



LESSON PLAN

Level:	Grades K to 3
About the Author:	This lesson was written for MediaSmarts by Ethan Anderson
Duration:	30-45 minutes

Rules of the Game



This lesson is part of *USE, UNDERSTAND & ENGAGE: A Digital Media Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools*: <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-framework>.

Overview

In this lesson, students consider the importance of the written and unwritten rules that make it possible to learn and play together, online and offline.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- consider the importance of written and unwritten rules for playing and interacting online and offline
- discuss the differences between playing and interacting online and offline
- identify which rules are most important for playing and interacting online

Preparation and Materials

None

Procedure

Online Games and Worlds

Ask students whether any of them play online games or visit online virtual worlds, either on a computer, a game console or a mobile device such as a phone or tablet. (You can prompt them with examples such as Minecraft, Roblox, Clash Royale or Animal Jam.) Ask students:

- What do they like about online games and virtual worlds?
- What don't they like?
- Are there sometimes things that other players do that make it hard to have fun? What are some examples?



Make a T-chart on the board with the headings *Online* and *Offline*. (Make sure students understand what these words mean.) Have the class identify differences between playing online and offline and record these on the chart. (Explain that you're not just talking about playing games but also about spending time together in virtual worlds.) Make sure the following points are included:

- Playing both online and offline can be fun
- You may not know everybody you're playing with online
- You don't really hear or see the people you're playing with online
- You don't get any exercise playing online

Rules and Roles

Now ask students to think about the *rules* we follow when we play with other people. Make sure they understand that you're not talking about the rules of a particular game, but the things we do so that everyone can have fun. An example of the first type of rule would be that in "Snakes and Ladders" you go up if you land on a ladder or down if you land on a snake; an example of the second type of rules would be the idea of not being a "sore loser" in a board game or "no ice in your snowballs" in a snowball fight. (Focus on the idea of rules as a way of making it possible to play together, rather than a list of things you *can't* do.) If your classroom or school has a posted code of conduct, refer to that for examples of rules that make it easier to play and spend time with other people.

Draw a three-column chart on the board. As a class, have students make a list of the most important rules to follow when working together in the classroom (some of these may come from your posted classroom rules) and put these in the first column of the chart, titled *Classroom Rules*.

When the class has finished filling in the first column, lead a discussion about *why* we have these rules. Make sure the following points emerge:

- Rules can keep you from hurting other people (physically or emotionally)
- Rules can make you feel safe
- Rules can let you do fun things for longer (because people don't get mad and frustrated)
- Rules can make sure nobody is left out

Now have students create a list of rules for playing outside at recess or at lunch in the second column of the chart, titled *Playground Rules*. Again, you may have posted rules for them to refer to, but also prompt them to look at some of the rules that deal with less formal issues such as:

- What do you do if someone asks to join a game after it's started?
- What do you do if somebody wants to stop a game (because they're hurt, not having fun, etc.), but others want to keep playing?
- What do you do if two people want to use the same equipment (slide, swings, etc.) at the same time?

Rules of the Game

Bring students back to the T-chart you made at the beginning of the lesson about the differences between playing online and offline. After reminding them about the differences between playing online and offline, have them create a



list of rules for playing in online games or virtual worlds in the third column of the chart titled *Game Rules*.

- What things do you and your friends do to make sure that everyone has fun?
- What are the things people sometimes do that make playing online less fun?
- How can you apply some of the rules from the other two columns to playing online?

Now point out connections between the rules on the list to ensure that students understand that while the contexts are different, the rules in each situation have the same purpose (to keep people safe, to make sure that people can do what they are trying to do and to make sure that everyone has fun).

Assessment/Evaluation

Have students create a poster that illustrates **one** of the rules that the class has identified as being important for online play. The poster should be organized so that the words are clear and graphics or drawings are used effectively to communicate the main idea.

Extension: Wacky Media Songs

You may consider supplementing this lesson with the TVOntario Original Series *Wacky Media Songs*. These short videos explore a variety of digital media literacy topics. Here are a few suggested videos and discussion topics:

[Guess Who!](#) Ava's got some special co-stars in her song: the AVA-tars! An avatar is a kind of online mask that can protect your real identity. It gives you lots more privacy and helps keep you safe online. Sing along with Ava and her AVA-tars!

Before the video, ask: Do you know the word "avatar"? If not, what do you think it means? If so, have you made any avatars? How did you decide how it should look?

After the video, ask: Why might you want to use an avatar and a nickname instead of your real picture and name when you're online? What are some ways you could tell the difference between a computer character and another player's avatar when you're playing an online game?

[Let's Connect!](#) Just like in real life, when we connect with online friends, it's important to show respect. Let's keep a positive attitude and not be rude! Make sure you feel safe and treat others well, and the fun will never end!

Before the video, ask: What are some ways that talking to people online is different from talking to them offline (in real life)?

After the video, ask: Think about a time when something that happened online was misunderstood – either by you or by someone else. How can we avoid hurting people's feelings by mistake? Since we can't see people's facial expressions or hear their tone of voice online, what can we do to find out how they're feeling? How can we be more clear about how we're feeling?

[The Emoji Dance!](#) Sometimes words aren't enough to get your meaning across. That's where emojis come in. Words and emojis make a great team. Do the emoji dance with Ava and end it with a big happy face emoji!

Before the video, ask: Do you ever use emojis when you're talking online? What do you use them for? After the video, ask: Could you sometimes send a message you don't mean to with an emoji? How could you avoid that?



Assessment Activity: Poster

	Learning Expectations	Achievement
<p>Use</p> <p>Skills and competencies that fall under “use” range from basic technical know-how – using computer programs such as word processors, web browsers, email, and other communication tools – to the more sophisticated abilities for accessing and using knowledge resources, such as search engines and online databases, and emerging technologies such as cloud computing.</p>	<p>tell or write about favourite parts of oral, print and other media texts</p> <p>describe ways they use technologies</p> <p>behave appropriately and in a socially responsible way in digital environments, demonstrating awareness and knowledge of legal and ethical aspects on the use of ICT and digital content</p> <p>use appropriate communication etiquette</p> <p>use acceptable etiquette in electronic communication</p> <p>explore the use of information technology in an appropriate, safe and responsible manner</p>	<p>Insufficient (R);</p> <p>Beginning (1);</p> <p>Developing (2);</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>
<p>Understand</p> <p>Understand includes recognizing how networked technology affects our behaviour and our perceptions, beliefs and feelings about the world around us.</p> <p>Understand also prepares us for a knowledge economy as we develop information management skills for finding, evaluating and effectively using information to communicate, collaborate and solve problems.</p>	<p>share personal experiences that are clearly related to oral, print and other media texts</p> <p>demonstrate understanding what cyberbullying means and what he/she can do when he/she encounters it</p> <p>demonstrate an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of others and self when using technological resources</p> <p>describe how technology affects individuals and schools</p>	<p>Insufficient (R);</p> <p>Beginning (1);</p> <p>Developing (2);</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>
<p>Create</p> <p>Create is the ability to produce content and effectively communicate through a variety of digital media tools. It includes being able to adapt what we produce for various contexts and audiences; to create and communicate using rich media such as images, video and sound; and to effectively and responsibly engage with user-generated content such as blogs and discussion forums, video and photo sharing, social gaming and other forms of social media.</p> <p>The ability to create using digital media ensures that Canadians are active contributors to digital society.</p>	<p>identify the topic, purpose and audience for media texts they plan to create</p> <p>identify conventions and techniques appropriate to the form chosen for a media text they plan to create</p> <p>produce some short media texts for specific purposes and audiences, using a few simple media forms and appropriate conventions and techniques</p> <p>use own and respond to others’ ideas to create oral, print and other media texts</p>	<p>Insufficient (R);</p> <p>Beginning (1);</p> <p>Developing (2);</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>