From the book:
Lol…OMG
by Matt Ivester

Technology is completely changing the way that teachers teach and students learn - improving both exponentially. Once a second home for curious students, libraries are now relics of a bygone age. Today's students have access to virtually unlimited amounts of information with a simple search on Google. They can quickly ask their friends for homework help on Facebook, or they can crowd-source answers on sites like Quora, tapping into the collective of the online community. They can watch a how-to video on youtube, or Skype to practice their mandarin directly with a student in China. They can take notes with a live scribe smarten and send those nose (audio and all) to a sick classmate with the click of a mouse. Lost the syllabus? Not a problem, because the teacher has posted all of the course materials online. The amazing ways that technology has improved education could fill a book. But life at a digit high school isn't all easy A's and smooth sailing. These recent technological advances have a dark side as well. (*page2*)

The Internet has opened up new and more powerful avenues for bullies to torment their fellow students. Unfortunately, just as it provides lightning-fast access to research and easy communication with teachers, the Internet also provides a way to spread gossip, lies, embarrassing photos and videos, and other hurtful material at those same lightning speeds. Moreover, it amplifies the power of the bully by enabling access to a global audience, and sometimes it provides a cloak of anonymity that makes the bully that much bolder and more brash. In the digital world, your permanent record isn't controlled by school administrators; anyone can write on it, including the bullies. (page 3)

For a student, it may feel as if the Internet has been around forever. In fact, today's high school students are considered "digital natives" - people who have never known a life without computers and the Internet.(page 5)

You can make a difference moving forward. This book isn't focused on what to do when something goes wrong - at that point a lot of the damage is already done. Instead this book focuses on how to prevent things from going wrong in the first place. It is meant to provide you with the resources needed to make educated decisions and to take deliberate actions online, becoming what I refer to as a conscious creator of content. (page7)

You may be creating more digital content that you even realize - the average Facebook user posts 90 pieces of content on the site every month, and students are far above that average. In aggregate, Facebook users upload more than **30 billion** items each month - and that number is continuing to grow. (page 15)

In many ways, open authorship has had an incredibly positive impact on society. It has, for example, provided opportunities for talented writers and entertainers to share their works with audiences who might never have seen them otherwise. And, on a more serious note, in countries such as Iran and Egypt, political dissidents, previously repressed by their governments, have used social media to revolutionize the way that they communicate, both with one another, and with the rest of the world. (page 17)

On the other hand, untrained writers do not necessarily have the skills to report objectively, and many have never been forced to think about the impact that their words can have. A blogger isn't held to the same standards as a professional journalist; indeed, a blogger can essentially write whatever he or she wants with no regard for factchecking or unbiased reporting. And yet, his or her ideas are equally accessible online - one can just as easily read

the ideas of a blogger as he or she can a lead reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*. This new type of citizen journalism must be embraced with both shrewdness and caution. While it's great that you may now be exposed to more new ideas, from a wider variety of sources, you must also become a more discerning consumer of online information. (page 17/18)

More than two billion people have access to the Internet - that's 30% of the world's population. In the United States alone, there are 236 million people who could potentially access the content you decide to publish, and even more if that content gets picked up by the mainstream media outlets. (page 18)

Today, 70% of recruiters admit to having rejected a candidate based on information that they have found online, and the actual number may be even higher. The three most common reasons for not hiring someone were "concerns about the candidate's lifestyle," "inappropriate comments and text written by the candidate," and "unsuitable photos, videos and information." What "inappropriate" means in this context is somewhat vague, but another survey found that "content about drinking or using drugs," "poor communication skills" and "discriminatory comments" were among recruiters' top concerns with regard to online content. Think about all of the content you have up online right now. Does any of that content fall into any of those categories? For many students, it does. (page 47)

The content that you put up online probably won't be what gets you the job, but it very well may prevent it - careless content creation can come back to bite you. Companies don't go online looking for the awards you forgot to tell them about. They are looking for red flags - things that you are ams art enough not to say in an interview or put on your resume, but might be willing to have said online. (page 47)

One reciter commented, "A lot of it makes me think, what kind of judgement does this person have? Why are you allowing this to be viewed publicly, effectively, or semipublicly?" (page 49)

Companies don't have to tell you why they decided not to interview or hire you. You don't get a chance to explain why you were giving the middle finger to the camera man…They just don't call you back. (page 49)

Already into college? Not going to grad school? Don't care about getting a job? There are still countless reasons to manage your online reputation. For example, you probably care about being able to get a date. In a recent survey of more than 1,000 singles in their early twenties, 81% said that they they do a search for their date on Google or Facebook before meeting. A good first impression online can make the date go a whole lot better, and a bad one can prevent it from going at all. The list of other people out there who might do a search of your name online goes on and on, each having a different potential consequence - be it the conservative grandmother who writes you out of the will, or the future landlady who doesn't think that you look like her kind of tenant. (page 51)

The question of "Why?" Preempts any other questions that you might as yourself. Why do you have a Twitter account in the first place? Why are you posting picture on Facebook? What are you hoping to get out of having a blog? Ultimately, why are you using social media the way you are? There are many perfectly legitimate answers to these questions, but you may find that some answers you arrive at aren't very substantial. (page 54)

In the process of answering the fundamental question of why, you may realize that you don't have good reasons for certain types of content creation. Maybe Twitter isn't actually adding that much value to your life. Or it may be that leaving comments on celebrity gossip sites isn't how you want to spend your time. The power of suggestion can be very strong, but

you should remind yourself that just because these sites are asking you to contribute doesn't mean you have to. Knowing why you are creating the content in the first place allows you to weigh that value against the potential risks. (page 55)

Research has shown that 96% of the clicks occur on those first 10 links. (Referencing Google searches) (page 68)

No book can tell you how to be a "good" person. Life has too many gray areas. And the Internet presents even more. Ultimately, you have to decide what is right in accordance with your own personal values. (page 113)

Tests that may help you judge your actions: (page 113 - 115)
1) Golden Rule - Treating others the way you want to be treated

2) Golden Rule 2.0 - How are you affecting somebody else's online reputation?

3) Laws & Policies Test - Does what you are doing violate a law? Harassment? Invasion of Privacy? Defamation? Cyberbullying? Would you be comfortable doing this in front of a police officer or school administrator?

4) Everybody Test - What if everybody is doing the same thing you are?

5) Offline Test - What is the real-world equivalent of what you are doing?

6) Real Name Test - How would you change your behavior if you knew your real name would be associated with it?

7) Emotion Test - Are you doing something to somebody because you are angry, jealous, or otherwise emotionally charged?

8) Whole World Test - Would you be comfortable with the whole world knowing what you are doing?

9) Get it Test - Is what you are trying to say hard to convey online? Is it likely to be misinterpreted?

10) Your Test - Consider how what you are doing reflects on you as a person. What does it say about you? Do you like what is says about you? Does it reinforce the notion of the person you want to be?