



Lesson Time: 25–30 minutes

Sharing Safely Online

Objectives & Outcomes

Lesson Objectives: Students will continue to learn about the dangers of sharing private information online and how to determine what is safe to share or not.

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

- evaluate what information is safe to share online.
- define the terms *private* and *personal* as related to online information.
- remember to consult a parent about all online activity.

Subject Area Connection: Language Arts, Information Technology

Background

As children become more familiar with the Internet, they gain confidence about their online skills and usually want to branch out further into cyberspace. There are many wonderful learning opportunities available, but it is imperative that parents and teachers continue to monitor all online activity for this age group. Students also need to be regularly reminded of online dangers and how to take precautions to stay safe. This includes identifying appropriate content and websites and knowing what kind of information is safe to share online. Children need to realize that sharing private information can put them and their families at risk.

Cyberspace is an exciting, enjoyable, and potentially educational place for students to visit, as long as they navigate it wisely and safely.

“Children need to realize that **sharing private information** can put **them and their families at risk.**”

Getting Ready

Teacher Preparation: To prepare for this lesson, brainstorm a list of examples of both private and personal information. In this case, personal information refers to individual preferences and tastes, such as favorite color, food, song, names of pets, number of siblings, etc.

Materials Required:

- red, yellow, and green construction paper
- scissors
- optional: precut red, yellow, and green circles
- paper
- pencil with eraser
- key
- checkbook or credit card

Introduction and Modeling

Hold up a house key and a checkbook (or a sample credit card) to show the class. Ask them if they think you should just hand over the items to some random person you don't know. Would you consider giving them to a thief? Of course not! These things belong to you and represent your home, property, finances, etc., and perhaps even your safety. They are private and valuable belongings that need to be protected, but not shared publicly. If these items fell into the wrong hands, it could mean danger or theft.

Private information shared online might also mean danger or theft! That is why it is important for students to know what is acceptable to share on the Internet and what is NOT okay to share.

Key Vocabulary

private: belonging only to one person or group.

personal: (online) reflecting individual tastes or opinions, not private information.

endanger: to put at risk.

Procedure

1. First discuss the definitions of the terms *private* and *personal* (as pertaining to this lesson).
2. Pass out one sheet each of red, yellow, and green construction paper to students, and model how to cut congruent circles from each color sheet. Or you can distribute pre-cut circles of all three colors to each person (to use like a traffic light signal—stop, caution, go).
3. Tell the class you are going to call out different kinds of information. If they think the information is okay to share online, they will hold up their green circle. If they think the information should not be shared, they will hold up their red circle. If they are not sure or if they think the information might require caution, have them hold up their yellow circle.
4. Use the list of private/personal information examples you brainstormed earlier, or consider the following, giving explanations if necessary.
 - full legal name
 - favorite color
 - address
 - phone number
 - names of pets
 - social security number
 - date of birth
 - number of siblings
 - mother's maiden name
 - favorite songs
 - favorite movies
 - e-mail address
 - gender
 - driver's license number
 - color of eyes
 - name of school
 - favorite foods
 - credit card/debit card numbers
5. Discuss students' answers and their reasoning for each. Reinforce the concept of safety and explain why certain types of information that may seem harmless might actually give away private data or location hints that can be used by predators or thieves.
6. Why is it okay to post things such as favorite foods, songs, movies, eye color, etc.? (These things are simply personal preferences, opinions, or harmless bits of information that cannot be used to identify someone. As long as students don't give away private or financial data, location, or any kind of contact information, it is usually safe to share. However, they should always think very carefully before they post anything, and definitely ask a parent, teacher, or other trusted adult if they are not sure.)

Discussion Questions

- Is sharing private information online any different than sharing the same information with a stranger you see in person? Why or why not?
- Why would someone want access to your private information? How could they use that information to harm or steal from you?
- How could sharing the wrong information online put your family and friends at risk?
- Why is it important never to share online when you are going to be away from home? Additionally, why should you never tell where you are going?

Evaluation

Have students create a list of examples of both private and personal information (such as the ones used in class) to use to interview family members and friends. Do they know what is safe or unsafe to post online? Ask students to keep track of the results to share with the class. Discuss.

Tips for Tailoring this Lesson

For Higher Grade Levels

- Remind students that certain sites have age requirements, and it is important to follow the rules. Most social media sites require users to be at least 13 years old. Discuss the reasons for this, including the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, which limits the collection of personal information from children under the age of 13.

For Lower Grade Levels

- Discuss the importance of adult supervision for all online activity. If students are unsure about appropriate sites to visit, content to view, suspicious e-mails, whether something is okay to share, or how to handle requests for information, they should immediately go to a parent, teacher, or other trusted adult. Every concern is important!

Alignment to Standards and Frameworks

Common Core State Standards: College & Career Readiness

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Anchor Standards for Writing

CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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

Productivity and Accountability

Manage Projects

- Set and meet goals, even in the face of obstacles and competing pressures
- Prioritize, plan and manage work to achieve the intended result

Produce Results

- Demonstrate additional attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to:
 - Work positively and ethically
 - Manage time and projects effectively
 - Multi-task
 - Participate actively, as well as be reliable and punctual
 - Present oneself professionally and with proper etiquette
 - Collaborate and cooperate effectively with teams
 - Respect and appreciate team diversity
 - Be accountable for results