

# GOING VIRAL: THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS


Est. Time: 60-90 minutes

Subjects: General Music, SEL, Social Studies/History

Age Range: All Ages


See the full lesson [here!](#)

★ *TEACHROCK* ★



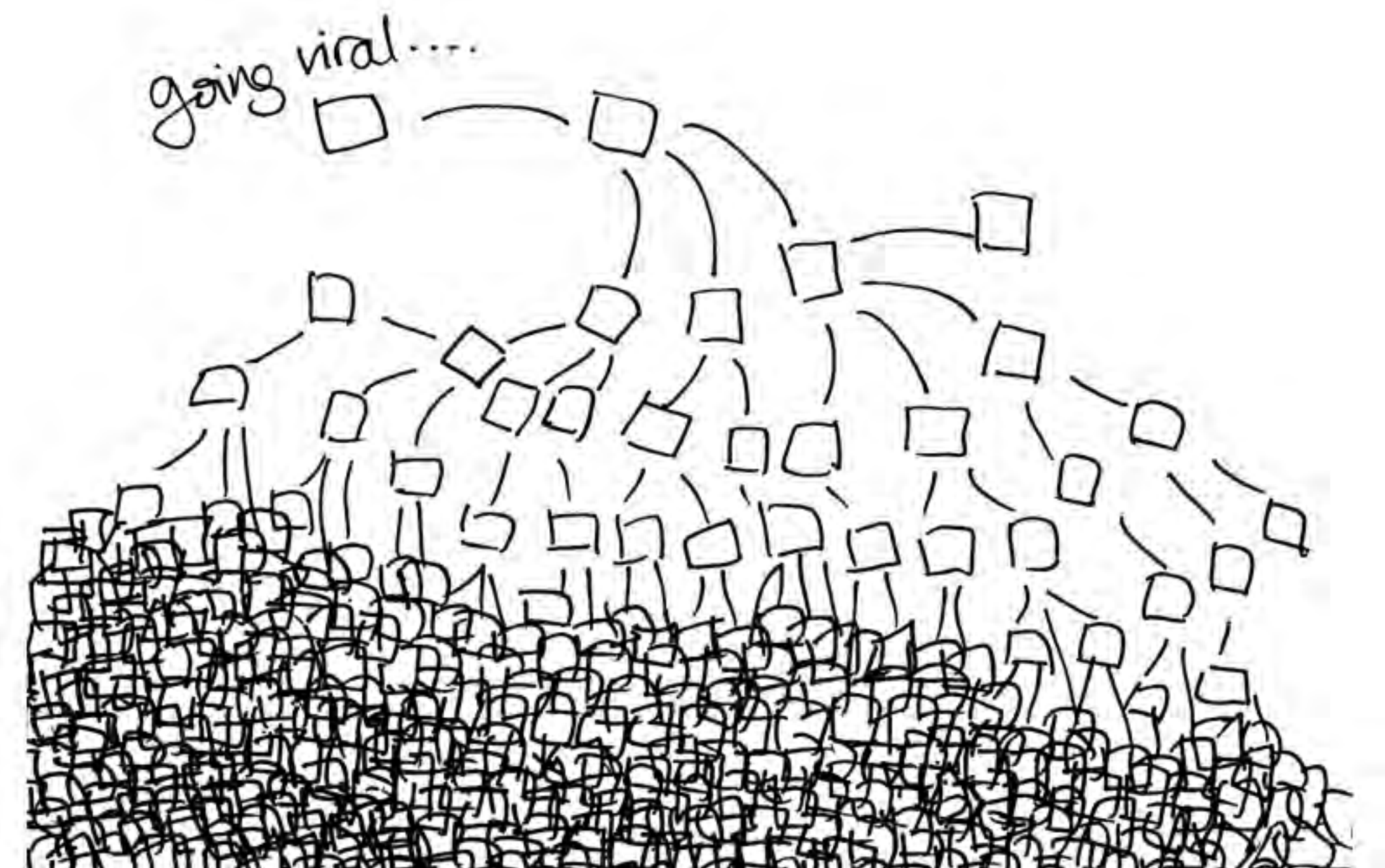
How did fans of the band Grateful Dead pioneer the idea of “going viral,” and what are the dangers of going viral today?

In this lesson you will:

- Learn how fans of the Grateful Dead pioneered the idea of “going viral”
  - Understand the negative implications of going viral
  - Learn how to protect your images and video from going viral
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Have you ever heard of a video that goes “Viral”?


**Click here** to watch one of the first videos to go viral in 2006.



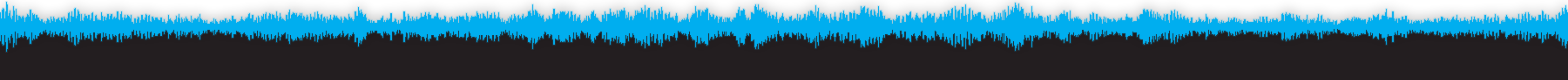


Consider or ask a friend:

- What is your definition of “going viral”?
  - Why do you think the “Numa Numa” video has been viewed almost 40 million times?
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The term “going viral” refers to a photo or video that spreads quickly and widely on the Internet through social media and e-mail. Beginning in 2006, videos like “Numa Numa” have been viewed and shared so much that they become part of popular culture.



The Grateful Dead is widely considered to be one of the most successful bands of all time. However, they had slow record sales, little airplay on the radio, and no number one singles. How do you think the Grateful Dead became so wildly popular?



A close-up photograph of a VHS tape label. The label is white with a black border and features a black square logo with a white letter 'A' on the left. The text 'NASSAU COLISEUM 5/16/80 II' is written in purple marker across the top. Below the text, there are two checkboxes labeled 'IN' and 'OUT'. The VHS tape is partially visible below the label, showing the clear plastic window and the black tape.

**A**

NASSAU COLISEUM 5/16/80 II


IN  OUT

## ALTHEA

This band loved making music and made sure that each concert experience was unique for their fans. Watch [this video](#) to learn about the many versions of one song, “Althea” that were played in concert.



Consider or ask a friend:

- Why would The Grateful Dead play their songs so differently at each concert?
  - How do you think that fans reacted to hearing different versions of the same song?
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## TAPERS

The Grateful Dead allowed fans to tape their concerts. This is something that other bands at the time did not allow and something that is still forbidden at most concerts today. Learn more about these fans by watching [this video](#).



Consider or ask a friend:

- Why do you think The Grateful Dead allowed fans to tape their concerts?
  - Why might other bands want to protect recordings of their music and not allow recording?
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## TAPE TRADING

Tapers recorded at Grateful Dead Concerts have been traded and collected and cherished by fans around the world. **This video** gives you a first hand account of the practice of tape trading.



Consider or ask a friend:

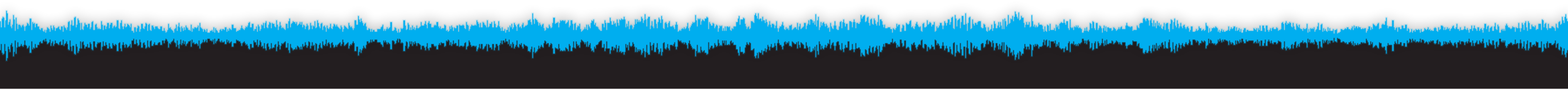
- How did “The Tapers” pioneer the idea of going viral?
  - Why do you think these tapes were so special to fans?
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Our world has changed much since those early Grateful Dead tapes. In today's world of cell phones and social media, going viral is a way to get a lot of attention. But sometimes going viral can be a negative experience.







Going viral has some advantages:

- It doesn't cost anything to get a lot of attention
  - Going viral can spread your photos or videos around your school or community, or sometimes your content can spread around the world
  - If you want to influence ideas or sell products, going viral can help
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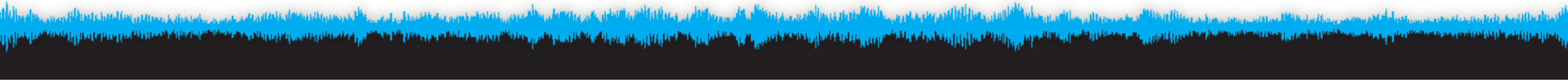


But going viral also has some disadvantages:

- Loss of privacy
  - Loss of control over photos or videos
  - The popularity that comes with going viral can be over very quickly.
- 




In the days of The Grateful Dead tape trading, there wasn't a problem when tapes were bought, sold, or traded. But going viral is different today, and if you send a photo to a friend and they send it to other people, and then those people send your photo to lots of other people too, your photo may be in on the devices of people that you don't even know! That is not a good way to go viral!







Consider or ask a friend:

- Why is it important to protect your privacy?
  - What are some steps that you can take to keep your photos and videos from going viral?
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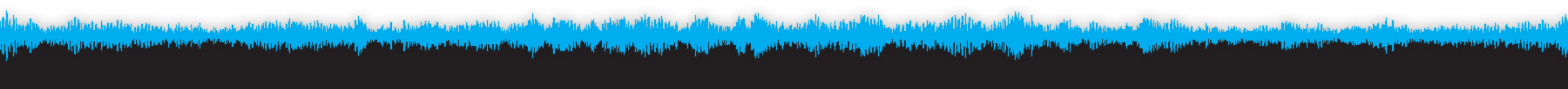
Sharing music with friends is still a fun thing to do, but it is important to be extra careful when you share anything on social media or text message.

Always follow “The Grandma Rule,” never post or share anything that you wouldn’t want your Grandma to see.





Consider or ask a friend:

- How did “going viral” with cassette recordings from fans help The Grateful Dead’s success?
  - What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of “going viral”?
  - Do you have a plan to protect your online privacy?
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# SUMMARY

- Grateful Dead Fans pioneered the idea of “going viral” by trading their cassette recordings of the band’s live performances
- Today, “going viral” has advantages and drawbacks
- It is very important that people of all ages protect their privacy online



# BE CREATIVE

- Create a personal pledge for your online safety and make it into a colorful poster. You may want to refer to **this page** for ideas in crafting your personal pledge.
- Pretend that you are a Grateful Dead Fan who wants to trade concert tapes. Write a make-believe ad that you might publish in the newspaper (because that's how tapes were traded before 1994, when the first online ad was published.)



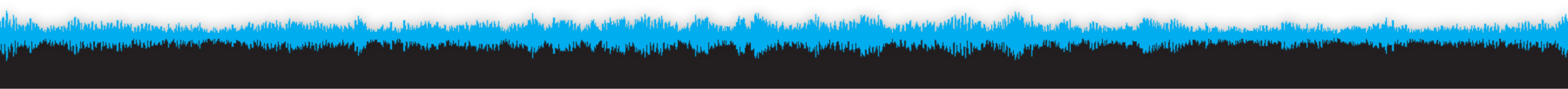
# BE CURIOUS

- Watch [this video](#) to learn more about Grateful Dead Tape Trading
- Read [this Family Contract](#) for Internet Safety
- Read [this article](#) about the legal implications of recording concerts without permission



# CONNECT

Share with us! Either you or an adult in your life can share your pledge or your tape trading ad with TeachRock on **Instagram** or **Facebook**, email to **info@teachrock.org**, or Tweet it to **@TeachRock**





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