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# **Identity Safety Unit**

**Grades 5-8**

# LESSON—Forming an Identity Online

## Lesson Guide

### Recommended grade level: 5-8

Students will compare and contrast how an identity is formed online with how an identity is formed in the physical community.

## Learning Objectives

### Students will:

- Understand the components of their identity
- Relate how personal identity is formed online as compared to offline
- Build a general understanding of how identity online affects online interactions



## Materials/Preparation

- A copy of reference page for each student

## Procedures

### Self-Reflection Activity

1. Have each student take out a sheet of paper and write down three adjectives to describe themselves.
2. Continue the activity by having them write a short paragraph describing (a) the characteristics that they see as forming their identities and (b) the characteristics they would like others to identify with them.

## Discussion

- Ensure that all students have printouts of the reference/activity pages.
- Engage the learners in a brief discussion in which they define the term “identity,” and identify, explain and analyze components of what forms a person’s identity in the physical world. Guide the discussion to cover the following:
  - > Identity is defined as the distinguishing characteristics and personality of an individual. It is the culmination of features that makes one a unique individual.
  - > To simplify – identity is how I see myself as well as how others view me.

## Group Exercise Instructions

- Take out a sheet of paper and put your name on the top. Note: the teacher may also want to participate in this exercise.
- Pass papers to the right.

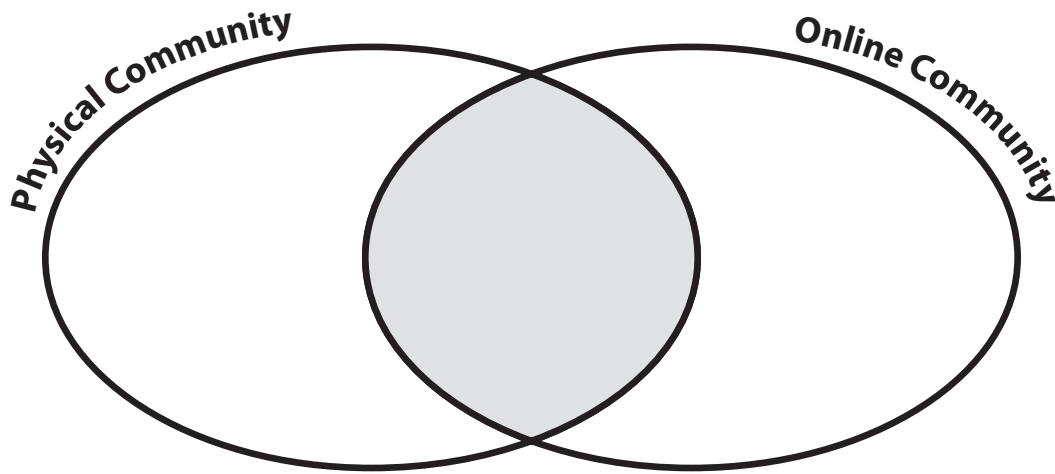
- Meanwhile, you will receive a paper with a name on the top. Write one adjective to describe that person's identity, along with a short explanation of why you chose that adjective. In general, try to stay positive; do not be mean to fellow classmates.
- Continue with the activity through 5-10 passings.
- Retrieve your own paper and review how others see you. How does this correspond to how you view yourself?

## Return to Discussion

- **Reinforce the concept** that identity is not just how you see yourself but it also includes how others see you.
- **Ask students:** How do others form their opinion of your identity in the physical world?
  - > Sample answers: how you act, sports you play, grades/academics, friends you keep, hobbies, interests, etc., all help others form an opinion of your identity.
- **Ask students:** How can someone form a WRONG impression of your identity?
  - > Sample answers: you act differently one time, but that leaves a strong impression; being caught in the wrong place at the wrong time; others listen to untrue gossip about you, etc.

## Reference and Venn Diagram Activity

- Direct students to read the reference page on identity. Students can read individually, in small groups or as a class.
- Create a Venn diagram on the board.
- Have the group brainstorm characteristics that form one's identity online and offline. Main concepts:
  - > Physical community characteristics and personality traits are those that are observable.
  - > Online identity characteristics may be created by profile postings, pictures, etc.
  - > Where the circles overlap, enter characteristics and personality traits that form an identity in both communities.



## Discussion

- Discuss the results of the Venn diagram. Items in the middle section may be different than the actual characteristics in the physical community.
- How does one form an identity online? (Answers: profiles, pictures, blogs, games one plays and other online activities, postings on the Web sites of others, etc.)
- How can your online identity be the same as your offline identity?
- How can it be different?
- Why might someone want to portray a different identity online?

## Conclusion

Introduce the idea of who sees a person's online identity. This concept will be fully explored in subsequent lessons in the unit.

1. Create a person's name (may be a girl or boy) and write it on the board.
2. Write characteristics of an online identity on the board or instruct students to work in small groups to create an online identity. Examples: posts lots of partying pictures or uses someone else's picture as their own; uses vulgar language in blogs or posts everything in poetry; pretends to be in a band; talks about having an eating disorder, etc.)
3. Write the following list on the board: teacher, principal, coach, friend's parent, college recruiter.
4. Discuss how each of these people might react if searching for and finding the person they have described in the online identity.
5. Explain that this concept will be fully explored in subsequent lessons in the unit.

# REFERENCE—Identity – Analyze It!

Identity is defined as the distinguishing characteristics and personality of an individual. It is the culmination of features that makes us a unique individual.

**Identity is how I see myself as well as how others view me.**

## How is one's identity formed?

While who we are is based partly on genetics, our identities are also shaped as a result of our interactions with our environments. When a parent praises a child for creating a piece of artwork or a teacher ignores a raised hand or questions, identities are being shaped.

## How have your experiences shaped your identity?

Think about your own identity. Do you show different aspects of your identity in different situations? Look at how you act around your best friend. How is that different from how you act around your parents? What about how you act in a new situation or environment vs how you act when you are comfortable in a situation? Have you seen these types of examples in others?

>Your identity is all of those – it is the TOTAL you. Your identity is constantly being developed and formed as you interact, explore and try new things. Also, sometimes others see things that you may not see in yourself.

## Think About It

List the main characteristic that you feel answers each of the following:

How do you see yourself?

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How do you think others see you?

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If our physical environments help us form our identities through our interactions, experiences and learning, how do you think your identity is formed when you are online?

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# How do we *mold* our online identities?

Millions of people interact online daily and yet few give any thought to the virtual identity they are forming. This is partly because one’s physical identity is so well defined, it is easy to forget the online environment is one in which one has to start nearly from scratch to develop an identity. As a result, our online identities may not reflect who we really are.

## The Truth or Consequences

How might someone’s online identity not accurately reflect who they are? For each of the following list two possible negative effects of how poor online choices could affect one’s online identity.

> Although you are normally a very kind person, in a fit of anger and frustration, you send a threatening IM to a classmate.

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> You lie about your age to sign up on a social networking Web site.

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## Problems with Online Identities

Now that the online environment is so interactive – all about Web 2.0 and social networking, people are being forced to pay more attention to their online identities.

Sometimes people use the Internet to experiment or try out new identities. They don’t realize that these identities are still presented to the world and are still associated with them as a physical person. An identity one may have used to play with or to be reckless with online might be the identity that the athletic coach, school counselor or college recruiter sees when researching.

# LESSON—When Online Identity Mistakes are Safety Risks

## Lesson Guide

### Recommended grade level: 5-8

Students will discover how revealing personal information online can result in safety risks.

## Learning Objectives

### Students will:

- Understand the concept of personal identifying information
- Identify various safety risks when online, including cyber harassment and cyber predation
- Relate how revealing personal information can increase online safety risks



## Materials/Preparation

- Prepare a copy of activity/reference pages for each student

## Procedures

### Group Exercises

1. (Pre-select student) Select a student in the class on whom you know identifying information such as name, age, hobbies/interests, hair color (do not reveal the identity of the student you have selected).
2. Direct the entire class to stand.
3. Start eliminating students with vague pieces of identifying information; for example:
  - Ask all students with brown hair to remain standing (the rest sit down).
  - Ask all students with March birthdays to remain standing.
4. Use this type of information to again narrow down the group until there are only one or two students standing, including the student you pre-selected.
5. Lead into discussion on the concept of personal identifying information.

## Discussion

- Ask students WHY there was only one student still standing.
- Explain that various pieces of information help to identify us and make us stand out from others.
- Some of this information is more vague or less identifying – such as hair color or favorite sport. In other words – others share this same information with us.
- Other information is more accurate in identifying us – such as name, birthdate, etc. Explain that while others may share this information – example: more than one John Smith in the world – it identifies us more accurately than other information.
- Finally, there is some information that others DO NOT have in common with us – address, phone number, social security number. (Family members can have the same address, etc., but this is still considered to be unique information.)



- Tie concepts: Just as there are different levels of information that identify us, there should also be different levels of information we share with others when online.

## Activity Page 1

Provide students with printouts of the two activity/reference pages and allow time for them to complete page 1.

1. Have students share examples from their lists on page 1 (you may want to create a sample on the board). Read the “Looking through a Lens of Identity” information (at the top of the page) together:

*Think of your personal information as being viewed through a lens that can open to show more and more about your identity. The inner part (we will call it the “90°” level) contains minimal information relating to you. Open it more (the “180°” level) with moderate information. The fully-opened lens (the “360°” level) is maximum information about you from your phone number to your address.*

2. Refer to the circle graphic. Have students offer other examples that would go in each “lens of identity.”
3. Continue with the activity. Discuss why it might be difficult to determine if identity factors should be in the 90° column or the 180° column. Make sure that the concept is fully understood before going to the next page.
4. Reinforce the determining factors if anyone is unsure about what goes in the 360° column.

## Activity Page 2

1. Have students complete page 2 individually or facilitate each section as they complete the page as follows:
2. Read the Think About It section: Have you ever known people to take something from another’s personal information and use it in a negative way?
3. Have students share examples of things people can do with another’s personal information (for example, a picture or address) that would be unkind or put your safety at risk.
4. Read over (explain) the directions of the Putting it Together section.
5. Have students complete the chart.

## Concluding Discussion

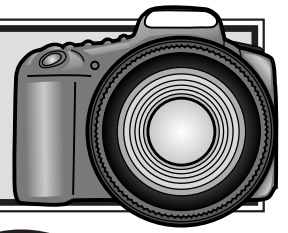
- Have students share examples from their charts (you may want to create a sample on the board).
- Discuss why it might be difficult to determine how much information to give on differing Web sites.
- Discuss why information about safeguarding identity on Web sites is important for all those who use the Internet, not just youth. (For example, adults give up important personal information when buying things online.)
- Refer back to the Think About It section on page 2 to reinforce the safety risks in providing too much of one’s identity online.
- Instruct students to share their activity and the importance of safeguarding identity with their parent(s) or guardian(s).

## Enrichment Activity

Create a “Be Identity Safe” poster or webpage:

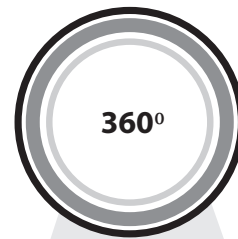
- Break students into small groups to create posters or webpages on what has been learned in the lesson.
- Evaluation: Posters/webpages should reflect (1) examples of why it is important to safeguard identity for personal safety reasons and (2) tips for safeguarding identity appropriately online.

# ACTIVITY—Categorizing Types of Personal Information



## Looking Through a Lens of Identity

Think of your personal information as being viewed through a lens that can open to show more and more about your identity. The inner part (we will call it the “90°” level) contains minimal information relating to you. Open it more (the “180°” level) with moderate information. The fully-opened lens (the “360°” level) is maximum information about you from your phone number to your address.



190 Maple St,  
Denver, CO  
719-555-1212



Name: Thomas  
Plays baseball



Lives in  
Cincinnati

## Activity Directions

Use the 90°, 180°, and 360° definitions to complete the activity.

1. Fill out the following survey with information about your identity. Each characteristic can be rated from very vague information all the way to very specific information.
2. For each item, check the box that best categorizes the characteristic as 90° (information that is common to many people), 180° (information that describes you more specifically, but may apply to other people as well), and 360° (information that is uniquely yours).

Characteristic	Your information	90°	180°	360°
Favorite hobby	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your dog's name	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone number	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Country you live in	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair color	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street name	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete address	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Favorite sport	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First name	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State you live in	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Favorite musician or group	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete name	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Favorite TV show	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Store where you shop	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
City you live in	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School you attend	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zip code	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E-mail address	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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# LESSON—From Identity Mistakes to Security Risks

## Lesson Guide

**Recommended grade level: 5-8**

Students will discover how revealing personal information online can result in security risks.

## Learning Objectives

**Students will:**

- Understand the concept of personal identifying information
- Relate how revealing personal information can increase online security risks
- Identify various security risks when online such as spam, scams and identity theft

## Materials/Preparation

- Prepare a copy of reference and activity pages for each student
- If time permits, or your students have a firm grasp on concepts, consider combining this lesson with other lessons.

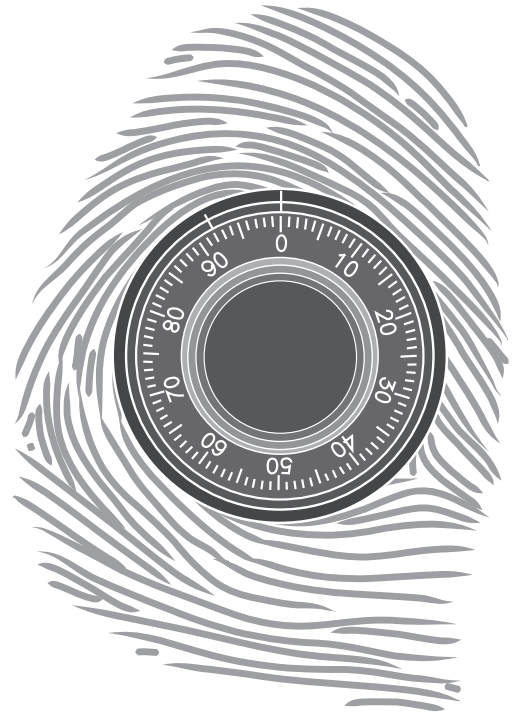
## Procedures

### Discussion 1 – Review/Introduction

- Ask students to review what they have learned about how revealing identity online can result in safety risks. List some of the safety risks associated with online usage.
- Explain to students that in addition to safety risks online there are also security risks. Security risks are risks that can lead to financial harm, computer harm, etc., rather than harm to our personal selves.
- Even though security risks may not harm us physically or psychologically like bullying or predators – they can affect our lives in many ways. Some, like spam, are mere annoyances, while others such as spyware/adware and identity theft, are more serious.
- Ask students if they have ever experienced security issues.

## Reference

- Hand out the reference page and read together as a class.
- Discuss each term so students comprehend the security risks.
- Ask students if they have ever put their e-mail address on a Web site where it could potentially be harvested, sold or exploited. Examples: Failing to read a privacy policy when filling in an online form, posting e-mail on a blog or other public site, using e-mail address to register for sweepstakes, etc.



## Activity

- Hand out the activity page.
- Direct students to think about what information they reveal online and how they reveal it. Explain that i-SAFE has identified three levels of profile information – 90°, 180°, and 360°. At the 90° level – you are revealing information that is perfectly safe and OK. This is information you can post for all to see. At the 180° level, you are getting more specific. Risks increase some and you may want to limit who sees this information. The 360° level is very specific information that identifies a person exactly. Sharing this information online will greatly increase safety and security risks.
- Have students complete the activity page.
- Share activity page answers as a class and make sure concepts are fully understood.

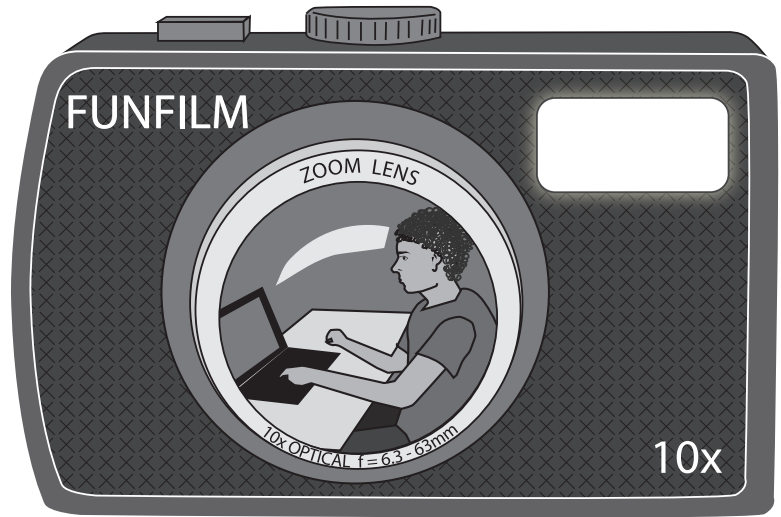
## Concluding Discussion

- Reinforce that students need to be careful about the identity they create online and the information they reveal.
- Make sure it is understood that information in the 180° and 360° categories increases security risks.

## REFERENCE—Securing Your Identity

### Identifying the Risks

In the physical world, preventative measures usually solve a risk to security. If you want to keep unwanted people out of your home, you can lock it or install a security alarm system. You control the key. When online, personal information you provide is stored in Web site databases, where you almost instantly lose control of it. Even if you erase a profile, the information has probably been saved. There isn't any way you can lock it up and keep it secure. The following lists ways one can be victimized if their online information is used without permission.



### E-mail Harvesting/Sales and Phishing

Many sites we choose to interact on request an e-mail address. However, the more often an e-mail address is put out there, the more likely it is to be “harvested” – that means copied and sold or otherwise used as a target for spam or scam e-mail.

- Harvested e-mail addresses can be used in **Phishing** scams. This means someone is “fishing” for information by using a business name without permission to send out an e-mail asking for personal information. Once a person responds to this type of e-mail, their information can be used for illegal purposes.

### Information Harvesting

A profile can be “harvested” (collected) from a Web site. It can be used by those who want to include that person's information on a searchable Web site. For example, if you say you are a ranked tennis player in your state, that info may be taken without your permission and placed on a Web site that lists contact information for tennis players. A greater risk is when profiles, such as from social networking sites, are illegally copied and saved. Names, e-mail addresses, and even complete home address information, along with likes and dislikes, are sold to others who want your information for anything from sales to illegal purposes.

### Hacking

Information found online can be used by others to hack into your personal computer in order to take control of your system for any purpose.

### Spyware

As you choose to interact online, you may be encouraged to download programs or allow access to your computer to continue. This can be a sign of spyware. Spyware programs can range from a simple nuisance to a true invasion of privacy. They can cause annoying pop-up ads and banners to appear, or install tracking programs that collect information, such as your computer's IP address and credit card numbers, as well as data about where you go and what you do online. This information can be used to spam you with inappropriate e-mails or endless offers to buy things. Additionally, the constant transferring of information uses up bandwidth and computer resources.

## Identity Theft

Identity theft, a very serious crime, occurs when someone uses your personal information, such as your name, social security number, credit card number, or other identifying information, without your permission to commit fraud or other crimes. In other words, your identity becomes a criminal.

## Unsafe Downloading

One activity many youth engage in online is the downloading of music, games, videos, documents, software and more. Beyond the consideration of whether this is legal, there are numerous security concerns. You never know what you are downloading, whether it is safe, or if it has malware (viruses, Trojans, spyware, etc.) attached! Download only from verified and safe resources to help protect your machine.

**Remember these are considered to be SECURITY RISKS – there are also many associated SAFETY RISKS such as bullies and predators!**

## Activity

The best way to stay secure online is to be aware of what information you are sharing and how it can be used by others. The concept of providing profiles in levels or degrees of limitation is a way to have freedom online without giving out information to those you don't know. A way to directly apply this concept through the **identity.net** levels: 90°, 180° and 360°.

## Review

90° – this is a small portion of your identity, information that does not specifically identify you – this information is of no use to harvesters or identity thieves.

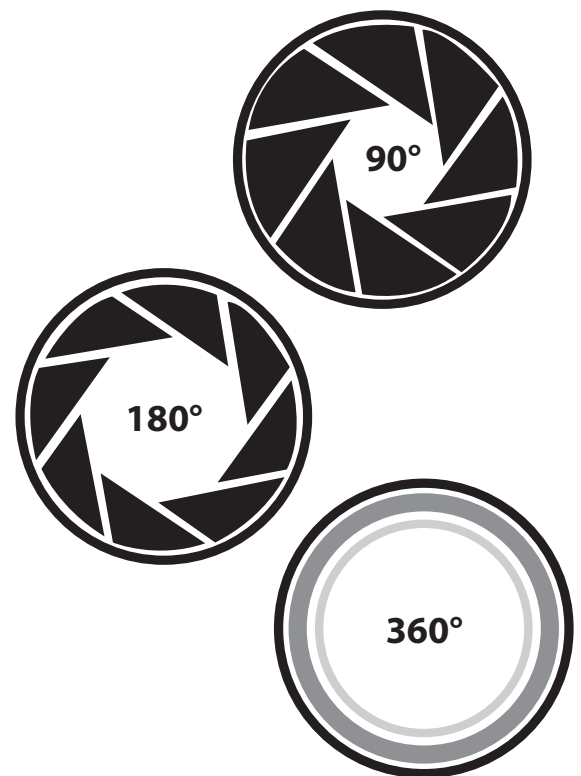
180° – this is a slightly larger portion of your identity, perhaps, the city you live in or things that help identify you and form a more specific identity online – however this information is still largely useless to security scammers.

360° – this information identifies YOU exactly – phone number, address, social security – information you really shouldn't be handing out online because it puts you, and possibly your family, at a HIGH security risk.

**Directions:** Fill in the various levels of information to show your understanding of the concepts mi90, mi180 and mi360.

**Example 1:** 90° = Jim likes to run – general information that can apply to a wide range of people.  
180° = Jim is on the school track team in Medford, OR – getting more specific  
360° = Jim is the OR state champion in the 100 meters

**Example 2:** 90° = her first name is Cathy  
180° = her nickname is Cathannah Montana  
360° = her full name is Catherine Eliza Martin



## Your Turn

1.      $90^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_  
           $180^\circ =$  Has a dog named Bruiser  
           $360^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_
  
2.      $90^\circ =$  Loves to play games online  
           $180^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_  
           $360^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_
  
3.      $90^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_  
           $180^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_  
           $360^\circ =$  She lives at 222 Stone street in Salt Lake City
  
4.      $90^\circ =$  Screen name is Partyprincess  
           $180^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_  
           $360^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_
  
5.      $90^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_  
           $180^\circ =$  Birthday is next week  
           $360^\circ =$  \_\_\_\_\_