

# Social Media Profiles for Historical and Literary Figures

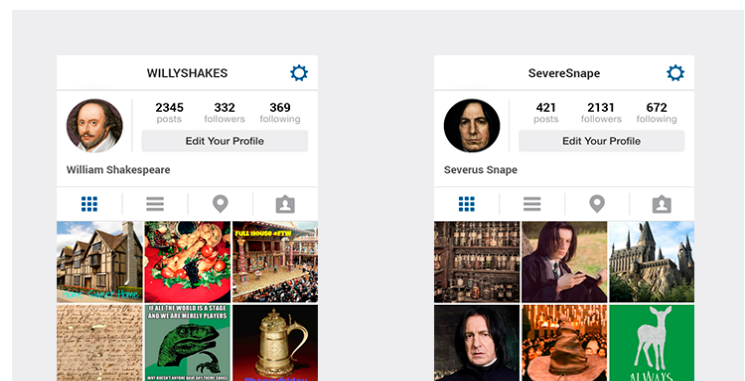
By Megan Townes

Ever wonder what Shakespeare's Instagram might look like? Or whether Severus Snape would have any friends at all on Facebook?

This fun project challenges students to imagine what a famous person from history or a character from a favorite novel might be doing on social media if he/she were alive today. Using Adobe Photoshop CC, students create fake Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter profiles. Then, they reflect on what they chose to include in their social media profiles — and what they chose to leave off — as a way to demonstrate their understanding of the personality, motivations, and public persona of their chosen person or character.

## This project includes:

- [Lesson plan](#)
- [Technical tutorial & Photoshop templates](#)
- [Rubric](#)
- [Example Projects](#)
- [Peer review form](#)
- [Design guidelines](#)



Sample projects courtesy Megan Townes

## About the Author



Megan Townes is a passionate educator, mother, and wife. She is currently a Teacher Ambassador for Microsoft, where she shares her passion for integrating technology into classroom practice with teachers from all around Australia. Prior to this role, she spent ten years teaching high school English and Computing Studies in fun, alternative, and challenging ways. Megan is a self-confessed edugeek and loves working with teachers to empower them to achieve more in their classrooms.

To learn more about Megan, visit [the Adobe Education Exchange](#).

Timing: 3 class periods, or about 2 hours

Grade Level: Secondary (9-12)

Subject: Humanities

# Social Media Profiles for Historical and Literary Figures

In this fun and engaging lesson, students select a historical figure or a fictional character and create a fake Instagram profile to imagine what that person would be doing online if she or he were alive today. Then, they reflect on the choices they made in constructing the profile, and discuss the difference between what we present about ourselves online and who we really are on the inside.

## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Discuss how the way we present ourselves online is similar to and different from who we really are, and why it matters.
- Imagine the social media activity of a historical figure or fictional character.
- Create a fake social media profile page using Photoshop.
- Summarize in writing the choices made about what to include (and exclude) in the fake profile.
- Provide constructive feedback to peers.

## Suggested Pacing

- **Day One** - Introduce project. Students identify their characters and sketch their fake profiles.
- **Day Two** - Students find and select images and build their fake profiles.
- **Day Three** - Students participate in a gallery walk to review peer projects and discuss key takeaways.



## Materials and Preparation

- Download the [Instagram Profile Page](#) and [Instagram Photo](#) templates.
- Photocopy handouts: Example Projects, Technical Tutorial, Design Guidelines, Rubric, and Peer Review (1 per student).
- Ensure that each student has access to the Internet (for image searching) and Photoshop (for profile creation)

## Teacher Tip

This project lends itself well to just about any period of history or work of literature you might be studying. It makes for a great alternative or addition to a more traditional written character study or biography project.

## Lesson Procedure

### 1. Motivation

Ask students to think about a time when they had to decide whether or not to share a picture on Instagram. What are some of the questions your students ask themselves when deciding what to share online?

*Note: This lesson works best if you ask students to share experiences with the social media platforms they actually use. So if your students aren't active on Instagram, think about Facebook or Twitter. You can easily find templates for fake Facebook or Twitter profiles on Adobe Stock, or you can challenge your students to start from scratch and build the fake profiles without templates. This will require more advanced Photoshop skills, but it's still achievable for most high school students.*

Discuss as a class: How does your social media profile reflect what you want the world to see versus who you really are? Are they the same, or different? How so?

### 2. Direct Instruction

Introduce the project:

- Explain that each student will be creating a fake social media profile for a historical figure or character you've been studying in class. In doing so, students will be demonstrating their understanding of the character or the person as well as reflecting on this question of public versus private personas.
- Show the example profiles for Severus Snape and William Shakespeare from the Example Projects page. Discuss: Why did the artist choose these images to share? What do the images shared say — and not say — about how each would want to be perceived online?
- Pass out the Rubric handout and explain your expectations and evaluation criteria.

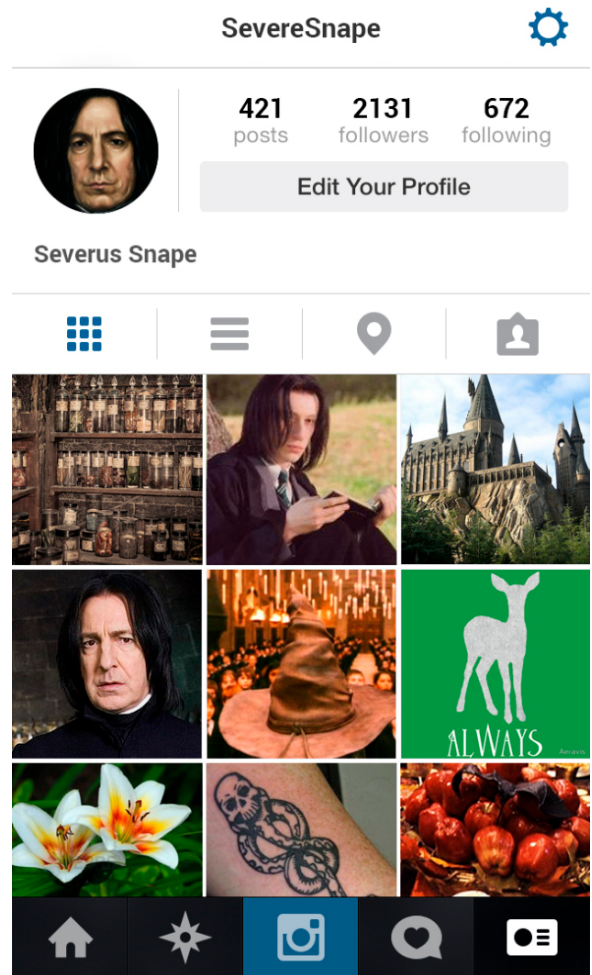
### 3. Independent Work

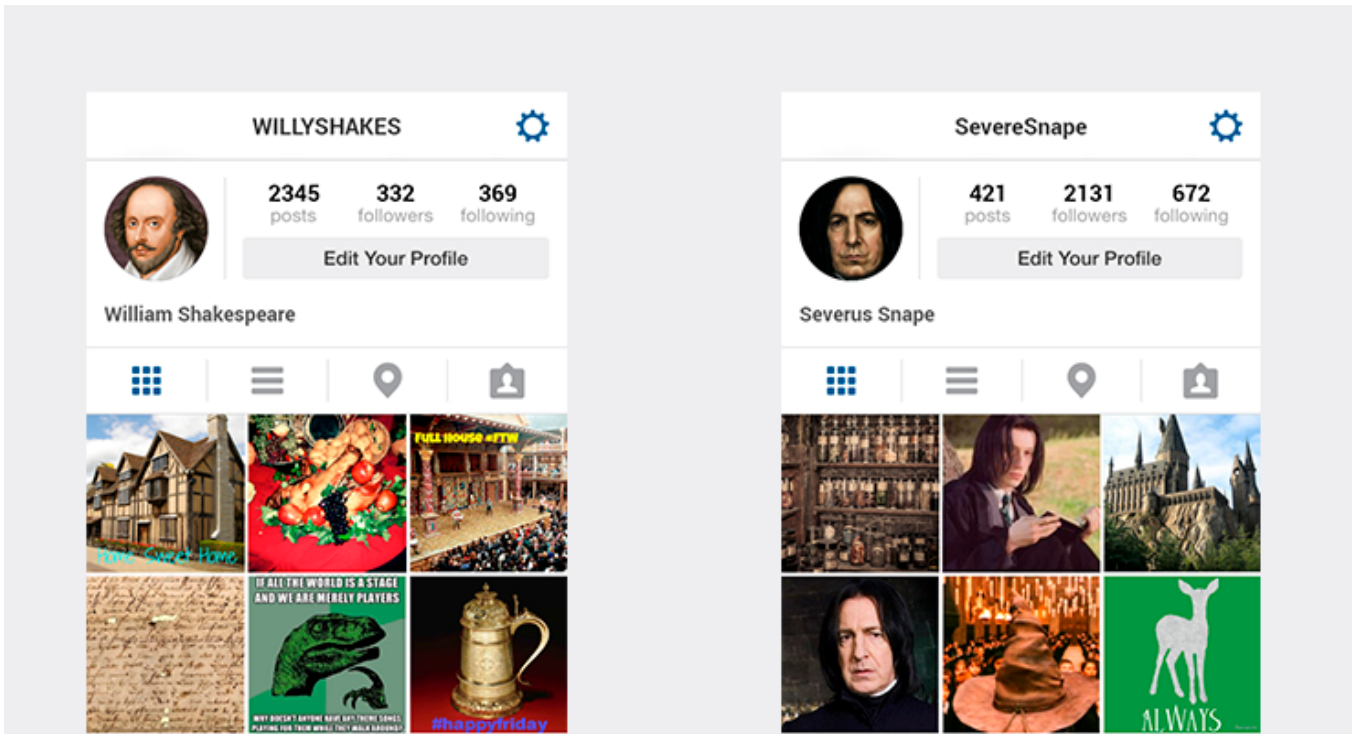
Allow class time for students to:

- Choose the characters or historical figures they want to focus on.
- Sketch their fake Instagram profiles on paper. Consider: What would this person share? What would he/she not share? How does this person want to be perceived online?

### 4. Direct Instruction (OPTIONAL)

Pass out the Design Guidelines handout and talk through the tips shared. Explain how to find images online that are licensed for use in projects like this. If necessary, demonstrate how to use Photoshop to manipulate the template of your choice. See the Technical Tutorial handout for details.





## 5. Independent Work

Allow class time for students to:

- Find and save images for their profiles.
- Edit the templates in Photoshop.
- Write their summaries.

## 6. Group Work

Lead the class in a gallery walk, using the guiding questions provided in the Peer Review form.

## 7. Close and Summary

Summarize the project by discussing as a whole class:

- What was easy or hard about choosing what to include in our social media profiles?
- How might what we share online — and what we keep private — help create our public personas?

### For more information

Visit the Adobe Education Exchange:

<http://edex.adobe.com/adobeforteachers>

Sample projects and templates courtesy Megan Townes.



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# Technical Tutorial

After you've identified your character or historical figure and created a quick sketch, follow these steps to create your social media profile:

## Step 1: Find and select images

Use search engines to find images related to your person. Here are some suggested places to look:

- [Google Images](#): Use the Tools dropdown to look for images that are licensed for reuse.
- [Flickr](#): Use Advanced Search to set your search criteria.
- [Adobe Stock](#): Use the Filter button to set your search criteria.

When searching for images, be sure to:

- Find images that are licensed under Creative Commons for your use, or make note of the source of the image so you can add it to your Works Cited page later.
- Save the images to your working folder, and give them a name you'll remember so you can find them later.

## Step 2: Lay out a rough draft of your collage

Open the [Instagram Photo template](#) in Photoshop. Then, place each image in template. Use the Crop tool to straighten, resize, and re-shape your images so they'll fit in the template. For example, if you've chosen an image that you want to be your cover photo, it will need to be a long, skinny rectangle. If you've chosen an image that you want to be your profile picture, it will need to be square. Save each image as a PNG so you can use it in your template later, and be sure to give it a name you'll remember.

Here are some Photoshop tutorial videos that will help you as you work:

- [Transform objects in Photoshop](#)
- [Using the Crop tool](#)

## Step 3: Add your images and text to the template to create your profile.

Once your images are properly shaped and sized, you're ready to add them to your template.

Open the [Instagram Profile template](#) in Photoshop and begin placing your images. Play with the layout of your images until you're happy with the basic layout. You'll also need to use the Text tool to edit your character's username, bio, and other text on the page.

*Pro Tip: As you're placing images and editing text in Photoshop, you'll be adding layers to your design. Make sure you always have the correct layer selected when you're trying to edit and move things around. It's a good idea to give your layers names so you can easily tell them apart as you work. You can learn more about layers by watching [this tutorial video](#).*

Try these Photoshop tutorial videos to learn more about the different tools you can use to do this:

- [Creating, opening, and importing images](#)
- [Layer basics](#)
- [Using the Text tool](#)

## Step 4: Save and export your final collage

When you're satisfied with your work, save the Photoshop file to your device. Then, go to "File > Export as" and select PNG to save your final project.

## Rubric for: Social Media Profiles

Assignment + Criteria	Points	Comments
<p><b>Content</b> 10 pts each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Images chosen are school-appropriate and clearly align with the chosen person's character and persona.</li> <li>All images and text help to convey the intended message.</li> </ul>	_____/20	
<p><b>Communication</b> 10 pts each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project successfully communicates the intended message about the chosen person's character and persona.</li> <li>Intended message reflects an understanding of the chosen person's motivations and beliefs about himself/herself.</li> </ul>	_____/20	
<p><b>Written Work</b> 10 pts each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a short (3-4 paragraph) summary about the project.</li> <li>Summary explains how the profile created conveys an intended message about the chosen person.</li> </ul>	_____/20	
<p><b>Work Ethic/Effort</b> 5 pts each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used class time effectively and came to class prepared. Actively participated in class.</li> <li>Demonstrated perseverance and problem solving throughout project.</li> <li>All work handed in on time.</li> </ul>	_____/15	
<p><b>Works Cited</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Works Cited page, in MLA format, has been submitted and includes citations for all images.</li> </ul> <p><i>**This is exempt if the student is using ALL images licensed for reuse by Creative Commons.</i></p>	_____/10	
<p><b>Technical Skills</b> 5 pts each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finished profile delivered in the proper file format.</li> <li>Photos are sharp (not pixelated/blurry).</li> <li>Used all tools proficiently and purposefully, knowing which tools to use to create desired effects.</li> </ul>	_____/15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	_____/100	

# Peer Review Form


**\*\*Remember - your feedback should not be critical of the person. Your goal is to provide information/ideas/suggestions that could improve their artwork.\*\***

## **Artist:**


- Who was your character? How do your chosen images and text reflect on your character's personality? Beliefs? Motivations?
- How do you think your character would want to be perceived online? What would he/she share on a social media profile? What would he/she exclude?
- Do you feel you were successful, how?
- What would you like to rethink or change?

## **Peer Reviewers:**

- Describe how your peer was successful with this project. What is great about his/her project?
- What would you suggest to add/change to further strengthen/enhance the project?

**WILLYSHAKES** 





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 **2345** posts   **332** followers   **369** following

[Edit Your Profile](#)

William Shakespeare






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The grid contains the following posts:

- 1. A Tudor-style house with the text "Home Sweet Home".
- 2. A still life of various fruits on a red tablecloth.
- 3. A stage set for the TV show "Full House" with the text "FULL-HOUSE =FTW".
- 4. A page of handwritten cursive text.
- 5. A green dinosaur head with the text "IF ALL THE WORLD IS A STAGE AND WE ARE MERELY PLAYERS".
- 6. A golden beer mug with the text "#happyfriday".
- 7. A close-up of blue bubbles.
- 8. A Star Wars Stormtrooper.
- 9. A quill pen in an inkwell.

**SevereSnape** 





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 **421** posts   **2131** followers   **672** following

[Edit Your Profile](#)

Severus Snape






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The grid contains the following posts:

- 1. A bar with many bottles.
- 2. Severus Snape looking at a book.
- 3. Hogwarts castle.
- 4. Severus Snape's portrait.
- 5. A Sorting Hat.
- 6. A white deer on a green background with the text "ALWAYS".
- 7. A white lily flower.
- 8. A tattoo of a skull and a snake.
- 9. A basket of red apples.



# Design Guidelines: Wireframes and Mock-Ups

Creating a fake social media profile is fun, but the skills you learn are similar to those used by professional web and [UX designers](#) when they create [wireframes and mock-ups](#) for the websites you use everyday. Here are some tips for creating more professional-looking wireframes:

## Start with good source images

Your wireframe is only as strong as the material you have to work with. As you're searching for material, look for high-quality images you can easily manipulate. If the images you want to combine are pixelated, too dark, or poorly cropped, spend some time editing them in Photoshop before bringing them into your collage layout. Not sure how? Try [these tips for basic photo editing in Photoshop](#).

## Want it to look real? Steal.

If you really want to make your wireframe look like a real Instagram or Facebook page, the best thing to do is to copy the basic elements of those pages like the colors, fonts, and labels. Take a screenshot of the page you want to copy on the real website. Then, open that screenshot in Photoshop. You can use the [Eyedropper tool](#) to select colors and save them to your Swatches so you can use them later. You can use [this technique](#) to figure out which fonts are used. Finally, you can crop the screenshot to just include the top navigation bar or other elements of the page layout you want to include in your fake profile. Now, all you have to do is change the information that pertains to your character.

## Use white space to balance your layout.

Ever wonder why most websites and apps these days look so plain and simple? Designers use white space — the space between images and text — to reduce visual clutter and make it easier for users to focus on the content that matters. As you're laying out the images you want to include on your fake social media profile, pay attention to how much space you're leaving between images and text. Don't crowd things too close together or allow layers to overlap too much. When in doubt, use the Photoshop [Grid feature](#) to make sure everything is even and lined up properly.