

# USE, UNDERSTAND & CREATE:

## A Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools

What exactly *is* digital literacy, and how can we ensure that students are learning the digital skills they need in school? MediaSmarts classifies competencies for digital literacy according to three main principles: *use*, *understand* and *create*. These principles form the basis for our digital literacy framework.

With Young Canadians need to be able to make good choices about privacy, ethics, safety and verifying information when they're using digital media, and they need to be prepared to be active and engaged digital citizens. Based on our research on digital literacy education in Canada, *USE, UNDERSTAND & CREATE* provides a road map for teaching these skills in Canadian schools. The framework draws on seven key aspects of digital literacy (listed in the grid below) and provides teachers with supporting lessons and interactive resources that are linked to curriculum outcomes for every province and territory. The home and school connection is supported by parent tip sheets that are linked to from each resource.

To find K-12 lessons in each category, visit <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/use-understand-create-digital-literacy-framework-canadian-schools>.

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### FRAMEWORK ICON LEGEND



Ethics and Empathy

Privacy and Security

Community

Digital Health

Consumer

Finding and

Making and



CANADA'S CENTRE  
FOR DIGITAL AND  
MEDIA LITERACY

### Ethics and Empathy



This category addresses students' social-emotional skills and empathy towards others as well as their ability to make ethical decisions in digital environments when dealing with issues such as cyberbullying, sharing other people's content and accessing music and video.

### Privacy and Security



This includes essential skills for managing students' privacy, reputation and security online such as making good decisions about sharing their own content, understanding data collection techniques, protecting themselves from malware and other software threats, and being aware of their digital footprint.

### Community Engagement



Resources in this category teach students about their rights as citizens and consumers and empower them to influence positive social norms in online spaces and to speak out as active, engaged citizens.

### Digital Health



Digital health skills include managing screen time and balancing students' online and offline lives; managing online identity issues; dealing with issues relating to digital media, body image and sexuality; and understanding the differences between healthy and unhealthy online relationships.

### Consumer Awareness



These skills allow students to navigate highly commercialized online environments. They include recognizing and interpreting advertising, branding and consumerism; reading and understanding the implications of website Terms of Service and privacy policies; and being savvy consumers online.

### Finding and Verifying



Students need the skills to effectively search the Internet for information they need for personal and school purposes, and then evaluate and authenticate the sources and information they find.

### Making and Remixing



Making and Remixing skills enable students to create digital content and use existing content for their own purposes in ways that respect legal and ethical considerations and to use digital platforms to collaborate with others.

## Digital Literacy Framework - Grades K-3

Students in the primary grades are already active users of digital technologies, and while they are usually supervised when they go online there are still many issues that need to be considered. For example, younger children (grades K-1) have trouble distinguishing fantasy from reality and tend to accept what they see at face value, including online advertising messages. They trust characters and people they see in the media, which makes them particularly vulnerable to stereotypes.

In grades 2-3, students are still not yet able to think critically about technology, accepting online environments and activities at face value. However, their growing independence means they are looking for more information online, and they are starting to integrate computers and the Internet into their daily lives. With this in mind, it's a good time to introduce:

- skills for search strategies
- recognizing how branded characters, games and activities on websites build brand loyalty
- how to protect their privacy on commercial sites
- the idea that material posted to the Internet can last forever
- the fact that the people we interact with online have feelings

### Adversmarts: Introduction to Food Advertising Online

Grades: K-1



In this lesson students are introduced to the idea of online advertising and look at the ways that marketers create immersive and appealing online environments that draw and hold children's attention.

### Adversmarts: Understanding Food Advertising Online

Grades: 2-3



In this lesson students are introduced to the idea of online advertising and look at the ways that marketers create immersive and appealing online environments that draw and hold children's attention.

### Break the Fake: What's in the frame?

Grades: K-2



In this lesson, students are introduced to the idea that what they see in media can be deceptive. They explore the idea that media are "framed" by their creators and consider what parts of the world are left out of the frame.

### Break the Fake: What's Real Online?

Grades: 3-5



In this lesson, students are introduced to the challenges of identifying what is real and what is fake online. After learning some simple steps to verify online information they create a poster that communicates the importance of questioning and double-checking online content.



[Can You Spot the Ad?](#)

Grades: K-3



In this lesson students will **learn about** the concept of branded content and will learn to differentiate between branded images and videos and non-branded images and videos in online and offline contexts.

[Co-Co's AdverSmarts: An Interactive Unit on Food Marketing on the Web](#)

Grades: K-3



This interactive unit is designed to help kids recognize the marketing techniques used on commercial websites that target children.

[CyberSense and Nonsense: The Second Adventure of the Three CyberPigs](#)

Grades: 3-5



In this game the three CyberPigs learn some important lessons about authenticating online information and observing rules of netiquette. They also learn how to distinguish between fact and opinion and how to recognize bias and harmful stereotyping in online content.

[Finding Balance in our Digital Lives](#)

Grades: K-3



In this lesson students look at the different ways in which we spend our free time and learn to find balance between active, learning and media activities.

[Healthy Food Web](#)

Grades: 2-3



In this lesson students consider the role of snack foods in a healthy diet and learn about some of the techniques used by online food marketers.

[Internet Time Capsule](#)

Grades: K-3



In this lesson students learn about the concept of “time capsules” and then apply the idea by selecting time capsule contents to represent both the time they live in and their own lives and tastes. They then extend this idea to online content, making a “time capsule” of any online content connected to them.

[Privacy Pirates: An Interactive Unit on Online Privacy \(Ages 7-9\)](#)

Grades: 2-4



This tutorial introduces children to the concept of online privacy and teaches them to distinguish between information that is appropriate to give out and information better kept private – and to recognize how this may change in different contexts.



**Representing Ourselves Online**

Grades: K-3



In this lesson students talk about dressing up and taking on identities that are similar to or different from them. They are then introduced to the idea of avatars as a kind of “dressing up” inside video games and consider the ways in which the technical, generic and aesthetic limitations on avatar creation and customization affect their choices and their ability to represent themselves online.

**Rules of the Game**

Grades: K-3



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.

**So Many Choices!**

Grades: K-3



In this lesson students are introduced to the first steps in finding information on the Internet.

**Teaching TV: Film Production: Who Does What?**

Grades: 1-6



In this lesson, students look at the equipment used to produce television and film, and learn about the members of the film production team and their duties.



## Digital Literacy Framework - Grades 4-6

Students in the junior grades lack sufficient critical thinking skills to surf the Web alone, but MediaSmarts' *Young Canadians in a Wired World* research shows that almost a third never or rarely use the Internet with an adult nearby.

Because they are spending more unsupervised time online, these students need guidance about Internet safety and protection of privacy, and they also need to be taught about good citizenship and responsible Internet use.

As more of their school work requires Internet research, this is also a good time to teach students skills for conducting effective research and for authenticating online content including recognizing marketing messages, bias and stereotyping.

Students at this age are highly active in games and virtual environments, where they need to learn to apply empathy to their online interactions and to resist “upselling” techniques in those environments as well as to manage the amount of time they spend online.

Children this age are also increasingly sensitive to messages about body image and gender norms that they get from media, including digital media, and need help in engaging with these.

*Young Canadians in a Wired World* backgrounders:

[Profile of Kids in Grades 4-5](#)

[Profiles of Kids in Grades 6-7](#)

### [A Day in the Life of the Jos](#)

Grades: 6-8



In this licensed educational game, students help the brother and sister team Jo and Josie with situations they encounter online as they go about a typical day in their lives. The modules are represented as five days in the lives of Jo and Josie, covering topics that research has identified as being important for youth: defusing drama (cyberbullying), data privacy, privacy and reputation, privacy ethics and authenticating online information.

### [Avatars and Body Image](#)

Grades: 4-6



In this lesson students are introduced to the concept of “avatars” and share their experiences creating and playing avatars in video games and virtual worlds.

### [Behaving Ethically Online: Ethics and Empathy](#)

Grades: 4-6



In this lesson students are introduced to the idea that “hot” emotional states such as anger or excitement can make it harder for them to control how they act. They also discuss the concept of empathy and look at the ways in which digital communication can make it harder to feel empathy for other people.

### [Break the Fake Lesson Plan: Verifying Information Online](#)

Grades: 6-9



In this lesson, students participate in a workshop that teaches them four quick, easy steps to verify online information. After practicing these four steps they create a public service announcement aimed at teaching one of these steps and spreading the message that it is necessary for everyone to fact-check information we see online every time we are going to share it or act on it.



**Break the Fake: What's Real Online?**

Grades: 3-5



In this lesson, students are introduced to the challenges of identifying what is real and what is fake online. After learning some simple steps to verify online information they create a poster that communicates the importance of questioning and double-checking online content.

**CyberSense and Nonsense: The Second Adventure of the Three CyberPigs**

Grades: 3-5



In this game the three CyberPigs learn some important lessons about authenticating online information and observing rules of netiquette. They also learn how to distinguish between fact and opinion and how to recognize bias and harmful stereotyping in online content.

**Data Defenders**

Grades: 4-6



This interactive game teaches children and pre-teens the concept of personal information and its economic value, and introduces them to ways to manage and protect their personal information on the websites and apps they enjoy.

**Data Defenders: Understanding data collection online**

Grades: 4-6



In this lesson, students explore the concepts relating to data collection that are introduced in the educational game Data Defenders. The lesson will underscore for students the idea that their data is valuable and worthy of careful management by analyzing the platforms, applications and websites they

**Editing Emotions**

Grades: 5-9



In this lesson, students learn about the history of film editing and how shot composition, juxtaposition of images and the use of rhythm and repetition in film editing can affect the emotional impact of a film.

**Game Time**

Grades: 4-6



In this lesson students consider the positive aspects of video games as well as the ways in which games may take time away from other activities they enjoy. Students are introduced to the idea of balancing game and screen time with other parts of their lives and learn about the reasons why they may be tempted to spend more time playing games or find it difficult to stop playing.



[Getting the Toothpaste Back into the Tube: A Lesson on Online Information](#)

Grades: 6-8



In this lesson, students watch a short video that compares getting rid of personal information online to getting toothpaste back into a tube. After a short discussion of how visual analogies like this work, students discuss the meaning of the video (that information online is *permanent*.) They then read a series of short scenarios that help them identify four further principles of information online: that it can be *copied*, that it can be seen by *unintended audiences*, that it can be seen by *larger audiences* than intended, and that it becomes *searchable*.

[Introduction to Cyberbullying: Avatars and Identity](#)

Grades: 5-6



In this lesson students are provided with opportunities to explore the ways that digital media leave out many of the cues that prompt us to feel empathy and discuss the importance of using empathy and common sense when talking to others online.

[Know the Deal: The Value of Privacy](#)

Grades: 6-8



In this lesson, students are introduced to the idea that privacy is a fundamental human right and that their personal information is valuable.

[Passport to the Internet: Student tutorial for Internet literacy \(Grades 4-8\)](#)

Grades: 4-8



This licensed interactive tutorial teaches students the critical thinking skills they need to apply to their online experiences, including online safety, authenticating online information, recognizing online marketing ploys, protecting their privacy, managing online relationships and dealing with cyberbullying.

[Pay For Play](#)

Grades: 4-6



In this lesson students discuss their experiences playing free online games and then learn the costs of these “free” games in the form of paying with money, sharing personal information or providing attention to advertising or branded content.

[Privacy Playground: The First Adventure of the Three CyberPigs](#)

Grades: 3-5



In this game the CyberPigs play on their favourite website and encounter marketing ploys, spam and a close encounter with a not-too-friendly wolf. The purpose of the game is to teach kids how to spot online marketing strategies, protect their personal information and avoid online predators.





**[Privacy Pirates: An Interactive Unit on Online Privacy \(Ages 7-9\)](#)**

Grades: 2-4



This tutorial introduces children to the concept of online privacy and teaches them to distinguish between information that is appropriate to give out and information better kept private – and to recognize how this may change in different contexts.

**[Stay on the Path Lesson One: Searching for Treasure](#)**

Grades: 5-6



This four-lesson unit on search skills and critical thinking teaches students how to target and specify their online searches to avoid unwanted results, how to judge whether a link, search result or website is legitimate or phony and how to find legitimate sources online for media works such as music, videos and movies. In this first lesson students learn how to create well-defined search strings and to use tools and techniques such as bookmarking, browser filters and search engine preferences to avoid unwanted material.

**[Stay on the Path Lesson Two: All That Glitters is Not Gold](#)**

Grades: 5-6



In the second lesson in the *Stay on the Path* lesson unit, students learn how to authenticate online information by comparing “facts” from the website [www.allaboutexplorers.com](http://www.allaboutexplorers.com) with more authoritative sources.

**[Stay on the Path Lesson Three: Treasure Maps](#)**

Grades: 5-6



In the third lesson in the *Stay on the Path* unit, students apply what they have learned in the first two lessons to find and verify information online.

**[Stay on the Path Lesson Four: Scavenger Hunt](#)**

Grades: 5-6



In the fourth lesson in the *Stay on the Path* unit, students apply their searching and critical thinking skills to learn how to find legitimate online sources for downloading and streaming movies, music and videos.

**[Teaching TV: Film Production: Who Does What?](#)**

Grades: 1-6



In this lesson, students look at the equipment used to produce television and film, and learn about the members of the film production team and their duties.

**[The Hero Project: Authenticating Online Information](#)**

Grades: 4-8



In this lesson students are introduced to Internet search skills through researching a personal hero. By focusing on the early parts of the research process, students learn to select well-defined topics, ask relevant research questions and select effective keywords.



**Understanding the Internet Lesson 1: Using the Internet**

Grades: 4-6



This four lesson unit looks at what the Internet is, how information travels online and how to use the Internet safely for a variety of purposes with a focus on communications. In the first lesson students explore their own experiences with online activities, build a common vocabulary of online-related terminology and identify purposes and methods of online interactions from the user's perspective.

**Understanding the Internet Lesson 2: Pathways and Addresses**

Grades: 4-6



In the second lesson in the Understanding the Internet unit, students gain a greater understanding of how messages are sent and received over the Internet.

**Understanding the Internet Lesson 3: Build Understanding**

Grades: 4-6



In the third lesson in the *Understanding the Internet* unit students identify and classify their own interactions with the Internet and will engage in a collaborative critical thinking activity that will have them examine the Internet from a variety of perspectives.

**Understanding the Internet Lesson 4: Communication and Social Media**

Grades: 4-6



In the fourth lesson in the *Understanding the Internet* unit, students compare and contrast a variety of online social networking platforms and build an understanding of how they work to share messages. They will reflect on basic online rules and explore concepts of safety and privacy when accessing and sharing information online.

**Winning the Cyber Security Game**

Grades: 5-8



In this lesson students discuss their online experiences and learn how to minimize the potential risks that may be associated with them.



## Digital Literacy Framework - Grades 7-8

Intermediate students still need continued guidance regarding Internet safety and protection of privacy, good citizenship and responsible Internet use. By this age, however, they can also assume more responsibility for the online spaces and communities they are part of: this is a good time to encourage positive social norms around sharing information and communicating online.

Given their increasing use of the Internet to find information, now is also a good time to introduce strategies for determining authorship and authority of online information so they can recognize good health information, biased or hateful content, and online scams and hoaxes.

At this age media influences on gender norms and body image are becoming more intense. Children need to learn to apply key media literacy concepts to online spaces such as social networks.

Children this age are also starting to form more intense friendships and, in some cases, beginning romantic relationships, as well as sharing more personal content online. They need to learn to recognize the qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships and to make good choices about how they handle others' personal information.

*Young Canadians in a Wired World* backgrounders:

[Profile of Kids in Grades 6-7](#)

[Profiles of Kids in Grades 8-9](#)

### [A Day in the Life of the Jos](#)

Grades: 6-8



In this licensed educational game, students help the brother and sister team Jo and Josie with situations they encounter online as they go about a typical day in their lives. The modules are represented as five days in the lives of Jo and Josie, covering topics that research has identified as being important for youth: defusing drama (cyberbullying), data privacy, privacy and reputation, privacy ethics and authenticating online information.

### [Allies and Aliens: A Mission in Critical Thinking](#)

Grades: 7-8



This interactive module is designed to increase students' ability to recognize bias, prejudice and hate propaganda on the Internet and in other media.

### [Behaving Ethically Online: Ethics and Values](#)

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson students consider how we come to hold values and how they affect our behaviour, especially online.

### [Break the Fake Lesson Plan: Verifying Information Online](#)

Grades: 6-9



In this lesson, students participate in a workshop that teaches them four quick, easy steps to verify online information. After practicing these four steps they create a public service announcement aimed at teaching one of these steps and spreading the message that it is necessary for everyone to fact-check information we see online every time we are going to share it or act on it.



[Click if You Agree](#)

Grades: 7-8



Think you know how to read and understand privacy policies and terms of use? Learn how to make sense of legal documents for websites and apps with this interactive game. Includes a Teacher's Guide for implementing the activity in the classroom.

[Cyberbullying and Civic Participation](#)

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson students explore the concepts of rules, values and ethics and learn how they influence our decision-making, and how they can contribute to creating positive online cultures.

[Cyberbullying and the Law](#)

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson students learn about and discuss the legal aspects of cyberbullying. They review a variety of hypothetical scenarios and a case study, and they consider the seriousness of the situations, who is legally responsible, what action (if any) should be taken and by whom.

[Deconstructing Web Pages](#)

Grades: 7-10



In this lesson students apply the "5Ws of Cyberspace" to sources of information they find online. Assuming the role of a student researching a science project, students must authenticate the information in an online article about the artificial sweetener, aspartame.

[Digital Media Experiences are Shaped by the Tools We Use: The Disconnection Challenge](#)

Grades: 7-12



In this lesson, students consider the role of technology and media in their lives and then spend a week either tracking or limiting their media use. They then share their experiences and discuss how the ways that digital media tools are made may cause us to use them differently (or simply more often). Finally, students draw on those insights to create a mindful media use plan. In an optional extension activity, they interview other students for a video exploring their experiences and reflections over the course of the project.

[Editing Emotions](#)

Grades: 5-9



In this lesson, students learn about the history of film editing and how shot composition, juxtaposition of images and the use of rhythm and repetition in film editing can affect the emotional impact of a film.

[Finding and Authenticating Online Information on Global Development Issues](#)

Grades: 7-12



In this lesson students learn strategies for using the Internet effectively to research global development issues.



[Getting the Toothpaste Back into the Tube: A Lesson on Online Information](#)

Grades: 6-8



In this lesson, students watch a short video that compares getting rid of personal information online to getting toothpaste back into a tube. After a short discussion of how visual analogies like this work, students discuss the meaning of the video (that information online is *permanent*.) They then read a series of short scenarios that help them identify four further principles of information online: that it can be *copied*, that it can be seen by *unintended audiences*, that it can be seen by *larger audiences* than intended, and that it becomes *searchable*.

[Hate 2.0](#)

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students learn about the ways in which hate may be encountered online strategies for confronting online hate.

[Hate or Debate?](#)

8-10



In this lesson students learn about the difference between legitimate debate on a political issue and arguments that are based on hate.

[I heard it 'round the Internet: Sexual health education and authenticating online information](#)

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students consider the use of the Internet as a research tool and learn how to use search engines more effectively. They then apply these newfound skills to investigating popular myths about sexuality and contraception.

[ICYouSee: A Lesson in Critical Thinking](#)

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students use a web-based activity to help them think critically about how to determine the quality of web resources.

[Impact! How to Make a Difference When You Witness Bullying Online](#)

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson, students discuss reasons why they might be reluctant to intervene when they witness cyberbullying and identify ways that they can help without making things worse. They then use the interactive tool *Impact! How to Make a Difference When You Witness Bullying Online* to help them decide how to navigate scenarios relating to being a witness to bullying, and share their experiences to help them understand how important it is to think carefully before you act.

[Know the Deal: The Value of Privacy](#)

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson, students are introduced to the idea that privacy is a fundamental human right and that their personal information is valuable.



**Online Marketing to Kids: Protecting Your Privacy**

Grades: 6-9



This two lesson unit on online marketing explores the various ways companies use the Internet to target young people. The first lesson introduces students to the ways in which commercial websites collect personal information from kids and to the issues surrounding children and privacy on the Internet.

**Online Marketing to Kids: Strategies and Techniques**

Grades: 6-9



The second lesson in the *Online Marketing to Kids* unit introduces students to the online marketing techniques that are used to target children on the Internet.

**Passport to the Internet: Student tutorial for Internet literacy (Grades 4-8)**

Grades: 4-8



This licensed interactive tutorial teaches students the critical thinking skills they need to apply to their online experiences, including online safety, authenticating online information, recognizing online marketing ploys, protecting their privacy, managing online relationships and dealing with cyberbullying.

**Playing With Privacy**

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson students are introduced to the idea that their gaming experiences may compromise their personal information. Students consider the ways in which games may gather or solicit information about them and learn about tools which they can use to control their personal privacy, and then discuss the trade-offs between protecting their privacy and enjoying a full game experience.

**Privacy and Internet Life: Lesson Plan for Intermediate Classrooms**

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson students are made aware of online privacy issues, primarily those relating to giving out personal information on social networking sites such as Facebook.

**Promoting Ethical Behaviour Online**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students learn about ways to manage their privacy and reputation online by exploring their digital presence and to make good choices about sharing other people's content online.

**PushBack: Engaging in Online Activism**

Grades: 7-9



This lesson explores how young people can use online media for activism on issues that matter to them.



**Put Your Best Face Forward**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students start by discussing the phenomenon of “selfies” and serve as experts in advising the teacher on the standards by which the “best” selfies are judged. They then discuss a number of statements taken from interviews with youth that highlight issues of self-representation, body image and gender standards, and learn about “photoshopping” images.

**Scapegoating and Othering**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students develop a deeper understanding of scapegoating and othering and how these factors may contribute to the promotion of hatred and intolerance.

**Taming the Wild Wiki**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students are introduced to Wikipedia, the user-edited online encyclopedia, and given an overview of its strengths and weaknesses as a research source. They are taught how to evaluate the reliability of a Wikipedia article and then attempt to improve an existing article.

**That’s Not Cool: Healthy and Respectful Relationships Online**

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson, students explore unhealthy relationship behaviours relating to digital media including: pressuring others to share private content, cyberstalking, harassment and abuse of trust.

**The Hero Project: Authenticating Online Information**

Grades: 4-8



In this lesson students are introduced to Internet search skills through researching a personal hero. By focusing on the early parts of the research process, students learn to select well-defined topics, ask relevant research questions and select effective keywords.

**The Invisible Machine: Big Data and You**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson, students examine a fictional social network profile to learn how online platforms collect data about their users. They then read an article that explains how platforms use this data and explores some of the issues this raises. Finally, they create a mind map of their own online data profile and reflect on how the data they post may be collected and used by others.

**Understanding Cyberbullying : Virtual vs. Physical Worlds**

Grades: 7-8



In this lesson students explore the verbal and visual cues that we rely on to understand how other people are feeling. They then consider the differences between online and offline communication and discuss how these differences may make it difficult to understand the effect our words and actions have on others online.



### [Video Games](#)

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students are introduced to the ways video games may impact their mental and physical health.

### [Who Knows? Your Privacy in the Information Age](#)

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students explore issues relating to privacy through a series of activities, surveys and quizzes.

### [Winning the Cyber Security Game](#)

Grades: 5-8



In this lesson students discuss their online experiences and learn how to minimize the potential risks that may be associated with them.





## Digital Literacy Framework - Grades 9-12

Given their autonomy, teens can no longer be forbidden to do things, especially online. Rigid bans don't work because teens are at an age where they are trying to establish their own rules and can easily get around those they disagree with. More importantly, heavy restrictions shut down discussions between adults and teens about how to safely diminish risks, which teens are very interested in doing.

Contrary to popular belief, cyberbullying remains a problem in high school. Students in these grades should learn the ways that they can speak out and make a difference, both in cases of individual cyberbullying and in building more tolerant and respectful online spaces.

Cell phone ownership also peaks in older grades. That makes it essential to teach these students how to balance their online and offline lives and deal with the stresses of social media. Because teens are constantly building a digital footprint as they send and share content online, it's also important that they learn how to make a positive impression and to consider the need to get consent before sharing a photo or any other content belonging to someone else.

Secondary students turn to the Internet for news and current affairs, making it essential that they learn to use finding and verifying skills both inside and outside the classroom.

Teens depend on media such as TV shows, magazines, the Web and social media to learn about topics of interest, especially subjects that are embarrassing or taboo such as sexuality, relationships and mental health issues. Media literacy education is also needed to critically engage with representations of sexuality in media.

*Young Canadians in a Wired World* backgrounders:

[Profiles of Kids in Grades 8-9](#)

[Profiles of Kids in Grades 10-11](#)

### [Alcohol on the Web](#)

Grades: 9-10



In this lesson, students explore issues surrounding the marketing of alcoholic beverages on the Internet.

### [Art Exchange](#)

Grades: 9-12



The purpose of the lesson is to facilitate and develop youth art as a form of community engagement and give students the opportunity to explore their experiences with privacy and equality in networked spaces.

### [Authentication Beyond the Classroom](#)

Grades: 9-10



In this lesson, students discuss "viral" photos, videos and news stories that spread via social media. They are shown how challenging it is to authenticate these using only their content and are introduced to tools and techniques for gauging their accuracy based on context.



**Bias in News Sources**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students consider the meaning of the words “bias” and “prejudice” and consider how bias may be found even at the level of individual words due to connotation. Students are introduced to the key media literacy concept that media contain ideological messages and have social and political implications in considering why it is particularly important to consider possible bias in news reporting.

**Break the Fake Lesson Plan: Verifying Information Online**

Grades: 6-9



In this lesson, students participate in a workshop that teaches them four quick, easy steps to verify online information. After practicing these four steps they create a public service announcement aimed at teaching one of these steps and spreading the message that it is necessary for everyone to fact-check information we see online every time we are going to share it or act on it.

**Challenging Hate Online**

Grades: 10-12



In this lesson students learn how digital media is used to promote or combat hatred and intolerance.

**Click if You Agree**

Grades: 7-9



This interactive game helps students make sense of legal documents for websites and apps.

**Cyberbullying and the Law**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students learn about and discuss the legal aspects of cyberbullying.

**Dealing With Digital Stress**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students reflect on the ways in which digital media can cause stress.

**Deconstructing Web Pages**

Grades: 7-10



In this lesson students apply the “5Ws of Cyberspace” to sources of information they find online. Assuming the role of a student researching a science project, students must authenticate the information in an online article about the artificial sweetener, aspartame.



**Digital Outreach for Civic Engagement**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students will design a community outreach promotional campaign in order to effect real change that matters to them.

**Digital Media Experiences are Shaped by the Tools We Use: The Disconnection Challenge**

Grades : 7-12



In this lesson, students consider the role of technology and media in their lives and then spend a week either tracking or limiting their media use. They then share their experiences and discuss how the ways that digital media tools are made may cause us to use them differently (or simply more often). Finally, students draw on those insights to create a mindful media use plan. In an optional extension activity, they interview other students for a video exploring their experiences and reflections over the course of the project.

**Digital Skills for Democracy: Assessing Online Information to Make Civic Choices**

Grades: 9-12



In this activity, students:

- think about the importance of making sure they have trustworthy information before they make a decision on a political or electoral issue
- explore a series of scenarios designed to teach five strategies for verifying information: find the original, verify the source, check other information, read fact checking articles, and turn to places you trust
- reflect on the impact of false and misleading information in politics

**Digital Storytelling for Civic Engagement**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students will create a Digital Story which addresses a topic, theme or issue that is affecting them. All stages of production will be covered, including research, storyboarding their idea into a visual organizational layout, practicing capturing quality photographs and interviews, and finally weaving their Digital Story into a finished project using computer editing software.

**Film Classification Systems in Québec**

Grades: 11-12



In this lesson students learn about the systems used to classify films, TV programs and video games. Students are asked to take a critical look at the criteria applied to classify these media products, and then take into account and discuss the underlying social and political aspects arising from those systems.

**Finding and Authenticating Online Information on Global Development Issues**

Grades: 7-12



In this lesson students learn strategies for using the Internet effectively to research global development issues.



**First, Do No Harm: Being an Active Witness to Cyberbullying**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students consider how difficult and complicated it can sometimes be to do the right thing. Students are asked to consider whether they agree with a number of widely-held moral principles and then are asked to consider a moral dilemma in which a number of moral principles are in conflict, reflecting on how their view of it may change based on the details of the scenario.

**First Person**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students consider diversity representation in video games by identifying examples of diversity in the games they play, comparing their findings to statistics on diversity in the Canadian population.

**Free Speech and the Internet**

Grades: 10-12



In this lesson students learn about the inherent tension within democratic societies between freedom of expression and freedom from hatred. They also learn how Canada has addressed these issues within the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and human rights legislation in Canada.

**Hate 2.0**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students learn about the ways in which hate may be encountered online strategies for confronting online hate.

**Hate or Debate?**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students learn about the difference between legitimate debate on a political issue and arguments that are based on hate.

**Hoax? Scholarly Research? Personal Opinion? You Decide!**

Grades: 10-12



This lesson is designed to help students determine the validity of information that is presented to them on the Internet. After reviewing a series of evaluation techniques for online resources, students form groups to assess selected websites based on accuracy and authority, advocacy and objectivity, and currency and coverage.

**I heard it 'round the Internet: Sexual health education and authenticating online information**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students consider the use of the Internet as a research tool and learn how to use search engines more effectively. They then apply these newfound skills to investigating popular myths about sexuality and contraception.



**[ICYouSee: A Lesson in Critical Thinking](#)**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students use a web-based activity to help them think critically about how to determine the quality of web resources.

**[Impact! How to Make a Difference When You Witness Bullying Online](#)**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson, students discuss reasons why they might be reluctant to intervene when they witness cyberbullying and identify ways that they can help without making things worse. They then use the interactive tool *Impact! How to Make a Difference When You Witness Bullying Online* to help them decide how to navigate scenarios relating to being a witness to bullying, and share their experiences to help them understand how important it is to think carefully before you act.

**[Introduction to Online Civic Engagement](#)**

Grades: 9-12



Students are introduced to civic education through a series of activities which will ask them to work together to engage with their larger communities through curiosity, conversation and creation.

**[Making Media for Democratic Citizenship](#)**

Grades: 11-12



In this lesson students create a video podcast to present balanced, unbiased perspectives on global development issues. They voice their perspectives through the language, codes and conventions of a visual medium.

**[Making Your Voice Heard: A Media Toolkit for Youth](#)**

Grades: 9-12



This toolkit is designed to help young people understand how the news industry works, why youth stereotyping happens and how they can access media to get positive youth voices and stories heard.

**[MyWorld: A digital literacy tutorial for secondary students](#) (licensed resource)**

Grades: 7-12



This tutorial aims to teach students essential digital literacy skills through simulating their favourite online experiences. The tutorial is divided into four chapters, each of which focuses on a particular aspect of digital literacy: researching and authenticating online information, managing privacy and reputation, dealing with online relationships and using digital media in an ethical manner.

**[Online Cultures and Values](#)**

Grades: 11-12



In this lesson, students are introduced to basic concepts of anthropology and ethnography and explore how they apply to online communities. After performing a digital ethnography project on the norms and values of an online community, students consider how a community's norms and values are formed and how they can be shaped and influenced.



**Online Gambling and Youth**

Grades: 11-12



In this lesson, students look at the ways in which online gambling draws in youth and increases the risk that they will become problem gamblers.

**Online Marketing to Kids: Protecting Your Privacy**

Grades: 6-9



This two lesson unit on online marketing explores the various ways companies use the Internet to target young people. The first lesson introduces students to the ways in which commercial websites collect personal information from kids and to the issues surrounding children and privacy on the Internet.

**Online Marketing to Kids: Strategies and Techniques**

Grades: 6-9



The second lesson in the Online Marketing to Kids unit introduces students to the online marketing techniques that are used to target children on the Internet.

**Online Propaganda and the Proliferation of Hate**

Grades: 10-12



In this lesson students learn about the ways that propaganda techniques are used to promote hatred and intolerance online.

**Online Relationships: Respect and Consent**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students use mind maps to explore concepts of “respect” and “consent” in an online context.

**Privacy Rights of Children and Teens**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students learn ways to find out what personal information may or has been collected by platforms that they use, how to limit data collection about themselves, and the various forms of recourse that are available to them if they feel an organization is not respecting their rights.

**Promoting Ethical Behaviour Online**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students learn about ways to manage their privacy and reputation online by exploring their digital presence and to make good choices about sharing other people’s content online.



**PushBack: Engaging in Online Activism**

Grades: 7-9



This lesson explores how young people can use online media for activism on issues that matter to them.

**Reality Check: Authentication 101**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students consider the different factors that make online sources reliable or unreliable. They then learn quick steps they can take to gauge an online source's reliability and practice these steps by playing an interactive online game. Finally, students create a media product to teach other students how to do one of the tactics they've learned.

**Reality Check: Authentication and Citizenship**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students consider the ways in which misinformation can have an impact on history and politics. After discussing a number of historical examples of misinformation, they examine the ways in which news sources may be biased and use an interactive online game to practice skills in getting more context on a story.

**Reality Check: Getting the Goods on Science and Health**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students start by considering the wide range of science and health information they are likely to encounter in news or through social media. They read an article on a scientific topic to help them understand the particular challenges of verifying science and health information and then use an educational computer game to practice skills in critically reading health and science stories. Finally, students compile a list of reliable sources they can turn to for verifying health and science stories.

**Reality Check: News You Can Use**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students consider the meanings of the term "fake news" and learn facts about the news industry that will help them recognize legitimate sources of news.

**Reality Check: We Are All Broadcasters**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students consider the ways in which our own biases can prevent us from being objective. They then learn ways to recognize and account for our biases and practice these by playing an interactive online game. Finally, students learn about how public service campaigns can change social norms and create their own PSA to promote ethical sharing of online information.

**Relationships and Sexuality in Media**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students learn to question media representations of gender, relationships and sexuality.



**Remixing Media**

Grades: 10-12



In this lesson, students examine different types of remixes – from works created by editing a single text to ones that draw inspiration from existing texts – in order to develop a definition of “remix.”

**Respecting Yourself and Others Online Workshop**

Grades: 7-10



This workshop provides tweens and young teens with strategies and knowledge that will help them respect themselves, respect others and respect the space when using social media.

**Secure Comics**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students read an interactive online comic that teaches them key concepts and skills relating to three cybersecurity topics: malware, passwords and privacy from geotracking devices. Following this, students research their own cybersecurity topics and learn how non-fiction comics are made in order to create their own Secure Comic.

**Scapegoating and Othering**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students develop a deeper understanding of scapegoating and othering and how these factors may contribute to the promotion of hatred and intolerance.

**Shaking the Movers: Youth Rights and Media**

Grades: 9-10



In this lesson students discuss the concept of human rights and then learn how these ideas led to the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Taming the Wild Wiki**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students are introduced to Wikipedia, the user-edited online encyclopedia, and given an overview of its strengths and weaknesses as a research source. They are taught how to evaluate the reliability of a Wikipedia article and then attempt to improve an existing article.





[Technology Facilitated Violence: Criminal Case Law Lesson Plan](#)

Grades: 11-12



This lesson plan explores the relationship between technology and the law by examining how the criminal law responds to technologically facilitated violence (TFV). Not only will it enhance students' understanding of the legal meaning of key terms such as "violence", it will also engage them in dialogue about the surrounding social and legal issues and the ways in which new and emerging technologies are affecting the relationship between the law and technology. Through the exploration of Canadian case studies, and subsequent discussion, students will develop their knowledge on legal implications of various forms of TFV such as harassing communications, criminal harassment, unauthorized use of computer systems, non-consensual disclosure of intimate images (sometimes referred to as "revenge porn"), and hate propaganda. Students will use materials from The eQuality Project's "Technology-Facilitated Violence: Criminal Case Law" database to research recent Canadian case law involving TFV, better understand the concept of "violence" and the wide range of acts that fall within TFV, as well as the available criminal legal resources and potential outcomes for those affected.

[The Citizen Reporter](#)

Grades: 9-12



This lesson begins with a brief history of citizen journalism and a discussion of just what it is. Students are introduced to the key media literacy concept that media are constructions that re-present reality and consider how the traditionally "white" makeup of Canadian journalism might affect the content of Canadian news. They then discuss the effects of the increasing ability of ordinary citizens to cover, broadcast and comment on news and compare mainstream news sources and citizen journalism in terms of accuracy, completeness and diversity representation.

[The Invisible Machine: Big Data and You](#)

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson, students examine a fictional social network profile to learn how online platforms collect data about their users. They then read an article that explains how platforms use this data and explores some of the issues this raises. Finally, they create a mind map of their own online data profile and reflect on how the data they post may be collected and used by others.

[The Pornography Debate: Controversy in Advertising](#)

Grades: 11-12



In this lesson, through classroom discussion, students are introduced to the issue of pornography. Students will understand the difficulty in determining the sometimes very fine lines between erotica, freedom of expression, and sexual exploitation and to familiarize them with guidelines for making these distinctions.

[The Privacy Dilemma: Lesson Plan for Senior Classrooms](#)

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students consider and discuss the trade-offs we all make on a daily basis between maintaining our privacy, and gaining access to information services.

[Thinking About Hate](#)

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students develop their critical thinking skills by learning to recognize various types of logical fallacies, including those that are used by hate mongers to spread misinformation and fuel hatred and intolerance.



**Video Games**

Grades: 7-9



In this lesson students are introduced to the ways video games may impact their mental and physical health.

**What Students Need to Know about Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy**

Grades: 11-12



These guides, created by the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, provide an opportunity for teachers and their students to discuss why access to government-held information and personal privacy are important public values and how these values are reflected in our relationships with governments.

**Who Knows? Your Privacy in the Information Age**

Grades: 8-10



In this lesson students explore issues relating to privacy through a series of activities, surveys and quizzes.

**Who's Telling My Story?**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson students learn about the history of blackface and other examples of majority-group actors playing minority-group characters such as White actors playing Asian and Aboriginal characters and non-disabled actors playing disabled characters.

**Your Connected Life: A Teen's Guide to Life Online**

Grades: 9



This guide is designed to help students who are just entering high school balance the demands of their offline life with their digital one.

**Your Online Resume**

Grades: 9-12



In this lesson, students learn that their online presence is like a resume that can help them – or hurt them – in their future personal and professional lives.

