



This thinksheet supports concepts taught in *Social Thinking Thinksheets for Tweens and Teens*

Brain Filters

What is a brain filter? Think about a coffee filter, or air conditioning filter, or a face mask. Filters are designed to only allow certain things to pass. Our brain needs to do the same thing by filtering the thoughts we have to decide which ones should pass through our mouths.

There are times when all of us have negative thoughts about what other people do or say. That's just being a human! It's okay to have negative thoughts about what people say or do. Others have thoughts about our actions and words too.

But, when should we run those thoughts through our brain filter to decide whether or not to say the thoughts out loud. The reality is that negative thoughts should mostly stay in our brains (caught in the filter) rather than coming out of our mouths. Of course, this depends on what's happening, the people around and the place, but it's pretty common for both kids and adults to use brain filters.

If we use our filter to decide what stays in our brains vs. what we say, then we can keep others feeling calm or okay when they are around us.

Remember - it's okay to think what you want - inside your own brain. But, if your thoughts might be hurtful, not helpful, judgmental, or just plain mean, then keep them in your brain filter!

Activity: Animate an example or time when you had to use your brain filter

1. Students explore and play around with the website
<https://editor.wickeditor.com>
2. Students create a plan to depict a situation of someone using their brain filter (What's the situation? What thoughts did the person have? Why were the thoughts filtered? What would have happened if they didn't filter their thoughts? Link with social emotional chain reaction)
3. Students create the animation independently or in small groups/breakout rooms
4. Student share animations with each other and discuss different situations

