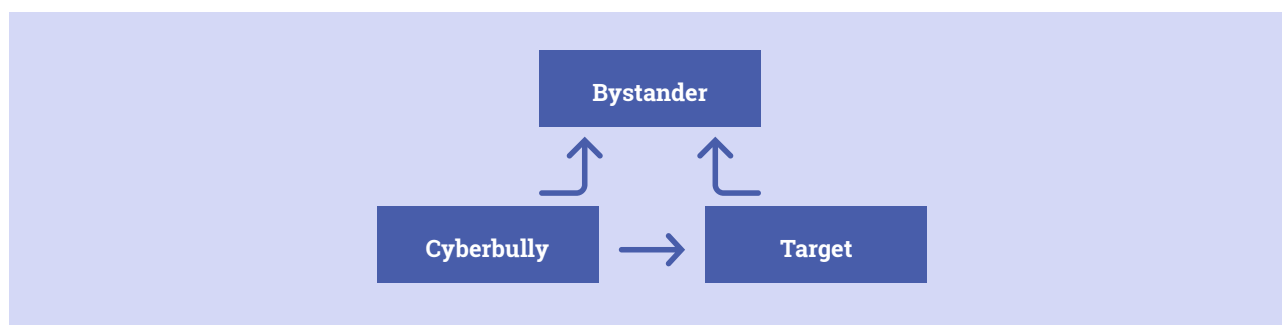
### **Activity 4**

This activity concludes the lesson. Worksheet 6 requires students to consider a range of practical tips and strategies on how to be a positive bystander in a cyberbullying situation. Teachers may choose to record popular class-nominated positive bystander tips and display these in the classroom to promote similarly positive behaviour.

**Teacher's Note:** Worksheet 6

Please note, the purpose of these questions is to stimulate discussion and as such, there are no prescribed answers. Students are required to choose the type of action they feel most comfortable with from the Positive Bystander Tips on page 13.

## Worksheet 1: What is cyberbullying?



**Cyberbullying** is defined as the repeated actions by an individual or group intended to embarrass, humiliate or intimidate a target using online technology such as the internet or a mobile phone.

**Cyberbullying is serious and is never acceptable. It typically involves a:**

- perpetrator—the person bullying online
- target—the person being bullied
- bystander—someone who witnesses the cyberbullying behaviour

**Sometimes, people who witness cyberbullying choose not to intervene. This can be for any number of reasons, such as:**

- fear of becoming the next target
- not wanting to make the situation worse
- being unsure about how to help in a safe way.

In situations where cyberbullies face no opposition, they may interpret silence as encouragement to continue behaving badly. It is important for bystanders to judge how best for them to safely intervene to support a target.

**Bystanders** can play an important role in influencing the outcome of a cyberbullying situation. Their decision to step in and help someone has a greater chance of causing the cyberbullying to stop, than if they were to do nothing. Not all cyberbullying incidents are the same, and sometimes it can be difficult for bystanders to know how to intervene safely without making the situation worse for themselves and the target.

### Questions

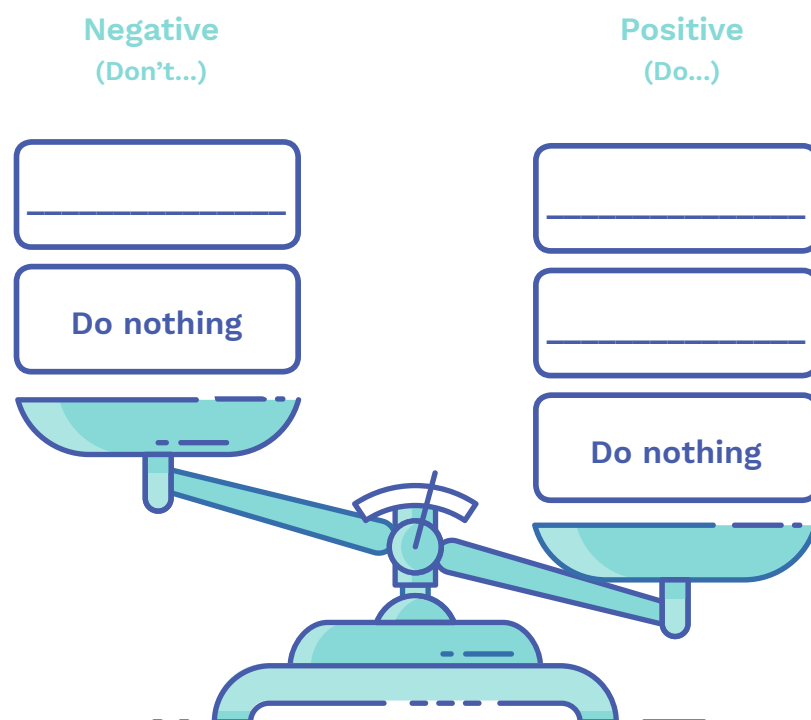
- Which of the following kinds of online behaviours is not an example of cyberbullying? Why?
  - Posting an offensive photo of someone online to embarrass that person.
  - Creating a poll to embarrass someone.
  - Spreading rumours about someone online.
  - Creating a fake profile of someone that contains content that is hurtful to that person.
  - Making threats to publish material that a person does not want to be made public.
  - Not accepting a friend request.
  - Sending abusive text messages.
  - Digitally altering a photograph of someone to humiliate them.
- If you are aware of someone being cyberbullied and do nothing, who are you supporting?

## Worksheet 2: What is a bystander?

**Table 1** – Types of bystanders

<b>BYSTANDER</b>	Someone who sees cyberbullying happening to someone else.
<b>POSITIVE BYSTANDER</b>	Someone who takes safe action to help the target of cyberbullying behaviour.
<b>NEGATIVE BYSTANDER</b>	Someone who sees cyberbullying happening, but chooses to do nothing to help the target. Some bystanders might also get involved in the cyberbullying, for example by forwarding hurtful texts, posts or messages on social media sites that have been posted by someone else.

**Table 2** – Positive and negative bystander behaviour



### Instructions

Read the bystander definitions above in **Table 1**.

Think about what types of actions that could be considered as positive bystander behaviour and negative bystander behaviour.

Fill in the spaces in **Table 2** with your own examples of positive and negative bystander behaviours.

## Worksheet 3: Em's reflections



Watch the Tagged Em interview:

[eSafety.gov.au/tagged](https://www.esafety.gov.au/tagged)

### Scan

Circle the word that best describes your general impression of Em.

vulnerable      follower      thoughtful      weak  
two-faced      reflective      remorseful

### Question

Why did Em choose not to stand up to Kate?  
List at least two reasons.

### Read

Read the three bystander definitions in  
Worksheet 2 on page 7.

### Recite

What is the main message you take away from  
the Em interview?

### Review

Having watched the interview, what is one  
question you would ask Em?



## Worksheet 4: Em's choices

### Instructions

In this task you will need to watch part of the Tagged video starting from 1 minute and 30 seconds through to 9 minutes and 30 seconds. The URL is [eSafety.gov.au/tagged](https://www.esafety.gov.au/tagged)

View the video and reflect on Em's behaviour.

### Questions

Answer the three questions below.

#### Question 1



At the 1 minute and 30 second mark, the three friends decide to publish a rumour on a blog.

Describe how Em's behaviour was not helpful to the targets—Chloe, Ben and Jack. Was Em a positive or negative bystander in this situation?

1 minute and 30 seconds

#### Question 2



In the school cafeteria, Em, Raz and Kate talk about whether to keep the filmed fight of Jack and Ben on the blog.

Was Em's behaviour helpful or not?

7 minutes

#### Question 3



Now look at the scene in the library. Raz and Em talk about Kate's threat to Raz.

What type of bystander was Em when Kate first made the threat to Raz?

8 minutes and 40 seconds

## Worksheet 5: Why should I be a positive bystander?

### Instructions

In the character reflection video, Em reflects on her behaviours that were unhelpful.

Watch the 'Em' interview at [eSafety.gov.au/tagged](https://www.esafety.gov.au/tagged/em)

Take note of how Em would deal with any future cyberbullying situations she might witness.

### Questions

Using Em's thought bubbles as a guide, answer the question below:

What do you think might motivate someone to help a person who is being unfairly targeted online?

**Em says:** I need to stand up for myself and stand up for my friends and do something and say something.

I should've backed up Raz because of she had support there it would be much easier for her.

If I was on Raz's side it'd give her more confidence and she would've had more guts to stand up and say something.

Maybe if I had stepped in earlier

I would want someone to be on my side and support me.

I should've spoken to Mum.

I should've gone and told her... let's go see someone that we trust.



We could've gone to see the guidance counsellor and got some advice.

Now I know that I can go talk to someone—that I can trust and that will help me out.

## Worksheet 6: Your bystander experience

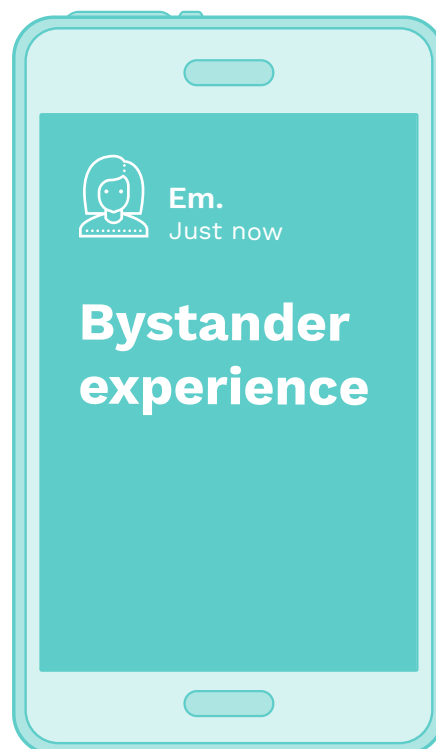
**Bystanders** have an important role to play in cyberbullying situations and their actions can help stop the bullying behaviour.

It is not unusual for a bystander to feel uncomfortable confronting a cyberbully on their own, as they may not feel confident or safe enough to do so.

There are options available if you wish to help someone who is being targeted online.

### Instructions

1. Think about a time when you may have seen instances of cyberbullying online.
2. Using the Positive bystander tips, select something positive you could do, or the option that you would feel safest in doing, if you witness:
  - a) someone repeatedly sending abusive text messages to another person;
  - b) an inappropriately tagged photo of someone in your year group—the photo is humiliating and has attracted many hurtful comments; and
  - c) a friend excluding a member of your friendship group from a party posted online.
3. Thinking of the Positive bystander tips, list any of the tips you have used yourself in a cyberbullying situation.
4. Note at least two tips you think you could use in the future if you were in a bystander position and wanted to do something positive to help someone else. and say something.



## Positive bystander tips

Step in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do something positive to help the target.</li><li>• Speak out against the cyberbullying behaviour—if you feel safe doing so. Make it clear you find the behaviour unacceptable and ask for any hurtful texts/posts/images to be deleted.</li><li>• Encourage the target to get help from a trusted adult. Offer to go with them to make the report and give them information on where to get help.</li></ul>
Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help in a way you feel comfortable. If you don't feel comfortable telling the bully to stop, think about ways you can help behind the scenes, such as saving the evidence of the cyberbullying (like screenshots or photos) or helping them check their privacy settings.</li><li>• Make contact with the target (online or offline). Email/message the target to let them know you feel for them and you don't agree with the cyberbully's behaviour.</li><li>• If you are not sure how to handle the situation, there are professionals and useful websites that can help. Check out the eSafety website at <a href="https://esafety.gov.au">esafety.gov.au</a> for useful tips on dealing with cyberbullying. The Kids Helpline also offers free and confidential counselling services on cybersafety issues, including cyberbullying. Visit <a href="https://kidshelpline.com.au">kidshelpline.com.au</a> or call 1800 55 1800.</li></ul>
Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't encourage the cyberbully. Choose not to comment on, resend or respond to posts that may offend or upset someone else.</li><li>• Group action—check with friends if they feel the same about the situation. Discuss what you can do together as a group to help resolve it. This might include sending a group message to those involved in the cyberbullying to stop their behaviour, blocking the main people involved or approaching a trusted adult as a group.</li><li>• Make it clear to your friends that you will not join in any cyberbullying behaviour.</li></ul>
Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell an adult you can trust and has the authority to help. This may be a parent, teacher, school principal, school counsellor, a coach or family member.</li><li>• Report cyberbullying to the police if you feel someone's personal safety has been threatened.</li><li>• Report anonymously. If you want to protect your identity, think about reporting the situation anonymously. For example, type up a note about what is happening and leave it in the letter box or under the door of an adult who can help.</li><li>• Report to an administrator. If you see cyberbullying online, report it to the administrator of the social media website to ask for content to be removed. Contact the relevant mobile phone company in the case of bullying text messages or calls.</li></ul>
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Show your concern and support. Put yourself in the target's position—you would want somebody to support you if you were being cyberbullied.</li><li>• Chat with the target directly and away from an audience. You don't have to mention the cyberbullying behaviour. Check in with the target and comfort them—this could be done in person or via a text or private message. Your support might reduce any feelings of isolation a target may have.</li></ul>