

The Teacher's Online Translation Guide

We want you to feel like the cat's meow! Or Da Bomb! Or...whatever it is kids are saying these days, but slang moves as fast as the algorithm. So building a safe space where students feel comfortable coming to you, starts with understanding their world—and their language.

#VIBES

Terms you need to be across:

Clanker

Bordering on a "slur"—used to call out AI-generated content or automated bots.

Looksmaxxing

Improving one's attractiveness via grooming, fitness, and beauty routines. Spans from basic self-care to obsessive online subcultures; closely linked to "mogging" and "ascension."

Opp/Op

A person or organisation that opposes, rivals, or challenges you. Think a rival peer or social group, authority figure, school leadership, or police.

Body Count

Refers to the total number of people an individual has been sexually intimate with. In Battle Royale or shooter games, refers to the total number of "kills" a player achieves.

Touch Grass

Exactly what it sounds like! Used to bring attention to one's lack of connection to the real world. Online overconsumption and losing track of reality, someone needs to touch grass!

Chat

Used to address a collective group of people or an imaginary audience (e.g., "Chat, what have I done?").

Cooked

Meaning ruined or completely wrong! Not to be confused with "Let Him/Her Cook!" this means wait and see, something exciting is about to happen!

Clock it

Enthusiastic agreement, similar to saying "Yes, Queen!" It means that something was absolutely correct or spot on.

Lowkey

Used to keep something subtle or quiet, or to express a desire without making a big deal out of it (e.g., "I lowkey want to go home").

Highkey

The exact opposite of lowkey; used to express a feeling intensely, openly, or proudly (e.g., "I am highkey stressed for this exam!").

Tea

Juicy gossip or secret information. Be careful if "the tea is piping hot"—if it leaks, it might rock a few boats!

Vibe Check

Assessing the general mood, thoughts, and feelings in a room (e.g., "Can I get a vibe check?")

Cracked

Either exceptionally skilled in a game or a PG13+ replacement for F****d! *Note: Check context before sounding the alarm.

Lock in

To withstand distractions, hyper-focus, and get the job done!

Keep in mind: It is more than knowing what is banter and what may be a red flag. Slang is just an entry point! Use this snapshot to open doors and spark conversations about their digital world. When we focus only on the online risks, we may accidentally build walls rather than take them down. By staying non-judgemental and curious about what they love online, we can become the adults they actually turn to when things go wrong.

Where to go for more information:

- Your School's Online Safety Hub
- esafety.gov.au/educators/toolkit-schools