

LESSON

1

INTRODUCTION TO
DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

OBJECTIVE: This lesson serves as an overview to the concept of awareness and responsibility in the digital realm. Digital Citizenship highlights both the individual's accountability for their actions and behaviors, as well as their responsibility toward others while engaging in the use of digital technology.

NOTES

- ✓ **It is critical to convey that Digital Citizenship is not exclusively about inappropriate content on the Internet.**
- ✓ Understand the need for the importance of consistent language and vocabulary. One of the overarching goals is to promote an ongoing dialogue with a shared language.
- ✓ Having the language necessary to do so is a prerequisite.
- ✓ Vocabulary should be **written up** on the board prior to the lesson.
- ✓ All sentences in *italics* indicate interactive questions, which should facilitate discussion.
- ✓ All sentences in red indicate an action on the part of the teacher.

VOCABULARY

Digital	involving or relating to the use of computer technology; this includes devices such as digital cameras, gaming devices, cellphones, home and portable computers, tablets and more
Citizenship	the state of being a part of a larger community with common/shared values, interests and responsibilities
Appropriate	suitable or proper for the situation, community norms and values
Responsible	having an obligation to act in a defined manner as part of ones role expectations

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INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to be a citizen of our country?

What other things can you be a citizen or a member of?

What does it mean to be a citizen or member of those groups?

As a citizen of a country there are certain communal expectations we have from our government. They include safety, security and laws to govern our lives to maximize our existential experience. There are also responsibilities we have towards our country – to abide by those laws to protect the interests, rights and liberties of those around us.

On January 20, 1961 at the inauguration of John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of our country, at the eastern portico of the United States Capitol in Washington, DC he so eloquently said: “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country...” Kennedy’s speech served as a call to action for individuals to do what is appropriate and responsible and in the interest of the greater good; In other words, be a good citizen.

This is the theme of Digital Citizenship. It is defining our roles and responsibilities within a greater digital community and how our actions and behaviors must be in our own best interest as well as that of the greater good. The challenge of thoughtless, inappropriate and malicious online behavior mandates us to learn how to make responsible decisions when we must engage in the digital world.

DAY-TO-DAY IMPACT

What do you think are some responsibilities you have towards others when utilizing digital technology?

What are some responsibilities you have towards yourself?

Chart the answers on large chart paper – you will come back to this discussion.

Define the concept of Digital Citizenship as the norms of appropriate and responsible behavior with regard to the use of technology.



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Make a large T (pro / con) chart on the board or on chart paper. Label the two columns PRO and CON.

What are some of the benefits that technology can offer?

Try to categorize their answer by the following larger categories:

PRO	CON
Connectivity	Behavior
Accessibility	Psychological functioning
Productivity	Social engagement
Information	Day-to-Day experiences
<i>78% of teens report at least one good outcome as a result of personal interactions on social networking sites.</i>	<i>41% of teens report at least one negative outcome as a result of personal interactions on social networking sites.</i>

"It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness"

A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens, 1859.

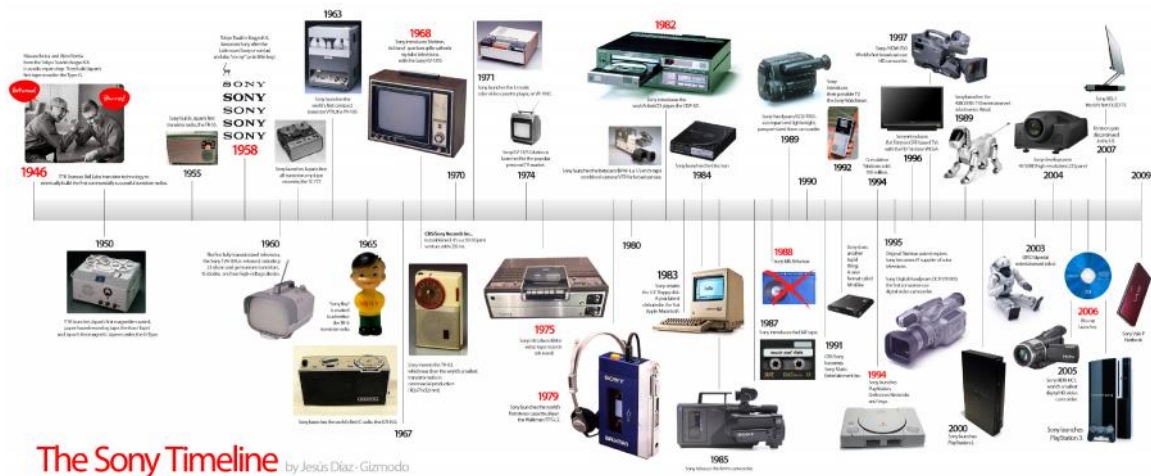
What meaning can you glean from this quote as it relates to technology today?

Discuss

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HISTORY

The advancements, affordability and proliferation of technology have greatly broadened our ability to stay connected with friends and family.



And its only getting *faster...*

- 38 YEARS for the **radio** to reach 50 million users
- 13 YEARS for **television** to reach 50 million users
- 4 YEARS for the **Internet** to reach 50 million users

Whether it is through cell phones, texting applications, email, social networking web sites, video conferencing, and more, the degree of connectivity we have with one another is unparalleled. It wasn't too long ago that long distance phone calls were designated for family members and only the closest of friends and generally occurred a pre arranged day and time. And then in the 1970's came call waiting. This technological convenience allowed users to engage on a phone call without the risk of missing another, potentially more important phone call.

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The advent of home computers brought in a new way of communicating through email. Some rules of engagement were established, such as ALL CAPS BEING CONSIDERED YELLING.

Enter 1975, and IBM introduced the first portable computer (see image below.) There were a limited number available for purchase.



With the advent of laptops and cellphones one does not have to be tethered to a singular location to connect, but can literally be anywhere in the world. While this access serves as a wonderful convenience, it also has a price.

We have come a long way from 1975 – 2015.

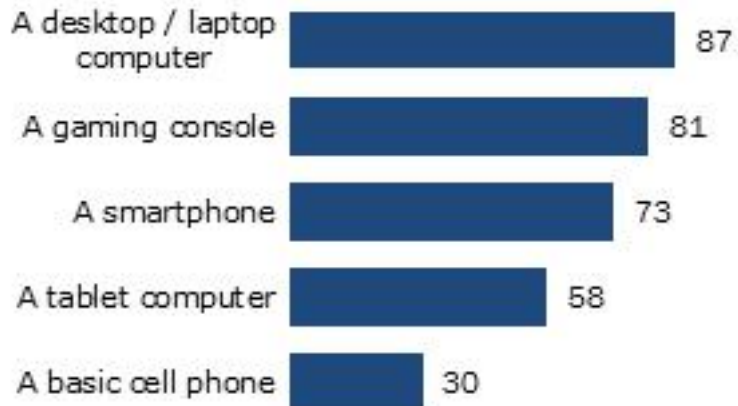
(Optional video clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X84muuaySVQ>)

The first text message was sent on December 3, 1992 from Neil Papworth, a 22-year-old test engineer for Sema Group (now Airwide Solutions), from his personal computer to the Vodafone network to the phone of Richard Jarvis. The message simply read, “Merry Christmas.”

Today, over 20 years later it is nearly impossible to even count or measure the number of texts sent per day. On average according to [Forrester Research](#), and over 2.2 trillion are sent a year. (That averages 6 billion SMS texts a day.) Globally, 8.6 trillion text messages are sent each year, according to [Portio Research](#). In the United States, 75% of teenagers text, sending an average of 60 texts a day. According to [Pew Internet research](#).

Teens' Phone, Computer & Console Access

% of all teens who have or have access to the following:



Source: Pew Research Center's Teens Relationships Survey, Sept. 25-Oct. 9, 2014 and Feb. 10-Mar. 16, 2015 (n=1,060 teens ages 13 to 17).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

- 95% of all teens, ages 12-17 are engaged in online activity.
- Nearly 75% of teens have or have access to a smartphone.
- 91% of teens go online from a mobile device at least occasionally.
- Of the mobile teens 94% go online daily or at least often.
- 71% of teens use more than one social networking site.
- 33% of teens with phones have messaging apps like Kik or What's App.
- Girls more than boys are more likely to engage in social media.
- 47% of teens use video calling.

Pew, 2015

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Although they overlap, Internet safety and digital citizenship are not synonymous terms. While Internet safety identifies ways of steering clear of potentially damaging content on the Internet, digital citizenship seeks to educate on ethical and socially acceptable norms of interactions in the digital realm. Internet safety has traditionally focused on exposure to graphic content, loss of privacy and vulnerability to individuals with fraudulent intent . Digital Citizenship addresses how we interact with our technology , how it impacts us, and influences our social experience.

Much in the same way we don't hand over car keys to teenagers without teaching the rules of the road through required safety classes and practice runs, we should not be handing over the keys to technology without doing the same.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Adir, C.. & Barker, T. *The big disconnect: Protecting childhood and family relationships in the digital age.*

A Majority of American Teens Report Access to a Computer, Game Console, Smartphone and a Tablet; by, Amanda Lenhart. April 2015

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/09/a-majority-of-american-teens-report-access-to-a-computer-game-console-smartphone-and-a-tablet/>

Digital citizenship: Developing an ethical and responsible online culture; by, Cathy Oxley. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED518512.pdf>