

TEACH

EDUCATION FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

September/October 2020

\$7.99



DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

SPECIAL ISSUE

Support your students for in-person and online learning

Today's students have experienced immense changes this past school season in relation to the pandemic, from how they learn to their relationships with friends and family. These changes mean that it is increasingly important for students to practice a growth mindset.

Students need to have grit and problem-solving skills to be able to overcome the challenges of transitioning to online learning and adapting to a new normal. They need to practice positive thinking, empathy, and optimism to help them continue moving forward. The **Grow Your Mind** series gives readers practical advice in developing this growth mindset and building their skills in these essential areas.

Addressing challenges faced by students during COVID-19 can help them connect with their peers and share their feelings. Invite students to share their feelings and thoughts and talk about both challenges and successes during this time. Then use titles from **Grow Your Mind** to discuss with students how they can continue to use a growth mindset (and skills such as problem-solving and grit) to overcome challenges, both independently and collaboratively.



Reading Level: Gr 4
Interest Level: Gr 3-6
New Series - 8 Titles



▲ From Ask for Help

Crabtree Digital

Support Back to School In-person and remote learning with Crabtree eLibraries!

Receive 25% off a first-year subscription.

CRABTREE PUBLISHING COMPANY

For teachers, managing and engaging students in online environments presents new challenges. Some obstacles for teachers may include lack of access to online resources and availability of resources that can teach children about all of the changes they're experiencing.

Crabtree eLibraries help with the problem of access & offers many different resources in one place for ease of use by classroom teachers and students. It can be used across different devices and web browsers simultaneously at home or at school.

Successful online instruction can also be aided by creating a daily structure that kids can follow and get familiarized with. A Crabtree eLibrary, is a great way to allow kids to browse through age-appropriate ebooks and choose one to read during designated reading times. Then, they can share something they liked or learned. This kind of activity is a great way to start the day or break up lessons that require more focused attention. Crabtree's extensive eLibrary lets teachers plan comprehensive and engaging lessons with multiple avenues for learning and many series have teacher's guides and other supports.

Crabtree Publishing is a trusted source for nonfiction and fiction books for grades PreK-9+.
Available in hardcover, paperback and ebook editions.

NEW CRABTREE SERIES HELPS DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET



ebooks
Available

These appealing guides for young children are designed to help them develop a “growth mindset.” When children believe they can get smarter, they understand that failing is simply learning and that putting in time and effort will lead to higher achievement. Each book is packed with fun and varied ways for children to improve concentration, positivity, confidence, and mental well-being in a way that works for them. Free downloadable Teacher’s Guide.



Reading Level: GR 4 • Interest Level: GR 3-6
32 pages, 8½ x 10¾”, full colour
\$21.56 RLB \$9.95 PAP
School Prices

- Supports provincial language arts standards: Ontario reading standards Grade 4: Overall expectations 1, 2, 3
- Supports social-emotional learning initiatives



▲ From Ask for Help

Ask for Help

978-0-7787-8165-3 RLB
978-0-7787-8173-8 PB

Build Resilience

978-0-7787-8167-7 RLB
978-0-7787-8175-2 PB

Face Your Fears

978-0-7787-8169-1 RLB
978-0-7787-8177-6 PB

Think Positive

978-0-7787-8171-4 RLB
978-0-7787-8179-0 PB

Boost Your Brain

978-0-7787-8166-0 RLB
978-0-7787-8174-5 PB

Don't Panic

978-0-7787-8168-4 RLB
978-0-7787-8176-9 PB

Make Mistakes

978-0-7787-8170-7 RLB
978-0-7787-8178-3 PB

Work Smarter

978-0-7787-8172-1 RLB
978-0-7787-8180-6 PB

Order Toll Free
Tel: 1-800-387-7650
Fax: 1-800-355-7166



Canada

Proud Canadian
Publisher



CRABTREE
PUBLISHING COMPANY

www.crabtreebooks.com

616 WELLAND AVENUE, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO,
CANADA, L2M 5V6, TEL: (800) 387-7650

NOTES

Technology is disrupting our lives and that shows no signs of changing anytime soon. The disruption has both positive and negative consequences. These ongoing developments are complicated and add layers of complexity to our daily lives. Teachers too lead complicated lives as the dynamic in a given classroom fundamentally changes. More challenges, more opportunities, more change. How is anyone supposed to navigate any of this in a reasonable way? Schools and districts struggle to keep up with regulatory amendments and policy updates that are supposed to provide guidance in this turbulent technological environment. And we expect that students will, by instinct, coast along accepting all of this as natural developments they will assimilate instinctively.

We present a special issue of TEACH Magazine devoted exclusively to exploring the topic of digital citizenship, what it means, and what it represents. As a result, you will find a vast range of content that is a good first step in addressing this very broad topic. This offering is not encyclopedic by any stretch as digital citizenship is now a motherhood issue like numeracy and literacy; one that is continually relevant and will evolve as we do.

We begin with the basics by providing a Digital Starter Kit that details the way forward with tools and resources when first starting out. The issue talks about the home-school connection and how that should be managed and maintained. We explore the price paid for digital citizenship with regard to the potential loss of privacy, for example and how to mitigate this through a range of strategies. Excessive screen time can also affect our sleep patterns and nocturnal rhythms. Certainly students are not immune and as adults, we should know better. We look at the barriers that digital presents in a typical classroom and what is required to overcome them. We explore the scary topic of AI in the classroom but take a positive approach looking at the benefits. Cybersecurity is always a concern and how to teach students that being online isn't always a safe place. On a positive note, we do examine the upside of social media and the potential benefits it presents. We also look at how Indigenous Peoples have embraced digital using it as a means of expression and empowerment. In addition, we present a lesson plan, a hands-on tool for addressing the important issues digital citizenship presents.

Our goal is to have this special issue exist as a pragmatic tool and resource for teachers to apply in their classroom practice. We also wish to thank the Government of Canada, the Canada Periodical Fund, Department of Canadian Heritage along with Ontario Creates, for the generous support provided that has made this issue possible.

Until next time,

Wili Liberman

PUBLISHER AND EDITOR

Wili Liberman

MANAGING EDITOR

Lisa Tran

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Raenu Sarathy

CONTRIBUTORS

Joneshia Cranford-Shepherd,
Kimberly Nava Eggett, Susan Hughes,
Chris Kruger, Chris Leavens,
Shelby Lisk, Alex Newman,
Erin Petley-Kerr, Micah Shippee,
Adam Stone

TRANSLATION

Tommy Guignard

ADMIN ASSISTANT

Deborah Buss

ART DIRECTION

Michael S. Marshall

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Bernice Slotnick

Teacher (Retired)

John Myers

Curriculum Instructor, OISE

Rose Dotten

CEO and Head Librarian, Shelburne

Public Library

TEACHMEDIA

TEACH is published by 1454119 Ontario Ltd. Printed in Canada. All rights reserved. Our contact info is: 1655 Dupont St., Suite 321, Toronto, ON, M6P 3T1 E: info@teachmag.com T: (416) 537-2103. For subscription info, visit shop.teachmag.com. Unsolicited articles, photographs and artwork submitted are welcome but TEACH cannot accept responsibility for their return. Contents of this publication may be reproduced for teachers' use in individual classrooms without permission. Others may not reproduce contents in any way unless given express consent by TEACH. Although every precaution is taken to ensure accuracy, TEACH, or any of its affiliates, cannot assume responsibility for the content, errors or opinions expressed in the articles or advertisements and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any damages whatsoever. Canadian publication mail sales product agreement No. 43579512. ISSN No. 1198-7707.

READ LEARN GONE



CONTENTS

Not Being Good Enough:
The Price of Digital Citizenship
Joneshia Cranford-Shepherd

36

Digital Pipeline:
To Home and Back
Kimberly Nava Eggett

39

Over Your Head:
Digital Barriers in the Classroom
Chris Kruger

22

Circadian Rhythms:
Screens and Kids
Chris Leavens

32

Updating the Moccasin Telegraph:
Indigenous People Embrace
Shelby Lisk

8

The Upside of Social Media
Alex Newman

12

Techxpertise:
The Digital Starter Kit
Erin Petley-Kerr

42

No Brainer:
AI in the Classroom
Micah Shippee

20

Cybersecurity
Starts Here
Adam Stone

16

24
Curricula

AD INDEX 47

I am a part of the younger generation who are claiming space for ourselves on our blogs, podcasts, online marketplaces, independent news outlets, and social media. [We start this journey not on our own, but on the backs of amazing storytellers.](#)

Updating the Moccasin Telegraph: Indigenous People Embrace Digital

Author Shelby Lisk

As a kid, I only ever saw my community, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, make headlines when there was a highway or railroad blockade. The public knew us for protests, cigarettes, and gas. Even from a young age, I knew there was more to that story and [there still is.](#)

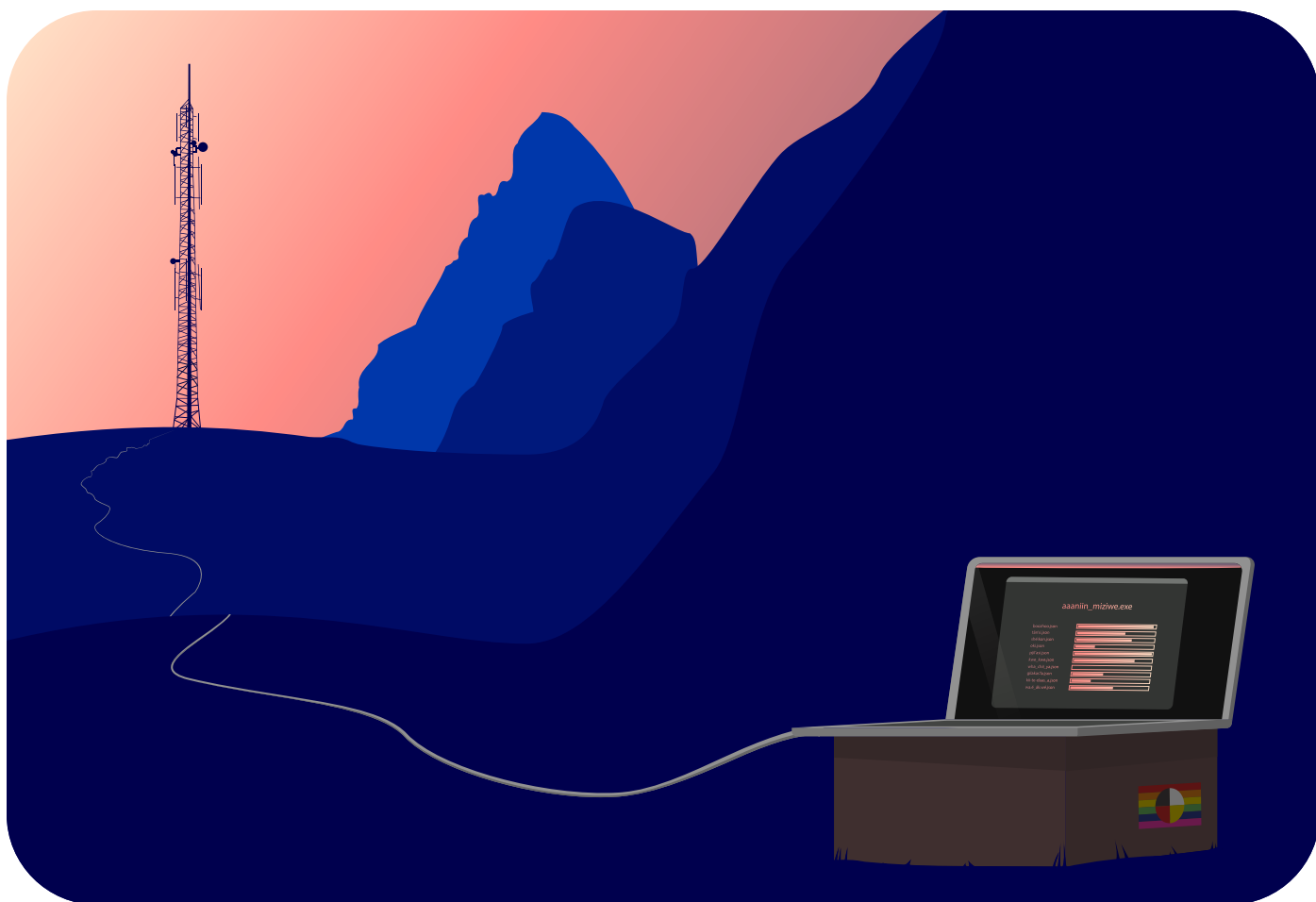
Most media content about Indigenous communities are created by non-Indigenous people, for *their* consumption. This leads to the reproduction of the stereotypes we've seen time and time again. Accomplished Anishinaabe reporter, Duncan McCue, coined [the WD4 rule](#), which has become ubiquitous in the Indigenous journalism world. In a [CBC article](#), he shares the story: "An elder once told me the only way an Indian would make it on the news is if he or she were one of the 4Ds: drumming, dancing, drunk or dead." (He added the "W" for warrior.)

In 2011, Professors Carmen Robertson and Mark Anderson, co-authored [Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers](#), an examination of Indigenous representation in Canadian newspapers from 1869 to 2009, and will be releasing an updated version in 2021.

"Things have not improved that much," Robertson said on [CBC's Unreserved](#) in November, "The stereotypes that we found in the 19th Century are still being reproduced but maybe different descriptor words are being used." The updated book will include contemporary examples, such as the reportage around Cree Red Pheasant First Nation resident, Colten Boushie's death, in 2016.

Retired journalist and Professor John Medicine Horse Kelly and Professor Miranda Brady argue in their book, [We Interrupt This Program: Indigenous Media Tactics in Canadian Culture](#), that "whoever controls or subverts the content matters in the meaning-making process, as do varied audiences and modes of production access, and circulation." We can't rely on one source or medium to reach people.

Within the classroom, it is important to share content that doesn't position Indigenous people in the past but brings them into the present and future. The division between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada grows smaller through education, where those who have been dehumanized are now seen



as whole people, with beautiful cultures, amazing senses of humour, artistic talents, and voices with important things to say. The places to find these voices are not within mainstream texts but within spaces where the non-Indigenous teacher or student may be taking the seat of the one feeling “othered.” But that is where the real learning starts—with listening.

I am a part of the younger generation who are claiming space for ourselves on our blogs, podcasts, online marketplaces, independent news outlets, and social media. We start this journey not on our own, but on the backs of amazing storytellers: grassroots journalists, rez radio hosts, writers and knowledge holders who self-published and shared education, language, and cultural resources across communities, Indigenous activists, artists, and even our hilarious uncle. Building upon our tradition of storytelling, entrepreneurship, humour, activism, and passion for our languages and cultures, we are asserting our voices across the Internet to declare, “we’re still here!”

“I felt for a long time that Indigenous folks were on this huge hiatus and observing the Internet, not

sure how we would go about putting our native spin on things,” says Skye Durocher, who created her first meme account on Instagram for a Cree language class, in 2018. Durocher, a Métis and Nehiyaw woman from Alberta and the “Cree-ator” of [@Cree.language.challenge](#) and [@Cree.okimaw.iskwew](#) (which means “Cree boss woman”), has definitely found a way to put her spin on things. She says that she creates her posts for Indigenous people and describes her sense of humour as “rez.”

Memes are often based on images from pop culture such as television shows and movies, which unfortunately still lack representations of Indigenous people. Pages like Durocher’s, can be spaces of healing for Indigenous people, where we can discuss shared trauma, foster identity, and fight isolation. “We create these memes to talk about serious issues as well,” says Durocher. “It is a way to inform younger people about what is going on within other nations and start a conversation about current and systemic issues.”

Sometimes humour is the best way to point out the absurdities in life. No one does this better than [Walking](#)

[Eagle News](#), a satirical online news outlet created by Tim Fontaine, who cheekily identifies himself on his website as, “a real journalist for almost two decades before becoming a pretend journalist.”

Fontaine, who covered Canadian Politics and Indigenous Affairs for APTN and CBC Indigenous, among others, started turning his Twitter jokes into satirical news articles after leaving the journalism world. On any given day, you may read headlines such as: “[Parliament Hill Skating Rink to be melted to provide drinking water for First Nations](#)” or “[Canada’s largest reconciliation manufacturer warns shut-down imminent if blockades continue.](#)”

“[Canada to present full-grown Indigenous man to Royal Couple as engagement gift,](#)” came after the engagement of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. I shared this article on Facebook, and a classmate of mine, who thought the story was true, became enraged. In less than 20 words Fontaine can point out something so poignant about Canada’s relationship with Indigenous people that readers take a moment to think about whether it could be true—and that’s powerful.

If you’ve spent time in Indigenous communities, you’ve probably heard of the ‘moccasin telegraph’, or plainly, sharing the news of the day through word of mouth. Now, Indigenous communities are utilizing social media to connect, unite, and mobilize. In 2012, the [Idle No More](#) movement spread across the Internet. In 2020, we see those tactics being used in the mobilization of Indigenous and allied communities across Canada standing up in solidarity with Wet’suwet’en traditional chiefs’ opposition to the Coastal Gaslink pipeline on their traditional territory in, what is now called, British Columbia.

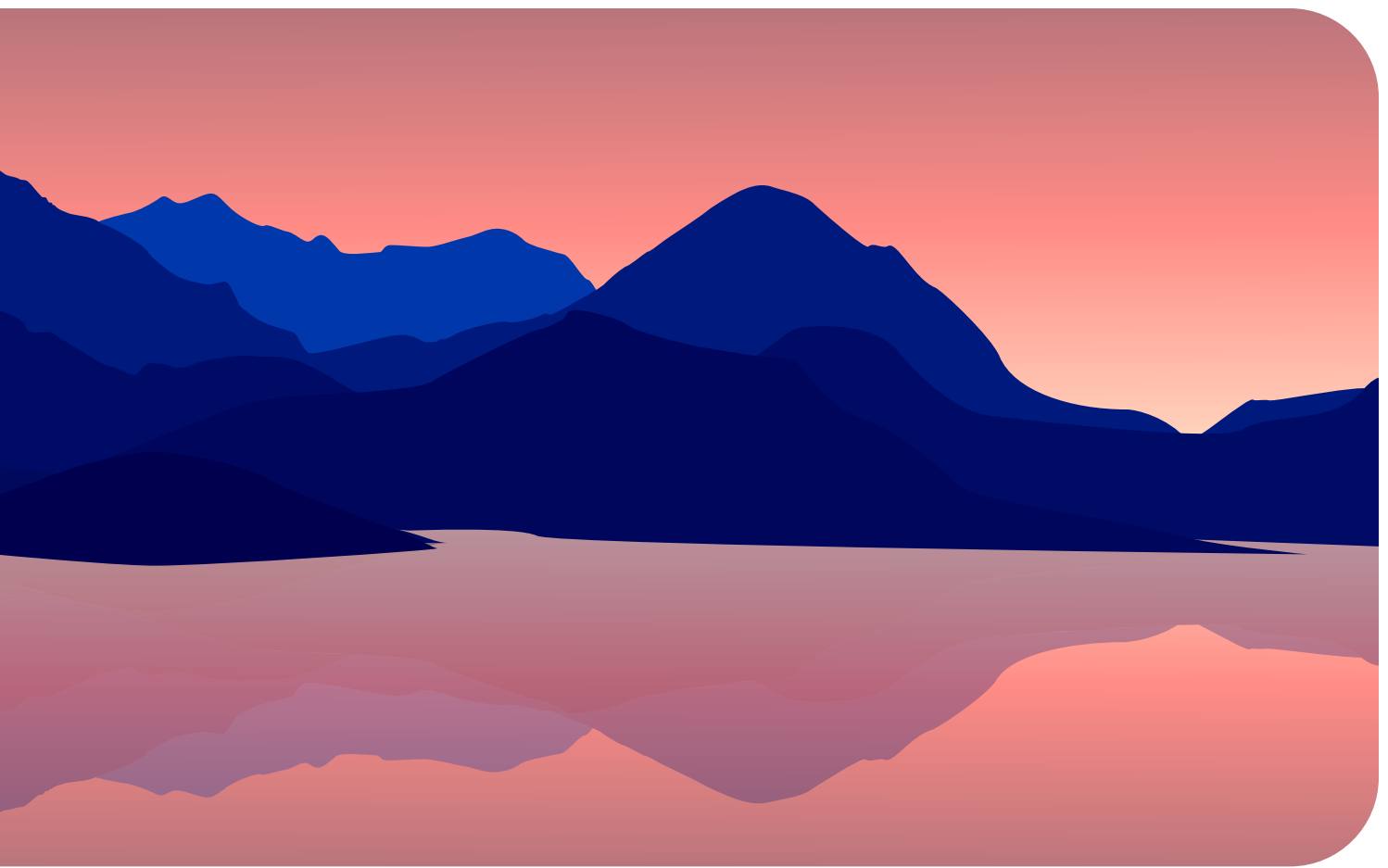
In 2018, the [Journal of Information, Communications, and Society](#) published the analysis of 1650 #IdleNoMore tweets shared between July and August of 2013. The researchers argued that “social media provided opportunities for #IdleNoMore tweeters to engage in wide-ranging forms of political and civic action or, from a broader perspective, political protest that was deeply informed and, to a certain extent, influenced by references to Indigenous culture,” (Raynauld, Richez, Boudreau Morris, 2018).

However, the Internet is not always a safe place for us. Because of the persistent stereotyping of Indigenous people in media, not to mention the amount of violence



our communities continue to face, our social media feeds can sometimes feel like a sad and overwhelming place. This became so apparent, in fact, that in 2015 [CBC made the decision](#) to completely close and re-evaluate the comment section on all Indigenous articles shared on their platform because commenters were disproportionately violating their guidelines by spreading misinformation, ignorance and sometimes hatred and racism toward Indigenous people. Many Indigenous people have carved out their own community in the online world, just as in the physical world.

Indigenous broadcasters, especially those in Northern Canada, have maintained their sovereignty and self-determination by remaining unlicensed, so it’s not surprising that our oral storytelling cultures have translated so well into the do-it-yourself world of podcasts. CRTC research analyst, Julia Szwarc, says that “the origins of community radio can be traced to isolated Indigenous communities and ‘trail radio’ in the 1960’s.” Some Indigenous podcasts, like Connie Walker’s acclaimed [Missing and Murdered](#) series, “Finding Cleo,” have been widely celebrated (and, in



this case, downloaded more than 10 million times). But you can also catch Indigenous voices talking about a whole spectrum of topics, from science fiction through a decolonial lens on [Métis in Space](#), to art and culture on Anishinaabe comedian Ryan McMahon’s “Ten Times Around the Sun,” [The Red Man Laughing](#) podcast, or listen to Kahentinetha Horn tell stories of her life to her daughter, Kaniehtiio, on [Coffee with Ma](#).

“I think a lot of Indigenous people are brought to social media because it truly shows the power in our collective communities and experiences,” says Michelle Beauséjour, the Métis artist behind the jewellery company [@thebirchtrail](#). She believes that digital entrepreneurship completely changed her ability to share her work. “Growing up in a city center and away from community made me feel isolated in my experiences. Now global platforms have instead brought a broader community together.”

Auróra Lamphere, who identifies as a mixed race Indigenous woman, says that Beauséjour was one of the many supportive Indigenous artists she met when she started her brand, [@reclaiming_roots](#), in 2017. “We’ve found a place of belonging online, where no one asks

your BQ [blood quantum], no one chastises you if you can’t speak your language, or if you need help learning traditional skills you never had the opportunity to learn at a younger age,” says Lamphere.

Through new information technology, contemporary Indigenous cultures (including places where they intersect with the mainstream) are not just accessible—they’re flooding in. Never before have so many diverse experiences been shared through so many different modes of communication. “We’re a new generation who is striving to reclaim our old ways,” says Lamphere, “and we do it by creating our own little online community.”

Shelby Lisk is a multidisciplinary artist and journalist from Kenhtè:ke (Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory). She currently lives in Ottawa, where she works as a multimedia journalist, capturing news and current affairs stories that affect Indigenous communities across the province.

“Adults weren’t raised on social media and conduct themselves differently—they use it to journal their activities, to brag about their kids, and even to bully others.”

The Upside of Social Media

Author Alex Newman

Released in 2018, TikTok has become one of the fastest growing social media platforms. The wild popularity of the app can be accredited to users’ ability—often youth—to express themselves through music, singing, dancing, and comedy routines. The app, however, has also raised concerns—mostly among parents, but also with educators—for the way it’s being used. One example is the “pass out” challenge whereby kids cut off oxygen to their brains and then record the results.

Focusing on those types of negative incidents—as dangerous as they are—is missing the point, explains motivational speaker Joe Whitbread. “Kids today are digital citizens from birth,” he says. “They already know about cyber bullying, rights, and wrongs. This shouldn’t be a conversation about TikTok per se, but about the mental health of the child and whether he or she is exploring places in a negative state. If a child is healthy, chances are high that their online explorations will also be healthy.”

Usually, kids use social media to connect with friends and have fun. In the course of their school

visits, Whitbread and his business partner Jo Phillips have addressed over 27,000 kids. They say fun is the number one reason they use social media. TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram and many other platforms allow kids to explore their creativity, for entertainment and information purposes, he explains.

It’s also instructional and kids learn things like how to apply make-up or fix rollerblade wheels. Also, they can build up their personal brand, although that has to be handled with care, Whitbread says. “If your reputation in high school is drinking likely it will precede you in your job future.”

Whitbread and Phillips co-founded their company Jo(e) Social Media and became “evangelists” about the positive ways in which kids are using social media. It’s actually the parents who need training in responsible use of social media, they say. “Adults weren’t raised on social media and conduct themselves differently—they use it to journal their activities, to brag about their kids, and even to bully others.”



WHY SHOULD TEACHERS INCORPORATE LITERACY INTO THE CURRICULUM?

The short answer is teachers must because parents aren't. The reason, Whitbread says, is because "they're [often] at a loss as to what the digital stuff is about. Adults didn't grow up with social media, and they are not as familiar with it. They [may follow] blogs and reports that are mostly negative, and they're not hearing about the amazing things kids are doing on social media and how they're using it to connect, even globally."

There's a philosophical distinction here as Carol Arcus, vice-president of the Association for Media Literacy, explains: "We're not in the business of prevention, but the business of preparation."

For Chelsea Atwell, a Toronto elementary school teacher and one of AML's directors, technology has always been an asset. Diagnosed with dyslexia in Grade 4, she lucked out with a wonderful special education teacher who encouraged her to use a computer instead of copying math problems from the board.

When Atwell became a teacher herself, she noticed

how students were all at radically different levels and believed that technology—especially the assistive kind—would be beneficial. She took a media literacy course that was partially subsidized through the Toronto District School Board, then introduced media production in her K-4 classes. The students were excited "because they could produce and tell their own stories," she says. "It was a great entry point for curriculum and a great teaching hook—once you [the teacher] understand the pedagogy behind it, you can engage students in a much richer activity."

This is where the literacy piece comes in—kids are technology-savvy, but they need to be guided in asking the right questions. Teacher-librarian Diana Maliszewski says those questions contribute to critical thinking and kids and adults both need educating and re-educating. It shouldn't be restricted to looking out for online predators or being cautious with social media—but to all media, including advertising and news stories.

As Maliszewski explains in an article she co-wrote with Atwell: "By starting at a young age to wonder, question, discuss and understand all the media texts

we are continually exposed to, this will help our littlest learners to become critical thinkers as well as literate media consumers and producers.”

Thanks to AML’s push for media literacy in the schools since the 1970s, the subject has been part of Ontario’s K-8 language curriculum since 2006. Originally, Arcus says, they were “hoping the discrete strand of learning would protect the presence of media literacy, but things have changed so much with digital technology, that most can agree that digital media literacy is necessary in every aspect of learning.”

At the moment, however, digital awareness and media literacy are still only part of English studies but that needs to change, Arcus says. “History has its bias and is a subject where the teachers really need media literacy. PhysEd is a natural given so many body image issues, but most PE teachers aren’t trained in it.”

Some teachers, though, have taken it upon themselves to become digitally aware. Whitbread mentions an Alberta social studies teacher who added Tiktok to the curriculum when he saw the number of kids using it. Whitbread has also seen “principals Snapchat morning announcements, teachers producing classes on YouTube, or Tweeting them. It allows parents to see what their children are doing. And it’s ultimately about normalizing the social media.”

In Whitbread’s experience, the problem lies more often with parents. This came to a head late last year with a highly publicized event in an Alberta high school. A teacher who had taught a lesson on climate change—using videos from both Greenpeace and the Alberta government—was openly pilloried on Facebook by one of the parents. The post went viral and the comments became so increasingly violent that the principal opted to cancel the Christmas dance for fear of reprisal. The superintendent for that school, Jayson Lovell, has since worked with Jo(e) Social Media, on a program for parents requiring them to sign a digital contract, similar to the Respect in Sport contracts.

WHAT SHOULD BE TAUGHT AND HOW TO INCORPORATE IT?

The AML defines media “[as] made by people, for people. You can see it. You can hear it. You can feel it. You can wear it. You can experience it. All media has a message.”

Being media literate, though, is much broader than “info verification and information literacy,” Arcus says. “When children are taught well and effectively, they’re able to recognize a newspaper article as a construct. Everything is a construct, including their textbooks.”

Maliszewski, who learned media literacy through professional development courses and additional research, says social media is a great teaching tool, but teachers need to apply critical thinking to its inherent messaging. “You need to look at why you choose a particular media, why it’s set up the way it is, who is included, who’s excluded.... Even our [school] assemblies... are media [constructs] too. The point is, media is part of the regular school day so it shouldn’t be separated from everything else.”

In addition to consuming content, students can also produce it—and do so critically. Maliszewski explains that her students use Lego and stop-motion animation apps to create their [own version](#) of a popular kids YouTube show called “Mystery Box.” This way they aren’t simply passive consumers and learn what is involved in creating a message. They also have conversations about the toys and games students enjoy such as on Webkinz.

Maliszewski also draws from everyday life—current events, culture, and society. She once asked students to draw an authority figure and was surprised at how much the young students were inspired by watching the news. A lively discussion ensued. Given her students come from diverse backgrounds, she also draws from individual cultural experiences: “Media isn’t just an add-on, it’s being able to understand the culture and society we live in.”

Parents in her elementary school have been supportive. For last year’s project on hair in a media context, one of the parents, a Muslim mom, brought in different hijabs for the kids to try on while she talked about their meaning. “A lot of other learning came out that I hadn’t expected,” Maliszewski says.

Even a poster about climate change, she says, is a media construct. “Advertisers use strategies to get our attention... how can we, as teachers, use those same strategies to get kids to pay attention—and then alert students to the fact that their attention has been gotten through these strategies.”

If that sounds like being overly suspicious of everything, it’s not, Maliszewski says. “It’s about being



aware and widening our idea about what a media text is saying.” The kids never cease to amaze her with their complex and philosophical thinking.

An argument can be made that including media literacy actually reduces teacher workload because of the partnering possibilities when you integrate curriculum such as math, social studies, history. The idea isn’t new, but using media production—video, oral communication, script writing, and the collaborating—to do so, is.

The real problem is the time it takes to research how to incorporate digital awareness into the classroom. It does require additional teacher training, but faculties aren’t teaching it enough, even though media literacy education is expected in most places in the world.

More important than learning the technology is to better understand the underlying pedagogy, Atwell says. “You can do coding, but how you link that to your curriculum in a deeper way, is more important.”

AML’s website is only six months old, but it corrals 20 years of curriculum design and pedagogy. Its goal is to “help teachers understand how to apply current events, what kinds of questions to encourage their students to ask,” Arcus says. “Discernment grows and is nurtured through substantial practice that has a solid foundation in critical thinking.”

Alex Newman is a Toronto freelance writer and editor. Visit her website, alexnewmanwriter.com.

“I tell them: Let me show you what I can find out about you and what you have done.”

Cybersecurity Starts Here

Author Adam Stone

Rayna Freedman, a fifth-grade teacher at Jordan/Jackson Elementary School in Mansfield, MA, worries about the degree to which her students’ private selves are exposed online. She’s concerned about how *unconcerned* the kids themselves are.

“When they check the box to sign up for an app, they don’t understand what they are agreeing to,” she says. “Sharing information with companies about sites you visit, sharing your physical location or your IP address: My kids have zero knowledge about any of these. They are just checking boxes with no understanding.”

When it comes to privacy and security, K-12 teachers have good reason to worry. A recent report by K12cybersecure.com shows over 770 publicly disclosed cybersecurity-related incidents involving U.S. public schools since 2016—and that is just the hacks. When you add in all the information kids freely give away, it’s easy to see why teachers would be concerned.

In fact, teachers often are at the front line in raising awareness of cyber security. “About a third of American students learn to keep their personal information secure

through school resources,” says Judith Bitterli, McAfee VP of Marketing, Consumer. “This demonstrates a crucial opportunity for teachers to instill awareness and security best practices in young children at school, so they are always protected and continue to stay safe in college and beyond.”

Let’s consider this from two angles. First, there’s the messaging itself: What do kids need to know about online security? Then there’s the how: What tools and techniques are out there to help get that message across?

WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT

In order to teach privacy, educators first must learn some basic rules of the road. In the U.S. this means having at least a passing familiarity with the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Rule, a federal statute that limits a web site’s use of personal information for kids under 13.

To safeguard privacy, teachers need to ensure digital tools used in the classroom are in compliance, says Kerry Gallagher, assistant principal at St. John’s

Prep in Danvers, MA and director of K-12 Education for the nonprofit ConnectSafely.org. “Teachers need to understand those rules. Then when a child is excited to use a particular tool or an application, they can talk about that piece of it,” she says.

Compliance is just a starting point. The heavy lifting comes when teachers try to help kids understand why digital privacy matters. That’s a hard sell when you are talking to people who may lack a basic concept of privacy—period.

“Because the children in K-12 have always lived in a world where the Internet exists and where information is free flowing and easy to access, they don’t have a strong sense of what privacy even means,” Gallagher says. “They don’t think of themselves as ‘private.’ They have a fundamentally different mindset than most adults.”

It’s hard to have a meaningful conversation about setting personal boundaries online, when kids don’t understand boundaries at all.

Sometimes a personal example is required. “I talked about how, when I got diagnosed with cancer, I had a private Facebook group to share that with,” Freedman says. “The kids asked why I didn’t want to just be public with it, and I explained that I wasn’t ready yet. That’s a new idea to kids whose parents don’t even ask before posting pictures of them on Facebook.”

In order to teach privacy, and to engage kids in conversations about security, it’s therefore necessary to go beyond a simple list of rules, the do’s and don’ts of cyber hygiene. The messaging here has to be personal and somewhat nuanced.

“It’s about calibrating their emotional intelligence with how they behave online: How did this online behavior make you *feel*, and do you want to feel that way?” Gallagher says. “It’s easy to put together a list of rules, but those things won’t fit every child. Our job as educators is to guide children through a path of self-discovery, and this whole area is just one more place in which we can help them to figure who they are and how they can share themselves with the world.”

There’s also a more practical, nuts-and-bolts, angle to this. For kids to stay safe, they need to know the threats.

“Account takeover is the number one abuse on the internet. That’s when someone gets your password, logs in as you, and takes over your account. Even fifth graders

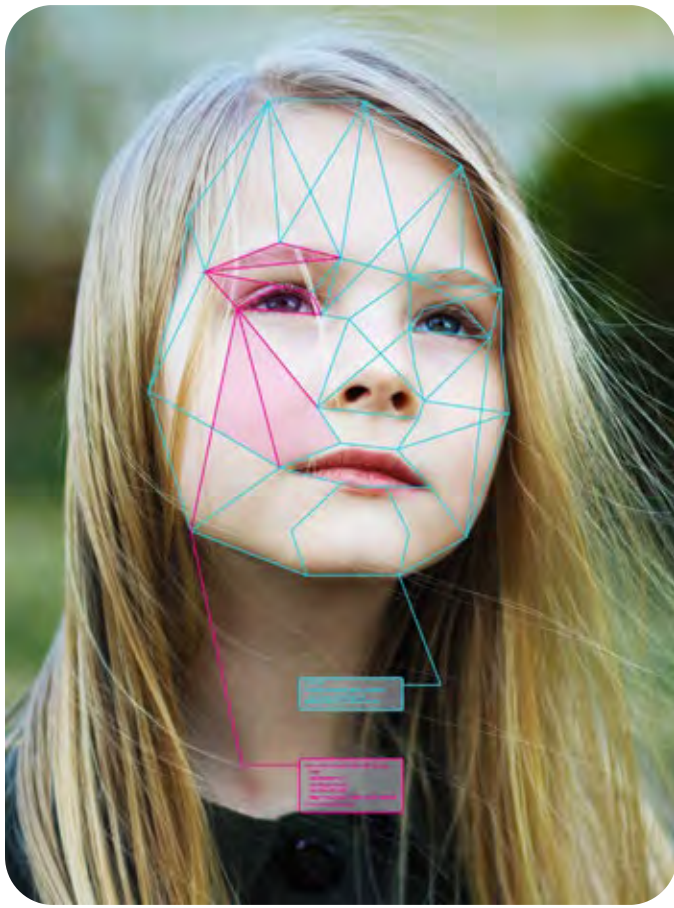


have passwords, so they need to be aware of that,” says Dr. Anthony Vance, associate professor of management information systems and director of Temple University’s Center for Cyber Security.

Kids also need to know that even trusted parties cannot be wholly trusted. “It used to be about bad actors hacking your system. Now kids need to think about implications of companies that you like and trust, and how they use your data,” says Matt Dascoli, a former teacher and presently Dell Education Strategist.

Kids also need to know that nothing is really private online. “Young people may have the mistaken notion that they are anonymous online,” Vance says. “As a teacher you can Google ‘what is the IP address of my device’ and you’ll see the geo-location of that device. That is eye-opening for kids, that your IP address alone can tell people a lot about you.”

Finally, they need to understand digital persistence, the idea that nothing you do online ever goes away. “I tell them: Let me show you what I can find out about you and what you have done,” says Kathryn Ives, Director, Integration Services of Pflugerville ISD in Texas. “I pull up the [Wayback Machine](#) and quickly



find things they have posted about themselves and even things they had deleted. The room gets alarmingly still. And I follow up with: Your college’s recruiters know how to do this too.”

Clearly, the privacy-and-security landscape is broad and complex. How best to communicate this mass of information, without overwhelming the kids?

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Every time a new app comes into the class, that’s an opportunity.

“When our teachers create an account on an app, they talk about how their information is protected on that app,” Gallagher says. “Then if students want to use a different app, there is a conversation about how that tool may not be prepared to protect their information, based on the requirements under the law.”

Freedman leveraged commercial technology to make the same point, introducing the Google Home smart speaker to show kids the privacy implications of the new consumer tools. “We took the district’s responsible-use policy and rewrote it for Google Home,

specifying that when they are on Google Home they will not share their home address,” she says.

It took two months of classroom discussion before she ever fired up the device. “They really thought about all the data you can collect from voice,” she says. “I didn’t want to turn it on until they really understood what was going on.”

By the same token, teachers should be careful not to introduce classroom tools that fail to make the grade. “Educators may find a personal scheduling tool or a task manager that works really well for them, and they’ll recommend it to a student who struggles with organization,” Gallagher says. “But maybe that app wasn’t designed for the K-12 environment. It wasn’t designed for children.”

All these conversations need to take place not just once but throughout the school year.

“Traditionally you brought everyone down to the library for a one-time lesson,” Dascoli says. “Now with students increasingly being online in school, those opportunities for learning have to happen throughout the day. Any time the students are actually working online, that’s a perfect opportunity to talk about how we behave online, what details we share there.”

What details should they share? In the past kids were told to hide their true identities online: Sharing personal information could lead to abduction. Now, with all the statistics suggesting that stranger abduction is [extremely rare](#), students are instead encouraged to be themselves. Not that they should disclose details like their age or home address, but rather that they should strive for authenticity.

“The person you are here and now, that’s the same person you should represent online. Share your real self, be the genuine you. If you make mistakes online, that’s part of you, it’s what makes you a whole person,” Gallagher says.

In this way, kids will learn naturally to keep their private selves private. “There are some inner thoughts that you wouldn’t bring up in a face-to-face conversation, so you don’t put that online. If you wouldn’t say it in a classroom or you wouldn’t say it to your mom, then if you are being yourself online, naturally you wouldn’t say it there either,” she says.

Kids are more apt to behave appropriately when they are empowered, Freedman says. She has a class Facebook page, “and while I have their parents’

permission to post any classroom picture, the kids know that they can tell me ‘not today,’ or if it’s a group photo, they don’t have to be in that photo,” she says. “Because I give them a voice, it teaches them that they can choose what to share.”

This strategy of making it personal is key to helping kids who may have a limited understanding of ‘privacy’ at the start.

“When I teach freshman and sophomores, a lot of them say: Privacy doesn’t matter because I have nothing to hide,” Vance says. “That’s not true, everyone has things that are private and valuable. So we need to have that conversation. What are the things that are valuable to you? What is personal? What could someone use against you? If you can have those conversations, they start to understand the kinds of traces that they are leaving in the digital world and what that might mean.”

Those “traces” matter—the digital persistence that can follow students through the years. How to convey this to the notoriously short-term brains of the K-12 crowd?

Sometimes the most effective way is to show them. If they’ve got a social presence, you can go back through their timeline and talk about what you see. “If they put something on there and a year later they feel like that was dumb, you can talk about whether they want to take that down, or maybe they want to leave it as an artifact, a digital record of their lives,” Gallagher says. “The important thing is to have the conversation.”

While all these human-centered strategies can help ensure safety and privacy, others take a more hardline approach. “We have boundaries,” Ives says.

“We don’t just open up the browser and tell them to search. They go into a portal and they see the resources that we have selected as a curriculum team,” she says. “Our internet is filtered, YouTube is filtered. On YouTube teachers can see anything, but the students only have access to some things, based on categories that we have selected.”

If a kid makes a request for a YouTube asset, “we will watch that video completely through, and if it matches the curriculum and it is appropriate for the student, we will unblock it for that student,” Ives says.

Even as a proponent of digital guardrails, Ives admits this approach will only get you so far. “We can block 100 different sites every single day and there will be another thousand the next day. They can always get

around our filters,” she says. “So we have to have the hard conversations. They will say: ‘I use this at home so why can’t I do it here?’ We get that a lot.”

In one case a teacher called the network engineer’s office when a student accessed a ‘dark web’ site that showed disturbing content—“in the violent torture category,” Ives says. “Our job is to protect our kids and keep them safe, and yet we can’t do anything about some of these things.”

If you can’t block it, discuss it. “They have to know that we know what they are doing, that we know what they can do,” Ives says. “Then the conversation is: Just because you can, should you? If you end up someplace shouldn’t be, can that harm you? Can it harm someone else? Do you think this would make your parents proud?”

Great technology, great people and great systems “can only go so far,” she says. “We still have to talk about ethics.”

HELPFUL TOOLS

Gallagher points to a number of helpful tools teachers can use to determine whether apps and web sites meet K-12 privacy standards, and also to craft useful classroom practices around privacy and security.

- ConnectSafely.org has an [educator’s guide](#) to student data privacy.
- Through the [Student Data Privacy Consortium](#), tech companies agree to meet minimum privacy and safety requirements, giving members access to a database of vetted tools.
- Almost 400 tech companies have signed the [Student Data Privacy Pledge](#), pledging to meet student privacy and security guidelines.

A seasoned journalist with 20+ years’ experience, Adam Stone covers education, technology, government and the military, along with diverse other topics.



The idea that some form of artificial intelligence might take over parts of our daily lives may seem a bit scary. If we embrace it however, *AI has a role to play.*

No Brainer: AI in the Classroom

Author Micah Shippee, Phd.

What is AI? It sounds other-worldly, futuristic... and a bit scary. Artificial intelligence (AI) is an area of computing science focused on the creation of intelligent machines that work and react like humans. AI learns through the data we generate in our real-time efforts and many AI products impact and improve our daily lives. Here is a list of some of my favourite AI technologies and products that may be beneficial to the teachers in the classroom.

VOICE RECOGNITION AND WRITING

One form of AI is voice recognition. It recognizes human speech and outputs it as text—all in real time. In the classroom, voice recognition can be useful for students struggling with writing. In two decades of teaching middle school, many of my students have struggled to translate their thoughts into keystrokes. It's difficult to type at the same speed that we think or speak. Apps like Google Docs have Voice Typing tools that allow users to simply articulate their thoughts while the computer does the rest. I once worked with a grade 5 student who, although doing well in school, was very anxious about writing an essay because of her

inability to find the letters on a keyboard quickly (in her opinion). I demonstrated voice typing and she was able to focus on the message rather than the keyboard. The result was more writing, and often for some students—better writing.

REVIEWING AND EDITING

Now that it is easy for students to fill up a page with text, they must be even more thorough when reviewing and editing their work. The [Hemingway](#) App is my favourite tool. The website is designed to support good writing. After users finish writing their first draft of an assignment, they can copy and paste it into Hemingway. The website's algorithm provides real-time analysis of the writing as it's being edited. Words and sentences are colour coded to indicate what type of change could be made to strengthen the work. For example, yellow highlights indicate a sentence is too long or complex. While green represents a passive voice. I tell my students to treat editing like a game: remove all of the colours by revising their writing. The app also measures the readability of the writing as a grade level. Once students are satisfied with their revisions, they may copy the new text back to their original text editor.

TRANSLATION

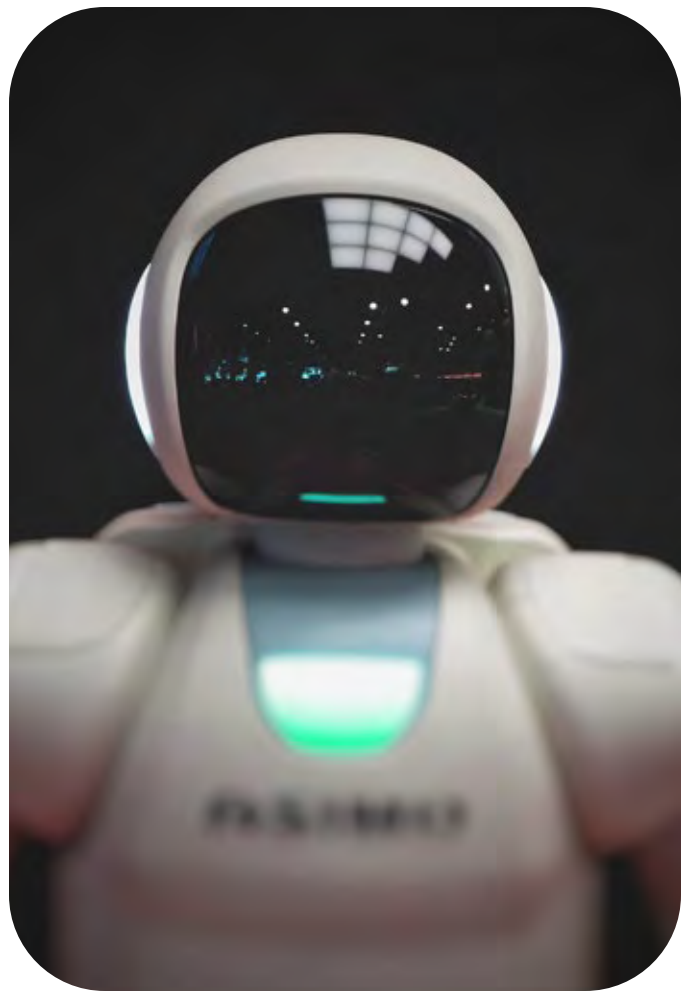
Translation is another commonly used AI app, although it is not advanced enough to fully replace learning another language. For example, my colleague shares that Google translates the English phrase “Paper Jam” to “Mermelada de papel” in Spanish. While it is a sticky situation, it is not quite the same “jam.” Despite this translation faux pas, the future of language learning is very exciting. In our classes, we may use these inaccurate translations as teachable moments in language instruction. For example, if you are teaching an international language to native English speakers, ask them to type a sentence in English and use Google Translate to change the language. This helps students understand the difference between literal translations and actual meanings. As the power of AI increases, we will likely see translations that are thought-for-thought and eventually, even paraphrased.

DRAWING

Another form of AI is recognition of hand drawings. Google’s Quick Draw is a game that asks users to draw or doodle different objects like a book or a dog. Millions of images have been submitted and the computer continues to learn and interpret them. How can this form of technology help students? Have you ever had to insert a special character or symbol while typing, but could not think of the name? In Google Docs, for example, when a user cannot find a special character from a prepopulated list, they may, instead, draw it in the search box. This could be beneficial to students looking for symbols, emojis, punctuations, accents, currency symbols, etc. without having to know the correct name of each.

HANDWRITING

Good handwriting is often regarded as important in subjects like language arts, but it’s equally important in subjects like math or chemistry where students often have to write out long and complex equations. AI helps learners by digitizing their hand-written notes that are stored in the cloud, but also easily searched come exam time. One of the apps I like for handwritten text recognition is ViewSonic’s myViewBoard. Teachers



write equations on an interactive screen and with the click of a button, it converts into text that is shared with students—much faster than transcribing them manually.

Similarly, Evernote is another app I enjoy. It allows users to type in key words while searching hand written notes. This would be useful for students who prefer writing out assignments by hand but would still like some of the benefits of technology.

The idea that some form of artificial intelligence might take over parts of our daily lives may seem a bit scary. If we embrace it however, AI has a role to play, especially in the classroom. AI’s varied applications and its ability to teach itself can support students across different styles of learning.

Micah Shippee is a social-studies teacher and educational-technology trainer in Liverpool, NY with two decades of experience. He is also a Google for Education Certified Innovator, National Geographic Educator, author, and consultant.

Over Your Head: Digital Barriers in the Classroom

Author Chris Kruger

It is widely accepted that digital tools and resources are vital to students' success in the modern world. It is also widely believed that the only barrier to access is money. "If only," I lamented as a first-year teacher, "there were enough devices to go around, all students would be able to become full-fledged digital citizens!" While this may be true for some students, for others, access is more complex and can't be achieved through simply receiving a grant or donation of devices. Often, other factors are at play. It's important to develop a nuanced understanding of access so that we can better help our students.

To start, we need only look to ourselves for one potential barrier to access. There is no grant that can overcome a teacher who is unable or unprepared to use a digital resource. Last year, I was lucky enough to win a grant for a 3D printer for my school, but the rollout was far from easy. I was so excited, but had no idea how to share it with my students. I attended webinars, read articles, followed the steps, did everything I could, but it was still so daunting. There it sat, gathering dust. It wasn't until I admitted I was in over my head that I could actually start moving forward. If you find yourself in this kind of situation, there are some simple steps that can help. Find real people to help you; break it into manageable chunks; and look for entry level projects to attempt first. But, above all, don't let a late start contribute to an even later implementation. Starting late is better than not starting at all.

Another barrier students may face is the level of digital infrastructure. In Chicago where I teach, high speed Internet is available almost everywhere. Outside of the classroom, there are public libraries, cafes, schools—a whole host of options. Furthermore, some urban areas are proposing to classify the Internet as a utility and making it available to all. Even so, just because broadband seems to be everywhere, doesn't mean all our students can easily access it. And for those in rural or remote areas, the situation may be even worse, as the cost of Internet access is higher, or the speed is much slower. Khan Academy may be one of my favorite classroom resources, but it isn't useful if a video takes 15 minutes to load.

I've found that one of the best ways to help students facing these barriers is by compiling an honest inventory of the resources available to them. Do



they have Internet access via cell phones? Or access only on weekends? Can you provide resources that can be downloaded at school and then worked on at home? For example, Google Docs and many coding platforms can be used offline and the work is then synced once students gain Internet access again.

Another potential barrier to access is parental acceptance of technology. A parent might generally dislike devices and are hesitant to have their child play any game, even if it is educational. Another parent might not allow their child to use technology unless the child is fully proficient with it. Or, they may be suspicious of social media and resist having their child use it in class without their supervision.

These issues cannot be simply overcome. Instead, it is important to work with parents to find out what makes them uncomfortable while finding solutions that work for everyone. If parents are concerned about privacy or security, highlighting the relevant features of the app, allowing students to have pseudonymous accounts, or establishing a contract for all parties to follow can help ease those fears. If parents are concerned about screen time, finding ways to trim down the time a student needs to work on a project, limiting curricula to a single digital component at a time, and finding different ways to present information may make technology less overwhelming. Both teachers and parents want students to be successful, so let's work together to define the skills we all think are important and how they can be achieved.

Similarly, even if there are parents who do not take issue with technology in the classroom, they may not provide support. For example, it might be out of their comfort zone, they're intimidated by apps or programs they don't understand, or they lack the time to provide support.

I've found that the key to making digital materials less intimidating for parents is by providing resources. For example, finding YouTube videos that explain the purpose and function of an app while providing explanations in parent newsletters may demystify class activities. Another surprisingly easy way is maintaining

an open line of communication with parents and helping them feel comfortable approaching you with questions. This is critical because it can be hard to predict which piece of technology will be challenging for parents. When introducing Khan Academy, I spent a long time preparing supportive materials for parents and although it was a lot of work—it was very successful.

Then, there is the most obvious barrier to access—money. Financial barriers have always been an issue for teachers and students. Fortunately, there are numerous scholarship and grant opportunities available if you do your research. For me, the key to obtaining resources, like the grant I received from the 3D printer, is diligence. I have dedicated an hour a week to look for grants, newsletters, or professional development. Then there are websites that collect and post financial resources for teachers, like teacher.org and teach.com—two of my favorite sites to browse for opportunities. It may seem daunting but setting aside a dedicated time can make it far less intimidating.

Technology is constantly evolving. Our young students are becoming increasingly comfortable with each technology release. So, it's tempting to think that if we can just get enough devices in front of them, that would suffice—they're digital natives after all. As any teacher knows, however, it's only just the beginning. The goal shouldn't be simply providing technology, it's understanding all the potential barriers, formulating plans to overcome them, reaching out to our colleagues for assistance, and involving parents. It's only when students understand everything that's involved just to give them access to their favorite educational games that they'll appreciate what it takes to be a digital citizen.

Chris Kruger is a teacher at Plato Academy in Des Plaines, Illinois. He has taught pre-kindergarten through middle school and loves all of them. Chris founded the Chicago Progressive Educator's Forum to give teachers a place to connect and talk about education from a progressive perspective. He can be reached at mrkrugerchi@gmail.com.

Lesson 1: Digital Citizenship

Grades 9 to 12

INTRODUCTION

According to the Ontario Council of Directors of Education, “Digital Literacy instruction needs to be part of all curriculum - not just technology and computer studies courses. Teachers need materials, training, and mentorship opportunities to embed digital literacy and to leverage technology to assist and enhance learning.” This viewpoint is shared across Canadian school boards. Many are creating their own curriculum and/or frameworks to help educators understand digital citizenship and to create strategies for implementing learning. Why is it so crucial? Studies show it likely that Canadian high school students are spending over 7.5 hours a day on screens, and 20% of high school students spend 5 hours or more daily on social media alone. They have online identities. They are interacting with others, influencing others and being influenced themselves. Whether they’re aware of it or not, Canadian students are digital citizens. Being part of any community, include the digital world, means having both rights and responsibilities.

In these lessons, you'll guide students to consider their role as a citizen in the digital world, asking questions such as, Who are we in the digital world? Who do we want to be? Why does it matter? What impact can we have on our community and the greater world?

KEY CONCEPTS AND ISSUES

Students will discuss what it means to be a digital citizen. They will consider their own online identity and its impact on real life relationships; and the role of social media in general on communities and the greater world. How can they interact with social media in such a way to create empathy and positive change?

DURATION:

3 to 4 classes

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Computers or devices with Internet access
- Materials needed for preparing presentations

EXPECTATIONS/OUTCOMES

The overall expectations listed below serve as an entry point for teachers. Teachers are encouraged to make connections to specific expectations in their region and grade.

Students will:

- Demonstrate friendship/relationship skills
- Demonstrate recognition of their own feelings and emotions
- Cultivate a digital identity in ways that are responsible and empowering
- Show an understanding of the concepts of ethical behavior and online ethics
- Demonstrate understanding of how to be a critical media consumer and creator
- Discuss elements of responsible digital citizenship
- Demonstrate values of (digital) citizenship and exhibit leadership as a digital citizen

- Use digital media to promote ethical and responsible behavior and to be part of a community
- Integrate visual media with other dimensions of the curriculum
- Include hands-on activities involving the creation of media products
- Create a digital work that effectively promotes positive online behavior
- Communicate their ideas, arguments, and conclusions using various formats and styles, as appropriate for the audience and purpose.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Digital tools are being used in most secondary school class in all provinces and territories of Canada. Many school boards are creating and beginning to implement umbrella policies regarding digital literacy and citizenship, as well as including them in their character and citizenship beliefs and values strands. As a result, as well as making connections to concepts of digital citizenship in formal lessons, teachers of all subjects can find opportunities during ongoing lessons on various topics to guide students to reflect on digital citizenship concepts. The links noted below are examples of where this lesson can be positioned in the curriculum.

Alberta and Northwest Territories

Art, 30, 31

English Language Arts, 9 – 12

Social Studies, 9

British Columbia and Yukon Territories

Information Technology, 9-12

Social Studies 9

Physical and Health Education, 9

Health and Career Education training, 10

English Language Arts, 11-12

Manitoba

Interactive Digital Media, Grades 9-12

Senior Years Information and Communication Technology

English Language Arts, 9-12

Computer Science, 20S, 30S, 40S

Aboriginal Language and Studies, 9-12

New Brunswick

English Language Arts, 10-12
Media Studies, 120
Journalism, 120
Social Studies, 9-12

Newfoundland/Labrador

Health Education, 9
Healthy Living, 1200
Social Studies, 9-12
Communications Technology, 2104
Computer Studies 20
ELA, 1201, 1202, 2201, 2202, 3201, 3202
Literacy, 1204
Writing, 2203

Nova Scotia

Technology Education, 9
Exploring Technology, 10
Information and Communication Technology
Integration, 10-12
Communications Technology, 11 and 12
Social Studies, 10 - 12
Law, 12
Sociology, 12

Nunavut

Art, 11, 12
Language Arts, 9, 10
Social Studies, 9
English Language Arts, 11, 12

Ontario

Healthy Active Living Education, 9
Career Studies, 10
Exploring Family Studies, Grade 9 and 10
Civics and Citizenship, 10
Dynamics of Human Relationships, 11
Politics in Action, 11
Equity and Social Justice: From Theory to
Practice, Grade 12
Geography: Living in a Sustainable World, 12
English, 9-12

PEI

Communication and Information Technology, 9
Social Studies, 9

Family Life, 421
Canadian Studies, 401A
Law, 521A and 531

Saskatchewan

English Language Arts, 9-12
Wellness, 10
Communication Media, 10, 20, 30

Quebec

Secondary English Language Arts, 9-12

BACKGROUND

When thinking about their involvement with, and dependence on, digital technology, students may only want to consider their devices and the online world as tools and themselves as users of these tools. They may have a reluctance to accept that they are participants in an interactive world with responsibilities as such. As a result, an important question is: What does it mean to be a digital citizen, and why should I care about my digital footprint and my online behavior?

According to Agatha Dyszlewski's report, *The Landscape of Digital Citizenship Education in Canada from Grades K-12*, "Digital Citizenship refers to the ways in which individuals engage and participate in the online environment when using digital technology. A participant who possesses the skills to effectively engage with the online society is critical, confident and equipped to make reasonable decisions when faced with a variety of circumstances online." Young people need to develop critical thinking skills and habits of mind in order to make these decisions and ensure safe and responsible behaviors online. We need to help them recognize that the way they self-disclose online, whether they choose to represent themselves authentically or take on new traits or behaviours, can affect their own sense of identity and their online relationships, whether positively or negatively; they need to understand the possible consequences of this and make decisions about this behavior. We need to provide them with practice in recognizing harmful behavior and content online and in reaching decisions on how to respond to it. They also need to spend time reflecting on why their own behaviour online matters to themselves and others, and hopefully make a personal commitment to be

empathetic and to support their own well-being and the well-being of others in their community and beyond.

STEP ONE: TEACHER-LED DISCUSSION: IDEAS

Discuss the meaning of the term digital citizenship with students. Is anyone who uses the Internet or any type of social media a digital citizen? How is being a digital citizen different or the same as being a Canadian citizen? Why does digital citizenship come with responsibilities, and what are they?

Divide students into pairs to discuss these questions generally. Have each team prepare a mock digital citizenship application form. This will be submitted to the teacher.

STEP TWO: DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Remind students that their “digital footprint” is the trail or footprint they leave behind when they share information online. Information posted online is often permanent. Third parties can search for, and access, data such as a person’s Internet Protocol (IP) address, the Internet sites they have visited, and any comments they have made on those sites.

Have students share their thoughts on what can contribute to a digital footprint (content you post on your own accounts, such as photos of yourself or comments about others; links you post or tweet; comments on websites, blogs, etc.). Discuss the difference between an “active” digital footprint (a trail of data left purposefully) and a “passive” digital footprint (a trail of data left unintentionally), and how a digital footprint can be negative or positive, giving examples.

Why should you care about your digital footprint? Why does your online reputation and other people’s perceptions of your beliefs and values matter?

Students may have several responses; explain that one reason to care is the impact of their digital footprint on their career aspirations. Have students form groups and have them create two assignments: an election poster for an imaginary candidate that includes various key promises; and a portfolio of the candidate’s digital footprint that includes content from high school and college years (for example, a Facebook profile and some examples of comments on others’ posts, tweets, some Instagram photos and comments, some photos posted

by others in which the person is tagged). Show how the content could damage the candidate’s chances, for example, by contradicting values and beliefs, and so on.

Explain that another reason is the impact of their digital footprint on their own sense of identity and their online relationships, whether positive or negative. Are they choosing to represent themselves authentically or are they taking on pretend traits or behaviors? What impact might this have in the short-term and long-term? Give students time in class to personally reflect on, and assess, their own online digital identities.

STEP THREE: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF EMPATHY

In an essay for the *Globe and Mail*, Dante Caloia, a grade 12 student at West Carleton High School in Ottawa, wrote, “There are other ways I’ve seen phones change my friends’ behaviour, like making it easier to be aggressive. Any texting fights I’ve gotten caught up in have dragged on, because it’s so easy to just type and send whatever you’re thinking. These fights also take away any form of remorse because you don’t have to look the person in the eye, just at your screen and a thread of texts.”

Ask students to share their opinions on Dante’s remarks. Are you more likely to be mean or hateful online than in real-life situations and, if so, why? Why might others be? Does the distance imposed by digital technology affect your real-life relationships, and if so, how? Why is it sometimes more difficult to recognize online negativity and bullying than it would be in person?

Have students discuss the meaning of empathy. Discuss a time when you have experienced empathy or witnessed empathy. How did it make you feel? How would you feel if someone was horrible to you or your friend on a social media site, making fun of you or making nasty suggestions? Does the distance imposed by digital technology affect your sense of empathy?

Tell students it is important they are a positive influence online. It is their responsibility as a digital citizen. Describe one or two scenarios and help students recognize negativity. Why did you decide this is an example of cyberbullying (racism; harassment; hate speech; and so on)? Why is it sometimes difficult to label online content as cyberbullying? (Content may include text that can’t show tone or body

language; images or drawings of people that don't have any captions and could suggest meaning with facial expressions or posture; language may be abbreviated, unclear, or deliberately false or illogical; emojis or acronyms with unclear or obscure meaning; complete context may not be clear; and so on). Help students come up with different ways they could respond and decide which one might be best. Encourage students to always tell a trusted adult.

For example, they may choose to speak out. The Canadian government's publication, *Digital Citizenship: Guide for Parents*, suggests comments such as, "That's not how we do things here," and "Stuff like that ruins the game for everyone." If students don't feel safe or comfortable speaking out in public, they can communicate directly to whoever is targeted and ask how they can help; record evidence of what's happening so they can help the victim report it later; they can report the behavior to the social network.

Have pairs of students select two examples below and, for each, create a brief two- to three-sentence summary about an online scenario that might involve an example of this difficulty, and brainstorm two or more ways to deal with it in a positive, empathetic way. Students will share one of their scenarios and solutions with the class.

- Racism
- Sexism
- Excluding or ridiculing others
- Cyber-bullying
- Pressure or harassment (sexual or otherwise)
- Sexting
- Breach of privacy (sharing password; sharing information online)
- Risky interactions with strangers
- Hate speech

STEP FOUR: CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Discuss how social media allows individuals to communicate more widely than ever before and how it can have both a negative impact on society (false news, bullying, etc.) and also a positive impact (media campaigns, sharing petitions, pop-up rallies, and so on). How does society benefit from empathy? What is the relationship between empathy and justice? How can

we use social media to have a positive impact on our community?

Students will choose a topic or cause of importance to them that reflects a social justice concern. They will use digital media (text, audio, images, video) to have a positive and empathetic impact on their community or beyond. Once students have created their content, they will present it to the class.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Have students do a guided inventory of their individual digital media use. What digital media do you use, and how often? How big a role does it play in your life? What effects (positive and negative) does it have on your life? What are your favorite and least favorite things about digital media? Are you worried about how much time you spend using digital media, and, if so, why?

- Have students list reasons why an online presence would benefit a social justice group. Would the same elements (cost, reach, publicity, branding, engaging youth, and so on) that benefit a social justice organization also benefit an online organization promoting hate? How could an online campaign address hatred?
- The student debate: Have students form into debating teams. There is a choice of two questions to debate: 1. Be it resolved that teens should not feel responsible for their online behaviour. 2. Be it resolved that teens need to care about, and manage, their digital footprint. One team shall take the Pro side and the other, the Con side. Formal debating rules will be followed: http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/frame_found_sr2/tns/tn-13.pdf. Those class members not on the two teams will act as judges and select the winner of the debate. The teacher shall act as moderator.
- Have students research to find significant examples of digital media (Twitter and Twitter hashtags, YouTube videos,

podcasts, blog posts, etc.) being used to create change, including economic, social, political, cultural, and so on, and explain how and the outcome. Examples could be #BlackLivesMatter, #BringBackOurGirls, the Arab Spring, mobilizing relief efforts in Haiti, fundraising, doctor virtual visits, civil participation and engagement, and so on.

- **Literary Assessment:** Each student will write a critical review of a novel (or graphic novel) of their choice that includes the theme of the influence or misuse of social media. Some possibilities are two middle-grade novels by Stacy McAnulty: *The World Ends in April* and *The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl*; YA novels *The Future of Us* by Jay Asher and Carolyn Mackler, *#16 Things I Thought Were True* by Janet Gurtler; *Fugly* by Claire Waller; *The Hive* by Barry Lyga and Morgan Baden; and hi-lo books such as *Disconnect* by Lois Peterson.

The review will run up to two pages and will look at elements such as plot, character, and theme. What role does empathy play in the story? Analyze the characters as digital citizens. Could you identify and empathize with them? How would you have reacted if you were in the same position? Explain whether your thought the social media misuse was portrayed realistically. The reviews will be handed in/submitted to the teacher for assessment.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Student Evaluation Questions Specific to the Lesson Plan

Before (Pre-Implementation)

- Do students have a general understanding of what it means to be a responsible digital citizen?
- Do students have a clear understanding of the significance of a digital footprint?
- Do students have any prior understanding of the importance of having a positive influence online?
- Are students familiar with the role of digital

media in affecting society in positive ways?

After (Post-Implementation)

- Students will describe the responsibilities of digital citizens and the significance of a digital footprint.
- Students will reflect an understanding of the importance of having a positive influence online.
- Students will reflect on, and create an example of, using digital media to affect society in a positive way.

TEACHER EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Before (Pre-implementation)

- Do you have a general understanding of what it means to be a responsible digital citizen?
- Do you have a clear understanding of the significance of a digital footprint?
- Do you have any prior understanding of the importance of having a positive influence online?
- Are you familiar with why digital media affects society in positive ways?

After (Post-Implementation)

- Describe what it means to be a responsible digital citizen.
- Describe the significance of a digital footprint.
- Have a clear understanding of the importance of having a positive influence online.
- Understand how and why digital media affects society in positive ways.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Discussion	Student participated poorly in the teacher-directed discussions	Student participated adequately in teacher-directed discussions	Student participated actively in the teacher-directed discussions	Student participated exemplarily in the teacher-directed discussions
Content	Student demonstrated limited understanding of concepts, facts, and terms	Student demonstrated some understanding of concepts, facts, and terms	Student demonstrated considerable understanding of concepts, facts, and terms	Student demonstrated thorough understanding of concepts, facts, and terms
Written Work	Student's written report was confusing, poorly structured, and had many grammatical errors	Student's written report was generally clear and had some structure, but numerous grammatical errors	Student's written report was clear and well-structured, but had a few errors	Student's written report was very clear, well-organized, and had virtually no errors
Presentation	Student's presentation was confusing, lacked emphasis and energy, and resulted in no discussion	Student's presentation was generally clear, but lacked energy and emphasis, and resulted in little discussion	Student's presentation was clear, vibrantly presented, and resulted in a good discussion	Student's presentation was very clear, enthusiastically presented, and resulted in engaging discussion
Group Work	Students made a minimal contribution to the group; very little cooperation	Students made some contribution to the group, but cooperation was superficial	Students made a considerable contribution to the group, with a good level of cooperation	Students made a significant contribution to the group, with an excellent level of cooperation

SPECIFIC RUBRIC

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Step One	Student demonstrated a limited understanding of what it means to be a digital citizen	Student demonstrated a basic understanding of what it means to be a digital citizen	Student demonstrated a good understanding of what it means to be a digital citizen	Student demonstrated a thorough understanding of what it means to be a digital citizen
Step Two	Student contributed limitedly to group’s creation of election poster and mock digital footprint	Student contributed adequately to group’s creation of election poster and mock digital footprint	Student contributed actively to group’s creation of election poster and mock digital footprint	Student contributed extemporarily to group’s creation of election poster and mock digital footprint
Step Three	Student’s presentation provided little information about how to deal with an online difficulty in an empathetic way	Student’s presentation provided some information about how to deal with an online difficulty in an empathetic way	Student’s presentation provided good information about how to deal with an online difficulty in an empathetic way	Student’s presentation provided thorough information about how to deal with an online difficulty in an empathetic way
Step Four	Student demonstrated a limited ability to create digital content to affect society in a positive way	Student demonstrated an adequate ability to create digital content to affect society in a positive way	Student demonstrated a good ability to create digital content to affect society in a positive way	Student demonstrated a strong ability to create digital content to affect society in a positive way

Children who get 8-10 hours of sleep exhibit greater empathy and happiness. [Sleep-deprived kids tend toward depression and anxiety.](#)

Circadian Rhythms: Screens and Kids

Author Chris Leavens

Technology provides us with some wonderful learning opportunities in our classrooms. Personally, I cannot imagine teaching without it. Over the last several years, my students and I have experienced many learning adventures along the digital frontier.

As a class, we've Skyped with a group of students in South Korea on our laptops. We've recorded and edited movie trailers for *Romeo and Juliet* with our smartphones. We've collaboratively published multimedia presentations on the symbolism that exists in *The Outsiders* using cloud-based technology. We've also been the benefactors of a virtual tour of the Sistine Chapel. There seems to be no limit to teaching with technology.

In spite of the many benefits of technology, however, we do not talk enough about how it harms the sleep patterns of our students.

I see sleepy kids every day in my 8th grade English class. Their heads are drooping. Their eyes are barely open. Their energy is low. They ask, "Can we please

turn the lights off?" or "Can we sleep?" Many of them are clearly exhausted.

Lack of sleep is devastating to a child's ability to learn. They come to school unfocused and struggle just to pay attention. The National Sleep Foundation determined that a good night's sleep not only enhances one's attention span, but it improves their ability to learn and remember information. In addition to the academic benefits of sleeping, children who get 8-10 hours of sleep exhibit greater empathy and happiness. Sleep-deprived kids tend toward depression and anxiety.

As a teacher, I check in with my kids daily by asking, "What time did you go to bed last night?" I hear a variety of responses. Typically, bedtimes fall between 9-10pm. However, after children are in bed, many of them continue to use their smartphones and tablets. Sometimes they're watching videos. Sometimes they're playing games. Frequently, they're messaging their friends.

What is wrong with smartphones and tablets kids often wonder? They do a lot of good. They have about a



million times more power than the computer that took the Apollo 11 shuttle to the moon! Smartphones and tablets emit blue LEDs (light-emitting diodes) affecting sleep.

In 2014, three Japanese scientists won the Nobel Prize in physics for their work on blue LEDs. Their work has led to providing more energy-efficient sources of light and power. Although blue LEDs have incredible benefits in the fields of energy and technology, they also have harmful side effects on our sleeping habits.

Blue LEDs may significantly suppress melatonin. Melatonin is the hormone that induces sleep. A study by Harvard looked at the impact of blue LED light on sleep. The study determined that blue LED light can delay sleep as much as three hours depending on the amount of exposure.

In addition to screens, teenagers already have a difficult time sleeping. Their circadian rhythm is often delayed. This pattern makes them more active and energized than most adults. The shift in rhythm also makes it more difficult for teens to fall asleep at a reasonable time.

Between the sleep-suppressing impact of smartphones and tablets and the delayed shift in the circadian rhythm, it is no surprise that our teenage students are struggling to stay awake. Additionally, some students live in home environments that make it difficult for them to get a good night's sleep.

As teachers and school leaders, what are we to do? We can't assign a bedtime for homework. We also can't require our students to turn in their phones before bed as if they're on a field trip. We're not their parents. We're their teachers.

What we can do is control our own classrooms and educate our school community. I have a policy in my classroom called, *If You Need to Sleep, Then Sleep*. (I know, not very original.) I have extra pillows and blankets that the students can use to take a 15-20-minute nap at their desks.

I have high standards in my classroom for performance and participation. When students come to class, they must be ready to learn. Once I see that students understand and respect this, then I introduce the nap policy. I would much rather have students

quickly nap, recharge, and be prepared to learn than struggle through my class and the remainder of the day.

The National Sleep Foundation says that a 20-minute nap is the ideal length of time. It improves alertness, memory, creativity, and decreases levels of stress. Teachers can allow, and should even encourage, naps to be taken to help students academic and mental health. The work that is missed can be made up later.

Some teachers disagree with this idea. They argue that this is lowering the bar, that the students will nap all the time and miss valuable classroom activities. In my experience, I have not found this to be true. Rather, this raises the bar. Students know that when they come into my class they need to be attentive, participative, and active. But if they need to take a nap, then it shows that they're not ready. So often, they strive to be at their best and not need to nap.

Sleep deprivation is not an issue that a single teacher with extra pillows and blankets can handle on their own. Parents and administrators have a large role to play. Teachers can address the issue in parent-teacher conferences and on Back-to-School Night. Many parents that I meet are unaware of the amount of sleep their child is getting and the adverse impact that smartphones and tablets have on their sleep patterns.

Who can blame them? Smartphones did not even exist when I was growing up in the 90's and 2000's. Technology advances so quickly that it is difficult for anyone to keep up. Collaboration and conversation

need to exist between parents and school communities on best practices with technology bearing in mind the best interests of the child.

As a part of those conversations, school district leaders and administrators need to open discussions about the possibility of delaying middle and high school start times. If we want to maximize the learning experience of our students, schools could move their times back. I know that this might be akin to moving mountains, however, if we truly prioritize our children's education and well-being, school boards should begin to have those conversations.

We need, however, to balance the role of technology in our lives as it continues to change. Back in 1997, Netscape was the premier Internet browser. In 2002, Blockbuster was the preferred movie rental choice. In 2005, Myspace was acquiring 2 million new members per month. If you do not know or remember them, therein lies my point. Technology will always be an integral part of our society. It will change, be reinvented, and evolve, but we cannot forget the power that will always come from a good night's sleep.

Chris Leavens has taught middle school English for nine years. Currently, he is teaching 8th grade English in Englewood, Colorado. He has also taught in Baltimore, MD and Santiago, Chile.



80 DEGREES NORTH

**BRING AN HISTORIC TALE
OF DISCOVERY AND ADVENTURE
INTO YOUR CLASSROOM**



80 DEGREES NORTH is a FREE bilingual teaching resource that explores topics of scientific inquiry, examination of Inuit culture, and Canadian sovereignty — all part of the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913-1918.

SIGN UP TODAY!

80DEGREESNORTH.COM

When I asked 10 students what they do in their free time, *five mentioned different social media sites.*

Not Being Good Enough: The Price of Digital Citizenship

Author Joneshia Cranford-Shepherd

Do you know any children who are active Internet browsers or users of social media? If so, congratulations are in order. They have earned their digital citizenship. Digital citizenship is the use of computers and electronic devices to engage in responsible use of the Internet. When used responsibly, the Internet serves as a great foundation in which an abundance of knowledge can be obtained. When there is a misuse of one's digital citizenship, it can affect children mentally and physically. Physical effects are ones that take a toll on the body itself, often things you can see with the naked eye. Mental effects are ones that take over the mind and thoughts, things that are not visible to others. Throughout this article, the Internet or web will be referred to as the "digital world." Mentally and physically, the digital world can have long lasting negative effects on children.

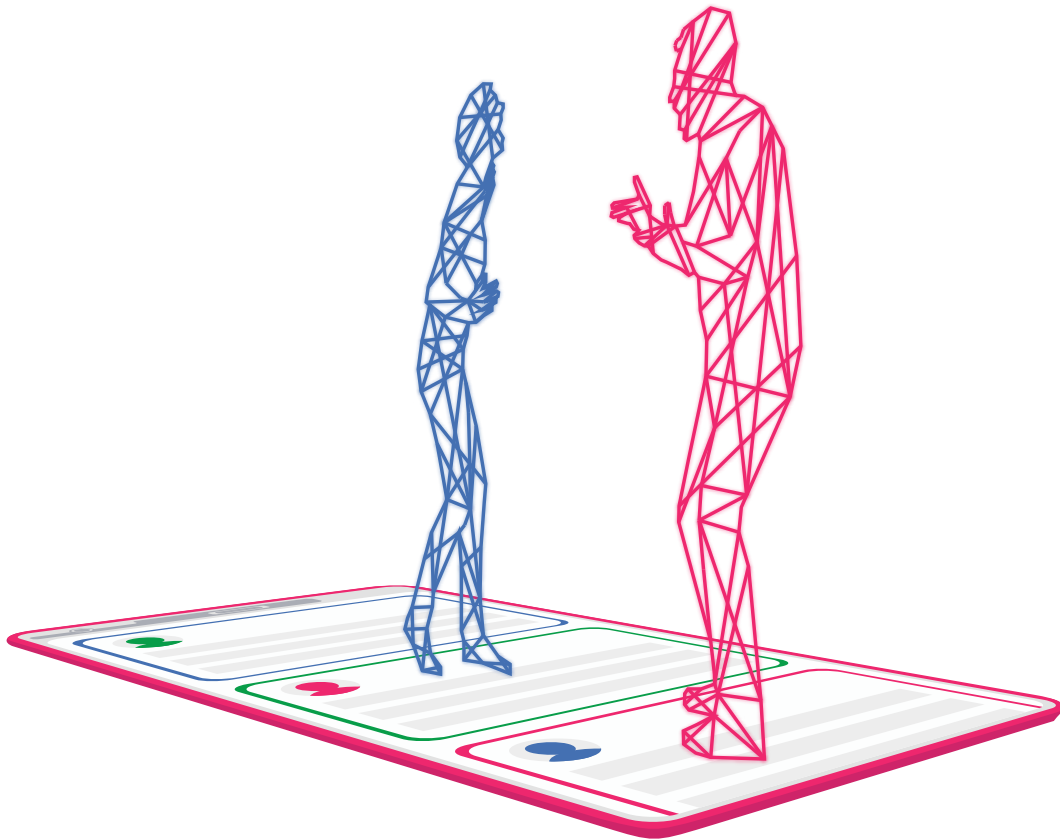
Good, wholesome mental health is very important for all ages, especially children who are just discovering who they are and where they fit in society. Pre-teen and teenagers are very impressionable and things that happen during this period tend to spill over

into adulthood. The digital world provides a fine line between serving as a confidence enhancer or self-esteem suppressor.

The digital world is also where many students connect with one another. As you know, children can be very judgmental and harsh. Digital platforms such as Snapchat and Facebook allow you to be who you want to be and display what makes one look good. It is on these apps where students receive the most criticism and flak from their peers.

Creating posts that are degrading and mean towards others is very common in the adolescent digital world. When a teen is faced with these particular actions, they do one of two things; ignore it despite being hurt or face it head on and get caught up in disputes in or out of the digital world.

As a mother and teacher, I see these posts being handled both ways depending on the mental stability of the adolescent. My now 19-year-old daughter recently opened up to me about how rough the digital world was on her growing up. I witnessed my happy-go-lucky daughter become withdrawn and sad at age 13. At the



time, I attributed this mainly to hormonal changes, but deep down inside I knew there was something else brewing within her that needed my full attention.

During this time, she was using her digital citizenship to hold a membership on a particular site in which members were allowed to anonymously ask questions of others without exposing their identity. During her time on this site, she was asked questions such as, “why are you so fat?” or “why are you so ugly?” and “did you know that nobody likes you?”

Thinking about her having to live through this rough time in her life makes me cringe as a parent. After being questioned for so long, she began to start believing these negative things about herself. Her self-esteem became low and she slipped into depression. In my opinion, the people hiding within the digital world asking her these questions were people who knew her and the insecurities she felt deep down inside.

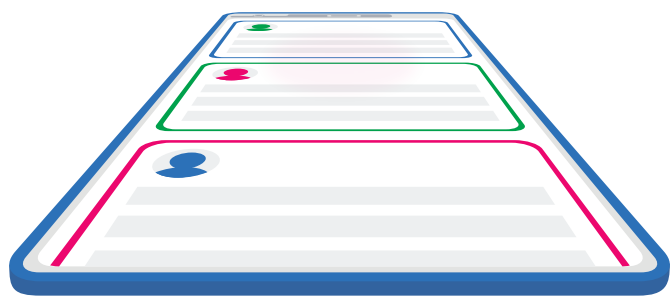
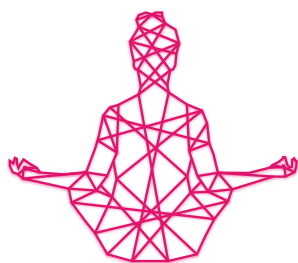
When disputes occur in the digital world, it sparks a need for children to defend themselves while showing they aren’t afraid to stand up to bullies. I have witnessed web quarrels lasting long periods of time in which the

child’s main focus is the digital world and nothing outside of that receives attention, not even school. The digital world often tells these young girls what to wear, how they should look, and basically, who they should be.

As a teacher, I often sit my students down and talk to them about choosing to stand out versus trying to look like the people they see in the digital world. They become so focused on trying to be who they aren’t rather than embracing who they are. In doing so, this leads to feelings of not being good enough. I always speak to my female students with respect to loving themselves and not allowing others to tell them how they should look. When a student, particularly females, embraces who they are and loves themselves, they are less focused on the digital world and some of the negative aspects it holds.

As confusing as it may seem, digital citizenship can also be detrimental physically. Think about it: how much physical activity does surfing the web or posting on social media require? Not a lot.

As a Content Master teacher, I am responsible for



preparing paperwork for accommodation meetings. This involves the use of my laptop and printer. I have noticed that my eating habits have worsened due to constant snacking. That has caused weight gain due to a decrease in physical activity. It's easier to grab a snack, most likely an unhealthy one, as I work.

My students often express that their idea of fun involves surfing social media sites while eating snacks. When I asked 10 students what they do in their free time, five mentioned different social media sites. In my classroom, I created learning stations in which students traveled around my room to perform different academic challenges. These challenges stimulated their mind and activated their body physically.

Numerous times throughout my teaching career, my students had many different electronic devices taken away from them as a form of punishment. In building close relationships with my students, I learned that some parents used these electronic devices to control their child's behavior or keep them occupied. In talking to these students, I realized I have been guilty of doing the same.

The digital world can be very time consuming, causing students to lose sleep energy which results in lower class participation. In my classroom, participation is very important so I do whatever it takes to keep students engaged. When a student falls asleep or

appears lethargic, I ask if something is going on. More often than not, I hear, "I was up on Snapchat late." I have seen students with bags under their eyes while being grouchy in the classroom. Decreased physical activity and unhealthy eating while using electronic devices is not uncommon amongst my students. When the physical body is in an uproar, the mind eventually goes along with it and causes a disturbance within the classroom.

Instead of watching these physical and mental changes take place, as educators and parents, we should offer different outlets as a means to keep students engaged. Instead of reading online, try offering a book for the student to read. Reading is fundamental, and studies show that reading at least 20 minutes a day has a positive, significant effect on the brain.

In all honesty, we need to go back to outside play and let kids be kids. Imaginative play sparks a lot of creativity while students form relationships and bonds that can last a lifetime. If there are sports students are interested in, they should participate. Even joining a gym that provides a range of children's activities could counteract the excessive use of technology. They can work out that built-up energy while improving their physical health at the same time.

The web has both negative and positive effects on a person. Younger students are more likely to experience the negative aspects of the web. I am all for the use of technology, even in the classroom, but not to the point that it distracts students from participating in class or at home. Mentally, a student is susceptible to hurt feelings when being criticized for their appearance. Physically, a student spends more time lying around as they search the web while snacking during the process. As an educator, it is my duty to evaluate, inform, and make sound decisions for my students. In doing so, I will continue to find other methods of instruction that tie in technology so that my students' well-being is healthy, safe, and sound physically and mentally.

Joneshia Cranford-Shepherd is currently a Content Mastery Teacher with the Lufkin Independent School District. In 2018, she received her Masters Degree in Elementary Education from Stephen F. Austin State University, and in 2019 she graduated from Lufkin ISD's Leadership Academy.

Digital Pipeline: To Home and Back

Author

Kimberly Nava Eggett, M.Ed

“Are you coming to our class so we can play with robots?!” asked a curious 7-year-old at my elementary school. This conversation would not have taken place 10 years ago, but these days, our students are constantly surrounded by innovative technology. They read text online to learn about the main idea of a topic or tinker with a robot to understand the basics of computer programming. Our students are digital natives that seek instructional technology in their learning environments. For the previous 15 years, I have seen this evolution take place. I have worked as a 4th and 5th grade classroom teacher and for the last seven years, I have been our school’s Digital Lead Teacher. My role is to support students, staff, and families as we consider thoughtful technology integration. We use innovative devices in our learning environments.

Parents and families are finding themselves faced with digital dilemmas at home. The amount of mobile media time has increased substantially in the last six years among 0 to 8-year-olds, with a daily time of 5 minutes in 2011 to 48 minutes in 2017. Within that same age group, kids with their own tablets have increased from less than 1% in 2011 to 42% in 2017. This means that parents and caretakers are faced with helping their children navigate the digital world when they themselves did not have the same experience. So how do we support them? Here are some ways that educators can support our families and caregivers:

1. BE TRANSPARENT ON TECH USE IN THE CLASSROOM AND ASSUME NOTHING

Most districts or schools have an *Acceptable Use Policy* that requires transparency with respect to how students can be expected to use technology in the classroom. Share this policy and/or your guidelines with students, families, and colleagues in order to be clear on how tech is used and how students are expected to interact online. Having clear expectations with regard to how tech is used in the classroom helps proactively guide students and families. Although most students know how to navigate digital tools, do not assume they know how to correctly engage in virtual classroom spaces. Thoughtfully set up your online classroom at the beginning of

the year by explicitly guiding students through your online classroom expectations. Cultivate kindness in your virtual classroom by practicing appropriate commenting and sharing. Creating a safe learning environment, both off and online, helps students build healthy relationships with peers and their technology.

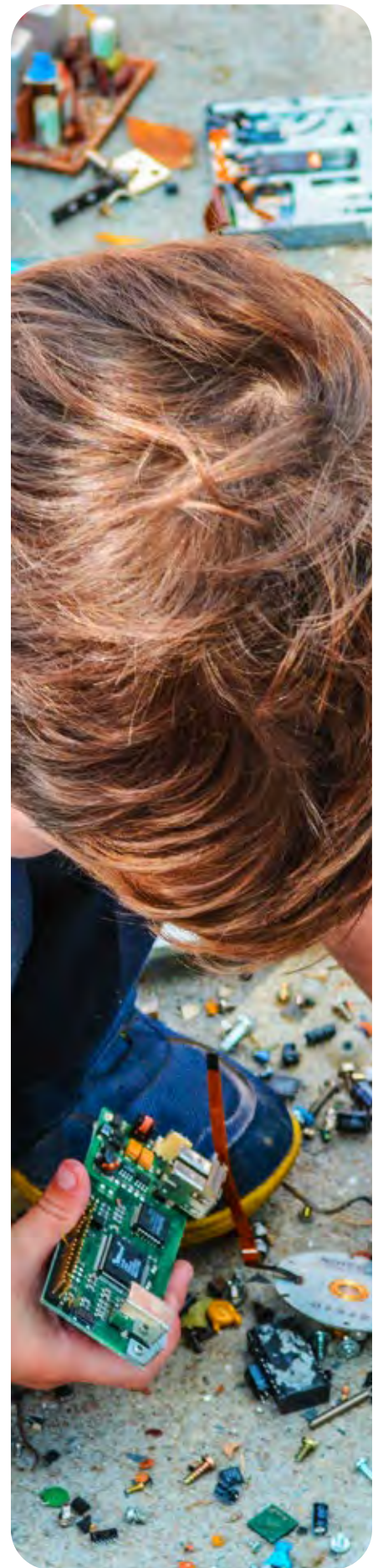
In order to help our families become familiar with how technology is being used in the classroom, share it with them! Whether you use Flipgrid, Seesaw, or Google Classroom, share family login information so that students can demonstrate what they are doing at school. Since many parents may be unfamiliar with these tools, help them understand how instructional technology is being used in a transformative way in order to build skills and apply them in the virtual learning spaces. Some of our families do not have consistent access to the Internet. Showcase these learning environments during your Parent/Teacher Conferences, Open House, or Curriculum Nights to further demystify these tools and to provide equitable access for families that cannot access them from home.

2. UTILIZE FREE RESOURCES OR HOST AN INTERNET SAFETY FAMILY NIGHT!

From cyberbullying tips to setting up a device-free dinner, Common Sense Education has resources to support your classrooms and your families. The Common Sense Education Digital Citizenship curriculum is utilized by almost 50% of all U.S. schools. The Common Sense Education Digital Citizenship curriculum has a vertically aligned structure for many digital citizenship topics with lessons in K-12. These [free resources](#) support teachers as they engage students in conversations around privacy or media literacy. Along with their Digital Citizenship curriculum, Common Sense Education has plenty of [free resources](#) for educators to pull from in order to guide our families through their toughest questions. Another great resource is Google's Be Internet Awesome campaign that also has free resources to share with families in order to support students as they are building "good digital habits". This curriculum provides free lessons for grades 2-6 by focusing on five topics: Smart, Alert, Strong, Kind, and Brave. [Be Internet Awesome](#) also has a free web-based game, Interland, that allows for students to practice tough scenarios based on their five topics.

As a classroom teacher, it is important that students proactively discuss these topics rather than waiting for something to "bubble up" in order for it to be addressed. Although it is great to be able to lean on a resource on digital drama when it arises (cyberbullying or excluding other students on platforms), giving students space to discuss scenarios first may help reduce the number of drama-filled instances and better prepare them for real-life interactions.

Last year, our school hosted an Internet Safety session for parents and caregivers as part of a school-wide event. A small group of parents, caregivers, and their students came to learn more about media balance, checking privacy settings on personal devices and apps, and how to support students when tricky scenarios arise. Students spoke up about their experiences



and asked great questions. As the session facilitator, I reminded people that they are experts too and getting guidance from each other helps us understand that there are different ways of supporting our students at home. Families and caregivers should not feel that they are powerless as they discuss concerns that arise for their families in their use of technology.

3.FIND OUT THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR FAMILIES

These days, educators have plenty of free ways to connect with their families. From Class Dojo to Smore newsletters, our educators have the opportunity to share curriculum-rich links, pictures, and videos as well as important information. But not every parent or caregiver has equitable access to the Internet. Some prefer not to be connected. Take an interest survey on how families would like you to connect with them. Be explicit on how you plan to use these tools and how you will protect their privacy and information. Can they expect a weekly newsletter or a daily Class Dojo message? Perhaps you will just send out an email with a Google Form for volunteer sign-ups around special classroom events every few months. Either way, allow for your families to opt-in and model how digital citizens protect personal data, privacy and digital identity.

Finally, use the power of online tools to create a more language inclusive space. Although most translation tools are not perfect, it is at least a way to communicate with students and families that may not speak the dominant language in your school or class. As a native Spanish speaker, I often encourage folks to use Google Translate to support educators that only speak English. Not only can this tool help translate when there are time sensitive needs, but shows that you acknowledge their home language and want them to be part of the classroom community. Some tools, such as Class Dojo and Seesaw, offer built-in translation features to ensure educators can communicate with all families. Students that are new to your classroom can also benefit from online translation tools. [Microsoft Translator](#) provides real-time captions for instruction in the student's native language through a PowerPoint presentation or by using the app.

There are many ways that educators can model good digital citizenship for their students, families and fellow colleagues. Technology is a part of our classrooms and, as educators, we must explore how to make digital citizenship a part of our classroom conversations and management.

Kimberly Nava Eggett is a Digital Lead Teacher in Asheville, NC and currently a doctorate student at Appalachian State University seeking an Educational Leadership in Instructional Technology degree.



When discussing the three types of websites, we describe the characteristics of each, how they make us feel, and the steps we should take when we encounter each type of one.

Techexpertise: The Digital Starter Kit

Author Erin Petley-Kerr

Technology is inevitable in our world and especially in our schools, students come into our classrooms each year with the innate ability to use technology. This can be a blessing, but as teachers, we've been given the role to navigate what technology now looks like in our classrooms.

To assist both students and teachers, at my school we have developed a model to support technology use. The system is trifold, focusing on:

1. Digital citizenship lessons
2. A teacher technology team
3. A student techxpert team

We have found that not only have technology issues decreased, but confidence among staff, and technology capacity within our school community has grown immensely.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP LESSONS

Starting in the month of September, each grade level teacher begins a digital citizenship lesson focusing

broadly on Internet safety. We discuss the difference between green, yellow, and red websites. An example of a green website is FamilyJr, where students know exactly what they need to do, are not required to login, and can navigate the website easily. On a yellow website, it will ask questions of the students like their username or password. We teach our students that it is important to ask an adult about this type of website before using it for the first time to ensure it is safe. Our school communication platform, Edsby, is a great example of a yellow website. Finally, a red website is one that could be confusing, too hard to read, or shows something inappropriate.

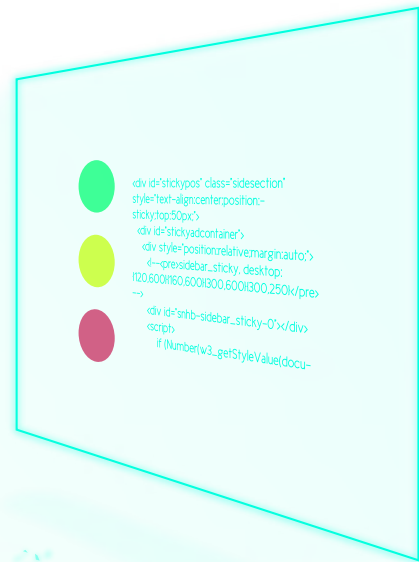
When discussing the three types of websites, we describe the characteristics of each, how they make us feel, and the steps we should take when we encounter each type of one. We also touch on the differences between personal and school technology devices and the expectations that differ when using them. After this, each month teachers focus on a digital citizenship lesson, based on [Common Sense Media](#) resources, but have been modified and catered for our student population. These lessons focus on topics such as



creating a balance between online and offline activities, being safe, respectful, and responsible when online, keeping information private, and giving credit to other's work. To accompany each lesson, there is also a family activity, tips, and resources page that goes home so parents are aware and can continue to discuss and have conversations with their child at home.

TEACHER TECHNOLOGY TEAM

As a committee at our school, the technology team is comprised of one teacher from each grade level. This teacher acts as the grade level representative and is the “go-to” person for that grade level team. They can assist with technology problems, offer tips, answer questions, and provide their team with the monthly digital citizenship lesson. Having a go-to person, specifically one that the grade level knows and feels comfortable approaching, has allowed our tech team to be very efficient and helpful. These teachers act as mentors and positively support each member of their team through their own technology journey.



At the beginning of each year, our team gathers and creates a goal for the year, giving us a specific task on which to focus. We meet roughly once a month to discuss our goal(s), and design lessons, tips, or gather current research to support our staff. We also create a pre and post survey with questions around our goal, so we have evidence as to our own areas of weaknesses and topics where our staff may need support. This allows us to design a specific professional development plan focusing on our staff members needs and concerns.

STUDENT TECHPERT TEAM

The techxpert student team at our school consists of our oldest students—grade four students. After a preliminary “try-out” where we observe the skills these students have on both iPads and Chromebooks, we select around ten students to be a member of Techxperts. With this group, we meet once a week to work on a variety of things.

First, the Techxperts can be requested by another classroom teacher to assist in her classroom while they are completing a tech-related project. For example,

let's say we have a grade one teacher who is using Book Creator. They have seen examples online of how a project may look but don't have the skills to complete it. They may simply request our Techxperts to come in and support them and their students. In addition, this team may just be used as an extra body when every student seems to have a question!

Second, Techxperts may also be requested by a teacher to teach them a tech related skill. For instance, using the same example as above, a teacher might be tutored over lunch hour by a team member picking up experience and instruction on a program like Book Creator. The teacher could then work with their own class using their newly acquired skills.

Next, members of Techxperts are responsible for creating informative videos to be used at assemblies or shown in classrooms, such as news reports using a green screen app. Finally, our members are given opportunities for themselves to learn new technology skills. We work individually with them to build their own capacity, and focus on a variety of topics such as Micro:bits, coding, and a range of other maker space skills.

Working with our Techxperts throughout the years, we observed numerous benefits that this club has for our students. Not only do they learn new technology skills, but they gain confidence in their abilities to troubleshoot, to help others, and to believe in themselves. Through being a leader and working with both students and teachers, they have developed patience, empathy for others, perseverance when confronted with a difficult task, and communication skills to voice and explain how to do something. It has challenged them to take on a leadership role in our school, has offered them an opportunity to build relationships, and has developed the skills that are necessary to lead a group. Our Techxperts love coming each week to our club because they know that they fulfill an important role in our school community and their excitement around learning has blossomed. Each year they tell us how good it makes them feel to be able to help others.

Buddy classrooms is another area that allows our students to shine. Typically, we have our grade four classrooms partnered with a grade two classroom, and our grade three classrooms partnered with a grade one classroom. During allotted times, the students buddy

up, and work together to complete a task or teach a skill. Buddy classrooms have been beneficial as they allow one-on-one support to students. Not only are the older students helping the younger ones, but the younger ones can also teach the older students a new skill. For instance, we had a grade two class that had just completed a postcard activity using a green screen app. They were then able to teach the grade four students the basics of the app, and together the partners put their creative skills to work. The grade twos felt special being able to teach the oldest kids in our school a new skill, and it helped increase their confidence. We've observed relationships and comfortability between students grow, as they spend the year working together.

In assisting teachers and students with technology, it's important to remember that everyone is on their own journey: Everyone is at a different place and has a different end point. When we create a supportive and encouraging environment, we can see that capacity increase, confidence grows, and relationships remain strong.

Erin Petley-Kerr is in her 11th year as an educator and is currently a Grade 4 teacher at Foundations for the Future Charter Academy in Calgary, Alberta. She holds a Masters of Education from the University of Calgary, and is passionate about tech integration in the classroom.





EXPLORE THE COMPLETE STORY OF THE CANADIAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT THROUGH A HISTORIC GRAPHIC NOVEL

A true story of how Canadian women achieved the vote in a dynamic and interactive format that delivers a compelling learning experience. The evocative illustrations recreate the span of time representing how long women struggled to attain the vote and the many challenges they faced.

SIGN UP TODAY AT CANADIANSUFFRAGE.COM

Canada

TEACHMEDIA



EXPLORE THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CANADA'S FIRST FRANCOPHONE PRIME MINISTER

Sir Wilfrid's story is brought to life through compelling images that illustrate his life from childhood to his twilight years. Follow one of the most revered politicians in Canadian history and the highs and lows of his celebrated career as well as his common humanity.

Key People and Themes

Sir Wilfrid's family life; Francophone politics in Quebec and on the national stage; The tragedy of Louis Riel; the Manitoba Schools Crisis; Outbreak of the First World War; and Mandatory conscription.

Teacher Resources

Comprehensive suite of curriculum-connected resources and lesson plans smoothing the way for classroom implementation. Recommended for teachers and students in Grades 9-12. Available in English and French.



SIGN UP TODAY AT SIRWILFRIDLAURIER.COM

Canada

TEACHMEDIA



SHATTERED GROUND: SOLDIERS MARCHING OFF TO WAR

An educational, interactive project commemorating the First World War centenary. Shattered Ground is designed to engage students in an exploration of the main educational themes related to the First World War, the impact of War on a way of life, and the legacy of sacrifice that is part and parcel of engaging in conflict.

SIGN UP TODAY, IT'S FREE!
theshatteredground.com

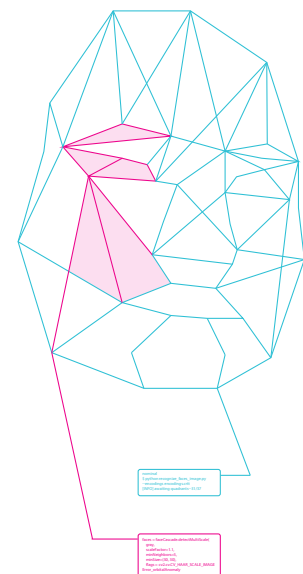
TEACHMEDIA

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.

Nous reconnaissons l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.

Ad Index

Crabtree Publishing Company	2-3
Dystopia 2153	6
80 Degrees North	35
Suffrage: Canadian Women and the Vote	45
Sir Wilfrid Laurier	46
Shattered Ground	47
TEACH Magazine: Subscribe	48



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

GET A 1-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION FOR ONLY \$8.99*



*PRICE IN USD

VISIT SHOP.TEACHMAG.COM