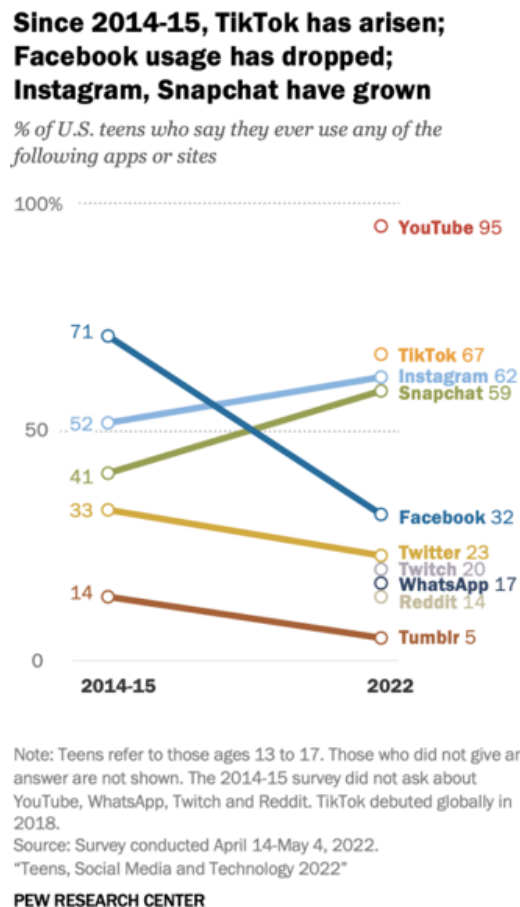


DOES NEWS FIND ME?

Understanding Algorithms: Breakout Room Activities

1. Which social media platforms do you think your students use most often?
2. How do your predictions compare to the graph below (from Pew). Does the percentage of students using each of these platforms surprise you? Why or why not?



3. We'll use YouTube and Instagram as examples. Both YouTube and Instagram use algorithms to sort content for users. YouTube uses a recommendation algorithm to suggest videos for you to watch. Instagram uses a sort algorithm to organize your feed.

How would you define an **algorithm** for students? Why are algorithms important?

4. What features do you think YouTube includes in its recommendation algorithm?

5. What features do you think Instagram includes in its recommendation algorithm?

6. These are the features that YouTube and Instagram say that they consider in their algorithms.

YouTube	Instagram
(a) Videos watched by others who watched the same video as you (b) Videos you find satisfying (e.g., shares, likes, dislikes) (c) Quality watchtime – how long you watch videos (d) Authoritative videos – Human raters determine if videos are conspiracy theories or misinformation	(a) Information about the post: How popular it is? (b) Information about who created the post: Are they someone you interact with? (c) Your activity (e.g., likes) (d) Your history of interacting with a post's creator

7. How do the features that YouTube and Instagram report considering in their algorithms compare to the algorithm features that you identified?

8. What is one similarity and one difference in the features that YouTube vis-à-vis Instagram consider in their algorithms?

9. Identify two benefits and two dangers or risks of algorithms for you as a user.

	Algorithm Benefits	Algorithm Risks
<i>For Users:</i>	(1)	(1)
	(2)	(2)

10. What, if anything, could YouTube or Instagram do to reduce the risks associated with their algorithms?