

Intellectual Property: Copyrights

SUBMITTED BY: Kamaila A. Sanders, The University of Pennsylvania

SUBJECT(S): Entrepreneurship

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

This lesson introduces students to the concept of and the challenges surrounding copyright laws. They will begin by learning about what kinds of things may be copyrighted and the definition and main idea behind copyright laws. Then they will watch videos that further explain copyright laws and why some think these laws restrict creativity in a digital age. Next, students will hear about one case where a person was sued over violations of copyright laws, and listen to the Knowledge@Wharton podcast on: “Suing Your Customers: A Winning Business Strategy?” Finally, students will cast their own vote to determine what kinds of works may be copyrighted and in what way.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Entrepreneurship, VIII. Legal

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“The Value of Intellectual Property”](#)
- [“Snap Caps, Sharks and Sparks: Maddie Bradshaw, Teen Millionaire”](#)
- [“Let’s Party! The ‘Happy Birthday’ Song Loses Its Copyright”](#)
- [“Designer Christian Louboutin Goes to Court to Protect His Precious Red Soles”](#)
- [“Career Insight: Jack Abraham on Changing the World through Technological Innovation”](#)

Common Core Standard(s): Vocabulary acquisition and use, key ideas and details.

Objectives/Purposes: To introduce students to the idea of copyright laws.

Knowledge@Wharton Article:

“Suing Your Customers: A Winning Business Strategy?” (podcast)

Other Resources/Materials:

- Do Copyright Laws Stifle Creativity? <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXwB9FikNXA>
- Small Posters that depict the mentioned scenarios in text and with illustrations
- Post-it notes

Activity:

1. (10 mins) Begin this lesson by asking students if any of them are carrying a book, CD, digital music, or other work created by an original artist. If they are, then have them take it out (if it is appropriate) and display it. Mention that these works are copyrighted and see if students can find either the word where it says this or the copyright sign (circle with a c inside). Now, explain to students the concept of copyright laws.

Copyright Law:

- Copyright laws are a form of protection provided by the United States to the authors of “original works of authorship.”
- If you own a copyright you may:
 - Reproduce the work in copies.
 - Distribute the work for the public by sale, transfer of ownership, rental, lease, lending.
 - Perform the work publicly.
 - Display the work publicly.
- It is illegal to violate this.
- Examples of copyrighted works include:
 - Literary works – novels, poems, stories, essays, computer programs.
 - Musical Compositions – lyrics, melodies or tunes.

- Dramatic works – plays, screenplays, TV scripts.
 - Choreographed works – ballets, dances, mimes, skits.
 - Pictorial, graphical, sculptural works – paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture, maps, diagrams, blueprints.
 - Audio visual works – movies, film strips, slide presentations, multi-media CD-ROM packages.
 - Architectural works
- Things that cannot be copyrighted include:
 - Ideas/facts.
 - Works whose copyright has expired.
 - Works of the U.S. government.
 - Laws.
 - Anything an author has dedicated to the public domain.

2. (5 mins) To further highlight copyright law, show the YouTube video: “Do Copyright Laws Stifle Creativity.” Explain that copyright is a contentious issue, especially in the 21st century where technology makes it so easy to access and share intellectual property.

3. (15 mins) To highlight the challenges facing copyright laws and owners of copyrighted materials, have students listen to the podcast: “Suing Your Customers: A Winning Business Strategy?” and have them discuss the following questions with a partner:

- What is the music industry’s solution to pirated music online?
- In what ways are Napster founder Shawn Fanning and Henry Ford alike?
- What can the Recording Industry Association of America learn from Henry Ford’s story?
- React to this quote: “The courts can delay progress but they can’t stop it.”
- What are some ways innovation can respond to the changing landscape?

Have students go over these questions with partners and then go over these answers as a class.

4. (10 mins) You are going to create a Copyright Museum. For this activity, hang small posters with one of the following scenarios (and pictures) around the classroom. Make sure that each poster leaves room for students to stick small post-it notes on it. The posters should depict

copyright scenarios that are among the most contentious issues in copyright law today.

Examples of these scenarios may include:

- A person uses an artist's song in a commercial to sell a product that will air on commercial television.
- Someone makes a remix of a popular song to play in a dance club.
- A person wants to make scarves that resemble the ones worn in Harry Potter movies, for fans of the book and film.
- A person makes a video that features clips of various movies and uploads it on YouTube.
- A person downloads music for free from an MP3 site.
- A dance troupe uploads a remake of the dance choreography of a popular song.
- Someone builds an exact replica of a famous building in your country in another country.
- A person writes a new novel series with a popular protagonist from a famous literary work.
- A person uploads the most recent episode of Gossip Girl to a German site where German fans can watch it for free.
- A person uploads the pages of a Japanese Manga comic book to an English website that translates comics and allows readers to read them for free.

Tying It All Together: Give each student a set of post-it notes, or something similar, and tell them to draw the copyright sign on each (a circle with a c inside it). Then, have students go around and read the different scenarios outlined on each poster and have them decide (vote) whether they think the action described on the poster should be protected by copyright law. For example, should a company be able to use the song of an artist to sell their product in a TV commercial without paying for the use of that song, or should copyright law protect that artist and force the company to pay for the rights to use that song. If a student thinks the scenario should be protected by copyright law, have him put one of his post-it notes with the copyright logo on that poster. Once all students have gone through each scenario and voted for or against each one, go through each scenario as a class. Have students who voted for or against each scenario discuss their reasons for voting that way.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: Think of how you use copyrighted works in your daily life. Do you use them in accordance with copyright laws? How does this affect the owner of that work?

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: This lesson worked out very well and it really brings out the complicated issues related to copyright laws in a streamlined manner. I would

recommend relaying the information on copyright law in a PowerPoint presentation. I also found that students loved the short YouTube clip on copyright issues. For the Copyright Museum, I put on some classical music in the background, and that helped to set the tone. Make sure you hang the posters with some space around them so that students can look at each one individually without running into someone else.

⌵