

Incoming 11th Grade English 5/6 Summer Reading Assignment
DUE IN CLASS on Sept 18th, 2026

Ms. J. Noto-Russo Mr. M. Lucchesi

Task: Every incoming English 5/6 student will read and annotate the 4 articles on Social Media in preparation for writing the argumentative essay on the question:
Should employers consider social media activity when evaluating potential candidates ?

- 1) Articles should be thoroughly annotated for evidence which could support your argument. Annotations could include notes in margins, underlining, highlighting, and if necessary, word work. (Identifying and defining unknown words). Annotations should NEVER just be highlighting.
- 2) After reading and annotating all 4 articles, use the 2 graphic organizers given to gather details for your argument. Be sure to cite text and line numbers for each detail.

All 4 annotated articles and your completed tables are due in class on 9/18/26. These components will be 40% of your summer reading grade. Late work will be downgraded each day. No late work will be accepted after the essay is written.

The essay will be written **IN CLASS** the following week and will be worth 60% of your grade.

DO NOT WRITE THE ESSAY OVER THE SUMMER!

11th Grade English Supply List

Throughout the year, there are supplies we go through very quickly. I'm asking that you each bring ONE OF EACH of the following to help keep our supplies full:

- 1 package of college ruled looseleaf paper
- 1 box of tissues
- 1 bottle of hand sanitizer

In addition, you should be prepared EVERY day with your OWN pens, sticky notes, a section in a notebook or binder for notes when we have them, and (2)-2 pocket folders for handouts and Regents Prep work.

All supplies should be in class no later than September 18th please

If you have any questions over the summer, you can reach me at
JRusso22@schools.nyc.gov

Part 2

Argument

Directions: Closely read each of the **four** texts provided on pages 13 through 20 and write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your argument beginning on page 1 of your essay booklet.

Topic: Should employers consider social media activity when evaluating potential candidates?

Social Media is a term for computer and cellphone-based communication systems where participants can send messages, photographs and videos to others, forming communities of connected individuals. These platforms usually keep the communications of their participants available for access indefinitely.

Your Task: Carefully read each of the **four** texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least **three** of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not employers should consider social media activity when evaluating potential candidates. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least **three** of the texts to develop your argument. Do **not** simply summarize each text.

Guidelines:

Be sure to:

- Establish your claim regarding whether or not employers should consider social media activity when evaluating potential candidates
- Distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims
- Use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least **three** of the texts to develop your argument
- Identify each source that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

Texts:

Text 1 – How Social Media Can Reveal the Best (And Worst) of Your Employment Candidates

Text 2 – Should You Consider Social Media When Evaluating Job Candidates?

Text 3 – Guardrails for Using Social Media During the Hiring Process

Text 4 – How Social Media Could Affect Your Job

Text 1

How Social Media Can Reveal the Best (And Worst) of Your Employment Candidates

Picture this: You had an argument three months ago on social media with a stranger over the hot-button issue of the day. You were provoked because you felt the other poster was such a jerk, and you had to stand your ground. You didn't even care that much about the topic (what was it again?), but somebody had to set that person straight. You didn't love the way you conducted yourself, but the comments are buried under millions of new posts and forgotten now, anyway, so who cares, right?

Well, someone might. And that someone might be your next potential employer.

As the president of a company that provides pre-employment screenings for clients, it's my job to find everything I can about a candidate through their social media. I don't make any decisions for clients; I simply hand over the information. Through this experience, I'm finding that hiring managers are more frequently conducting background checks that go beyond criminal and public records and employment history. And a candidate's irate,¹ aggressive and potentially threatening postings are what many are on the lookout for. ...

Those decision makers are checking Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter [renamed as X], TikTok, Reddit and more—every place where a candidate might have made a posting that can raise a red flag. As a job-seeker, you might have consented when you checked a box online or on your paper application. And even if you didn't, statements made in public forums, which includes social media, are fair game.² Screenings might range from simply viewing content available to the public to in-depth searches of posts you've made on social media over the past six months (even the posts you've deleted).

A CareerBuilder survey found that 57% of employers have found social content that caused them to rule out a candidate. What might rule someone out? Some of it is obvious, based on my experience: patterns of overt³ anger, suggestions of violence, associations with questionable characters, signs of crass⁴ behavior or even too many political posts. I've seen that a post one might consider mild or mainstream could get a resume tossed in the recycle bin.

Getting oneself in trouble with a social media post on the employment side isn't limited to the job search. In June [2022], the *Washington Post* fired a reporter for a days-long Twitter [X] dispute related to another reporter who himself had received a one-month suspension for an unsavory⁵ posting.

I've seen that legal issues can also prompt a closer look at a person's social media. The most obvious gaffes⁶ are those in which a person is caught in a fraud situation, such as posting a picture of themselves waterskiing when they're supposed to be home in bed collecting workers' compensation benefits, for instance. ...

¹irate — annoyed or angry

²fair game — appropriate, available or reasonable to review

³overt — obvious

⁴crass — rude or distasteful

⁵unsavory — objectionable

⁶gaffes — blunders

35 As an employer, it's all about eliminating potential risk. For this reason, I suggest to
clients that they take a look at current employees' social media accounts, too—a practice I
do myself. Now, what they do in their private time is their own business, and I don't believe
an untoward⁷ social media post is grounds to let someone go. But I do believe it's good to
40 know what is going on in employees' lives by their postings. If their social media revelations
don't affect their performance or raise issues with co-workers, they probably will not pose a
problem at the workplace. ...

—Harry Kazakian
excerpted and adapted from "How Social Media Can Reveal
the Best (And Worst) of Your Employment Candidates"
www.forbes.com, September 26, 2022

⁷untoward — inappropriate

Text 2

Should You Consider Social Media When Evaluating Job Candidates?

You're a hiring manager in the process of screening a pool of applicants for a senior management position. You've narrowed your list down to five top candidates, but you want to limit yourself to three people for a third round of interviews. You're naturally nervous about making a poor choice—this new hire will have a largely public-facing role and a potentially huge impact on your company's brand and reputation.

So you decide to do a little scouting on social media to see if you can turn up anything interesting that might sway your decision one way or the other—and what you find gives you pause about one of your top picks. What should you do?

Know the Risks...

What you may find in a candidate's social media presence—for the most part—is fair game, says Jeff Williams, VP of enterprise and HR [Human Resources] solutions at Paychex. "It's 2023, and what is posted on TikTok, Instagram, Twitter [X]—and even Facebook for the nostalgic—is an accessible, noninvasive way of gaining insight on your candidate," he says. You're not stalking or "creeping," he adds. You're accessing information that anyone can see.

But social media can be both a blessing and a curse when hiring, says Jennifer Preston, an HR consultant with Flex HR. While social media channels can yield ample benefits for HR professionals, recruiters and hiring managers for vetting¹ job candidates, consulting such sources can also be risky—particularly when they are used to evaluate candidates based on their personal lives, opinions and what they choose to post and re-post. Preston says this information can create dangerous biases that can lead to legal risks.

Marlene Allen Murray, a business litigation attorney at the law firm Fennemore Craig, says that an employer is not violating any laws by looking into an applicant's interests and values. "Social media posts can reveal a more honest view of an applicant than what they might share during an interview," she says.

However, Murray adds that there's a big caveat:² Employers must not use the information they find on social media outlets "to discriminate against a candidate based on ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender or other protected classes." Employers, Murray says, "might be sued by a candidate if any unlawful prejudice is shown by the employer during the recruitment process," even if employers do not intentionally or explicitly use the information they find online. ...

Stick to What's Relevant...

Preston says appropriate uses of conducting a social media search on a job candidate include determining if the candidate is qualified to perform the essential functions of the job and evaluating whether the candidate's profile is consistent with their resume and the answers they give during the interview process.

Amy Laiker, the head of the New York City office of Tiger Recruitment, a boutique staffing agency, says that information about a job candidate discovered online through a general search of social media profiles can legitimately be used in considering candidates unless that information is related to a legally protected status such as race, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

¹vetting — evaluating

²caveat — caution

40 For example, says Laiker, legitimate red flags may go up if a candidate for a position that requires a high degree of confidentiality and discretion has profiles in which they share every minute detail of their daily life, or post images with their computer monitor in full view. Hiring managers may also take note if a candidate has a LinkedIn profile with a career history that materially differs from what they represented on their resume.

45 Jeff Williams says a good practice is for hiring managers to ask themselves what information is necessary to make a good decision and whether what they discover is relevant to their hiring choice. For example,

- Is your candidate who they say they are? That is, is the person you interviewed reflected in their social media accounts?
- Does your candidate possess credentials relevant to the position you are seeking to fill (e.g., education levels, association memberships and awards received)?
- 50 • Does your candidate bash their former employers or colleagues?
- Does your candidate exhibit extreme behavior or poor judgment?
- Is your candidate engaged in any illegal behavior?

55 Laiker says it's generally better to review a candidate's social media presence (which may contain a photo of the individual) only after an initial video or in-person interview. Doing so, says Laiker, can minimize the risk of an applicant saying they were rejected on the grounds of race, age, disability or other discrimination. ...

60 The bottom line? "The essence of using social media to evaluate a candidate should be to determine if this person can perform the essential functions of the job," says Preston. "Is this person's candidacy accurate and consistent with their resume?" Asking that question when evaluating information learned during the hiring process is the most important step you can take in determining whether you've come across a true red flag or just irrelevant information.

—Lin Gensing-Pophal
excerpted and adapted from "Should You Consider Social Media
When Evaluating Job Candidates?"
www.shrm.org, June 9, 2023

Text 3

Guardrails for Using Social Media During the Hiring Process

It's increasingly common for employers to use social media during the hiring process. The temptation is obvious — there's a wealth of potentially useful information about applicants available online. It's not unreasonable to wish to use social media to understand a prospective employee's professional qualifications and skills to determine whether they fit with the criteria for the position. It's no wonder that a recent survey from The Harris Poll finds that seventy-one percent of US hiring decision-makers agree that looking at candidates' social media profiles is an effective way to screen applicants. Furthermore, 70% believe employers should screen all applicants' social media profiles, while the majority (67%) say they use social networking sites to research potential job candidates.

Despite the potential benefits, this sleuthing causes significant heartburn for employment and privacy lawyers and HR [Human Resources] professionals. While social media can be a fruitful way to find and recruit candidates, a minefield of legal risks appear when companies use social media during the screening process.

Potential Risks

- **Discrimination!** Federal, state and local anti-discrimination laws prohibit discrimination in hiring based on a prospective employee's protected class. The danger of researching applicants using social media is that you may become aware that the applicant belongs to a protected category — something that through the general application process you otherwise would be unaware of. And, you can't put the genie back in the bottle. If a recruiter or hiring manager has accessed this data, it is difficult to prove that they were not influenced by it in their hiring decision.

Two cases underscore this danger:

- In *Gaskell v. University of Kentucky*, the court denied a defense motion for summary judgment¹ when a top candidate was passed over partly due to information about the employee's religious beliefs the employer discovered through an online search.
- In *Hardin v. Dadlani*, the court concluded that since the hiring manager had previously expressed a preference for white female employees, his instructions to an employee to look up an applicant on Facebook and invite her in for an interview "if she looks good" can be reasonably construed to refer to her race, which can establish discriminatory animus.²
- **Running up against lawful off-duty conduct laws.** Many states have enacted laws prohibiting employers from discriminating on the basis of an employee's lawful off-duty conduct (for example, California, Illinois, New Jersey and New York). These laws vary in specificity. They generally protect an employee's participation in recreational or leisure activities during personal time, such as tobacco use, consuming alcohol, possessing firearms, or engaging in political activities.

¹summary judgment — a ruling by a judge designed to resolve a lawsuit before going to court

²animus — attitude

- **Violating the Fair Credit Reporting Act [FCRA].** In some instances, companies may find that working with a third-party social media background check provider may be preferable since the third-party provider can separate out any information about a prospective employee's protected class or lawful off-duty conduct. But — be aware that social media background check companies are considered consumer reporting agencies³ under the FCRA or similarly regulated entities under state background check laws because they assemble or evaluate consumer report information that is provided to employers using that information as a factor in determining eligibility for employment.

Accordingly, employers using social media background check companies must also comply with disclosure and authorization requirements for obtaining consumer reports and taking adverse employment actions based on information in the reports under the FCRA and similar state laws. In particular, before obtaining a consumer report, an employer must under the FCRA:

- Notify the prospective employee or current employee that the employer may obtain a consumer report for employment purposes.
- Obtain written consent from the prospective employee or current employee.

- **Running afoul of the National Labor Relations Act.** In recent years, the NLRB⁴ has scrutinized how social media policies, or enforcement of these policies, might discourage current employees from using social media to engage in concerted activity, such as discussing unions, wages, or other employment terms and conditions. The NLRB prohibits discrimination against applicants based on union affiliation or support. Therefore, using social media to screen out applicants on this basis may lead to an unfair labor charge against the company.

- **Liability under password protection laws.** More than two dozen states have enacted laws addressing employer access to current and prospective employees' social media accounts. These laws generally prohibit employers from requesting password and username information or otherwise accessing the password-protected portions of a prospective or current employee's personal social media accounts, with certain exceptions. (Further, in all 50 states, asking for an applicant's (or employee's) password creates a real risk of violating the federal Stored Communications Act.) ...

- **Computer interference laws.** To comply with computer interference laws, like the United States Federal Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, employers must ensure that none of its employees or agents exceed any access to social media sites granted in the sites' terms of use (which would be a violation both of the site terms as well as applicable computer interference laws). ...

—Caroline Burnett & Sofia Chesnokova
excerpted and adapted from "Guardrails for Using Social
Media During the Hiring Process"
www.theemployerreport.com, February 8, 2022

³consumer reporting agency — individuals or companies that collect information on people, such as debt and work histories, and then package and sell that information

⁴NLRB — the National Labor Relations Board is the agency created by the act that protects the rights of employees

Text 4

How Social Media Could Affect Your Job

...A social media screening is usually done prior to employment, when a candidate is applying for a job. It involves researching a prospect's social media profiles and their activity, including what they post, like and comment on. Some of the platforms they are likely to check are LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter [X], TikTok, and WhatsApp. ...

- 5 Audit your social media accounts before applying for a position. While it's important to check every account, there are some platforms hiring managers are more likely to check, such as LinkedIn. ...

- 10 Most employers view LinkedIn as a secondary resume, and some even post jobs on LinkedIn. However, they are still likely to check other social media channels, such as Instagram. In addition to what you're posting, make sure you are cognizant¹ of who you follow and how they are interacting with your content. ...

Tip

Showcase your positive personality traits on your social media profiles to be an effective applicant. Just one negative impression from your social media profile could disqualify you from a position. ...

1. Don't erase your profile.

- 15 While the fear of something embarrassing or negative being discovered might tempt some job candidates to completely erase their online persona, employers say that strategy can backfire.

- 20 About 1 in 5 employers in The Harris Poll's survey said they won't call a person for an interview if they can't find them online. In addition to seeming like you're trying to hide something, it's not a good idea to delete your profile, because it doesn't guarantee the data is completely gone. Instead, the best practice is to keep your social accounts clean and up to date. ...

2. Use social media to your benefit.

- 25 Despite what job candidates might think, most employers are looking for reasons to hire someone. The Harris Poll surveyed over 1,000 employers and found that 67 percent of them look for information that supports a candidate's qualifications to get them through the door. ...

3. Google yourself.

- 30 Every few weeks or months, take a minute to Google yourself in an incognito window.² This is likely where your employer is going to start when they take a look at your online presence, so it's good to know what will pop up. This will also help you get ahead of anything negative, so you can make sure all the top search results are things you would be fine with your employer seeing. ...

What to avoid on social media

The study found that a whopping 55 percent of employers who use social media screenings said they have found content that caused them not to hire a candidate.

¹cognizant — mindful

²incognito window — a private browsing window in an Internet search engine

35 Follow these guidelines from The Harris Poll's survey to keep your online presence professional:

1. Avoid posting anything potentially offensive. If you wouldn't bring in a particular picture and post it in your cubicle, or say something at the workplace, remove it from your public page.
2. Be purposeful in your posts. Ask yourself: What is my goal with posting this? Is this best for a private or public page?
3. Keep it simple: Remember that less is more in your public profiles.
4. Never complain about employers or colleagues — past or present — on social media.

40 While these tips are geared toward job seekers, the results of the Express Employment Professionals survey also make clear that existing employees should take this advice to heart.

45 Not only are employers sometimes monitoring their employees' social media behavior, but future employers may conduct social media screenings as well. ...

—David Cotriss

excerpted and adapted from "How Social Media Could Affect Your Job"

www.businessnewsdaily.com, May 11, 2023

NAME _____

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

Organizer #1

Utilize this organizer to find support for your argument as well as counterpoints.

Position statement: (thesis)

Supporting Arguments	Counterarguments

NAME _____

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

CONCLUSIONS CHART

Organizer #2

Gather at LEAST 4 details from at least 3 separate articles and use those details to draw a conclusion on your topic.

Evidence	Evidence	Evidence	Evidence
Conclusion			

(Arrows indicate flow from each Evidence box to the Conclusion box)