

Talk a Lot

Internet

Role Plays

1. "Should I click here?"

Place: At your home
Time: 10.34 am
Characters: You and your elderly grandma
Situation: You work as a professional web designer. Your grandma's beloved dog has just died, so to cheer her up you offer to help her learn how to use the internet. It's difficult to teach her because she has never used a computer before, while you are a computer expert – and not a very patient person

Scenes: i) You teach her how to use a search engine, but she can't work the mouse
ii) You try to teach her to send an email. Clicking wildly, she accidentally sends an offensive email to your mother-in-law that you had saved as a draft
iii) You leave the room for a moment. When you get back your computer screen has frozen. Your grandma has downloaded a virus by mistake, which has deleted all of your web design work – worth thousands of pounds! But you can't be too angry, because she's your grandma and her dog has died...

If there are three people in the group, the third character could be:

- a) One of your grandma's friends from the day centre, who is against new technology
- b) One of your clients, whose work has been deleted, but who needs it finished today

2. "Hmm... this looks familiar!"

Place: At school, college, or university
Time: 4.08 pm
Characters: You are a student and the other person is a teacher (or lecturer)
Situation: Your teacher has invited you to meet them, to talk about your recent homework assignment

Scenes: i) The teacher accuses you of plagiarism, saying that you have copied 80% of your assignment from an article on the internet. You deny it, but they show you the evidence. You apologise and promise not to do it again. The teacher warns that next time they will give you detention for a month!
ii) A week later, your teacher again accuses you of plagiarism. You deny it, but they reveal that you have plagiarised *their* research work! To avoid the detention, you say how good you thought it was. The teacher is flattered and gives you their latest (long) article to proof-read – as well as the detention
iii) While proof-reading it, you recognise some paragraphs that look familiar. You realise that your teacher has copied another work published online. You threaten to reveal their plagiarism unless they remove the detention...

If there are three people in the group, the third character could be:

- a) The head teacher of the school, or the principal of the college / university
- b) The writer whose work the teacher has copied

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Role Play Extensions

Here are some additional situations for students to use as starting points for new role plays based on the topic of "Internet":

Internet

1. You are at the library, using the internet for free. You are only allowed to use it for thirty minutes, because other people are waiting, but you become engrossed in playing a complicated online game that will last for much longer. The librarian – a very quiet, timid person – politely asks you to finish your session after thirty minutes. You lie and say that you are downloading an important file for your homework that will take about twenty more minutes. After one hour, the librarian again tries to get you to leave the computer, but you tell them that you have to wait for an important message from a relative who has just gone into hospital. Later, as the library is about to close, you are still trying to complete the game. Try to persuade the librarian – and later the security guard and cleaning staff – that you should be allowed to stay on the computer just a little while longer...
2. You spend most evenings downloading music and films from the internet – illegally. One day your internet connection speed is cut dramatically and it takes forever for even a normal web page to load. You phone your ISP to complain, and they tell you that you have been branded a web pirate because of all the illegal downloading. You use your charm to persuade them to increase the speed again. A month later, you have returned to your downloading habits, and once again your internet speed is cut – without warning. You phone your ISP again and this time you blame neighbours in your apartment building for hacking into your Wi-Fi connection. You give names and addresses of your neighbours to the ISP, and they lift the restriction on your connection speed. Later you meet some of your neighbours, who complain that their internet service has been cut – for no reason. Some of the children from the building are even crying because they can't get online anymore. You feel guilty, but do you come clean and tell them – *and* your ISP – the truth?

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