Digital Citizenship
Lesson Plan | Primary and Elementary School

Lesson Time: 25–30 minutes

Good Cyber Citizenship

Objectives & Outcomes

Lesson Objectives: Students will learn what constitutes proper "netiquette" and identify the characteristics of a good cyber citizen.

Lesson Outcomes: *Students will be able to...*

- recall the traits of a good cyber citizen and apply that knowledge to online activity.
- create and follow an agreement/contract outlining proper netiquette.

Subject Area Connection: Language Arts, Information Technology

Getting Ready

Teacher Preparation: Review characteristics of a good cyber citizen below and brainstorm several "good manners" scenarios for role playing (such as reacting to a harsh e-mail from a friend or responding when someone asks for a password, etc.) to introduce the topic of netiquette.

Materials Required:

- white paper
- blank index cards
- pencil with eraser

Key Vocabulary

cyber citizen: a person who is active on the Internet.

netiquette: proper manners to use while online, especially when dealing with other cyber citizens.

Background

A good citizen is one who properly fulfills his role in society, takes responsibility for his actions, and helps others. He respects the rights, property, and feelings of others and treats them the way he wants to be treated. He tries to do the right thing, but he will also take a stand (through the proper channels) against a wrong. He tries to encourage others who are trying to be good citizens as well.

A cyber citizen should do these things too—except he will be doing them all virtually. A good cyber citizen follows the rules of the internet and tries to act responsibly at all times. He will also remember to limit screen time, so that his school work or job doesn't suffer. A wise cyber citizen will manage his time and follow the computer rules established by his parents or teachers.

> " A **good cyber citizen follows the rules** of the Internet and tries to **act responsibly** at all times."

Introduction and Modeling

Ask students to define **etiquette** in their own words, and then write the definition on the board. In short, it is the accepted code of how society feels people should act in public or when interacting with others. It is the practice of good manners. There are certain things that people should or shouldn't do when interacting with other citizens.

Ask different students to come up to the front of the room and role play using either good or bad manners. Have different scenarios ready for them to act out in order to display proper or improper etiquette when dealing with others. Talk about the scenarios and how they were handled correctly or incorrectly. Were happy or hurt feelings involved?

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Procedure

1. How can the concept of etiquette carry over into cyberspace? *Netiquette* is the term we use when referring to displaying proper manners and how we act and interact online. If something is not okay to do or say in real life, then it is not okay to do or say virtually. Learning proper netiquette is also one of the traits of being a good cyber citizen. What are some others?

2. Make mind maps to brainstorm some other traits of a good cyber citizen. Give each student a sheet of paper. In the center, have them draw a circle and write *What Makes a Good Cyber Citizen?* inside of it. Have them draw lines off the circle and start labeling each line with the trait of a good cyber citizen. They may make subdivisions of each trait by drawing additional lines to add more information. What traits did they come up with?

3. If applicable, divide students into groups for the mind mapping session (above), and have them discuss their choices. Were the traits each student wrote down similar to or different from the choices of other students? If needed, write a few prompts on the board to get them started on their mind maps. Below are a few ideas:

   A good cyber citizen:

   - always uses good netiquette
   - thinks before posting anything that might offend or hurt someone's reputation
   - keeps private information secure
   - remembers Internet safety guidelines
   - gives credit where it is due
   - stands up for others if they are being bullied
   - will tell a parent if they see something inappropriate online
   - respects the privacy of other cyber citizens
   - respects the rights of other cyber citizens
   - follows the rules for legal downloads

4. If using the role-playing activity for older students in the Tips for Tailoring this Lesson section, you may need to provide guidance to help them brainstorm scenarios.

   Examples:

   - Leaving a comment on someone's website telling how much you enjoyed their article about sharks.
   - Leaving a comment on someone's website telling them how stupid they were to get their facts about lions wrong in their article.
   - Sending an anonymous message to someone to hurt their feelings.

Discussion Questions

- Why is being a good cyber citizen so important?
- What are the traits you would like others to recognize in you as a good cyber citizen?
- What are things that others do online that annoy you? What advice or suggestions could you give to help them improve?
- If you treat others respectfully online, do you think they will treat you the same way? Why?
- How is good netiquette related to being a good cyber citizen? Discuss.

Evaluation

Ask students to think about the traits of a good cyber citizen and proper netiquette that was discussed in class. On another sheet of paper, have each student write down 3–4 things that they will try to do in order to be a better cyber citizen. This can be a checklist or even serve as a contract between the student/parent or the student/teacher.

Tips for Tailoring this Lesson

For Higher Grade Levels

- Pass out blank index cards. Have students write down scenarios of actions or manners (either good or bad) that someone might use on the Internet. Take up the cards and redistribute them to different classmates. Have students read the card they have been given and tell whether they think the action reflects proper netiquette or not. Discuss.

For Lower Grade Levels

- Being a good cyber citizen also means acting responsibly. If students come across a website or any content that they know is inappropriate for themselves or for others, immediately telling a parent or teacher is the right thing to do. Have a discussion about other cyberspace issues or problems a student would need to share with a trusted adult.

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Alignment to Standards and Frameworks

Common Core State Standards:
College & Career Readiness

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Anchor Standards for Writing

CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCRA.W.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Partnership for 21st Century Framework

Partnership for 21st Century Framework: the framework comprises the skills, knowledge and expertise students should master to succeed in work and life in the 21st century. Partnership for 21st Century Skills www.p21.org

Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
Interact Effectively with Others

- Know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak
- Conduct themselves in a respectable, professional manner

Work Effectively in Diverse Teams

- Respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Respond open-mindedly to different ideas and values
- Leverage social and cultural differences to create new ideas and increase both innovation and quality of work

Leadership and Responsibility
Guide and Lead Others

- Use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
- Leverage strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
- Inspire others to reach their very best via example and selflessness
- Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in using influence and power

Be Responsible to Others

- Act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind

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