

Your Actions Contribute to Your Digital Footprint

Time needed: 15 - 20 minutes

Recommended Level: All grades

Categories: Awareness, Cyberbullying

Common Core Standard(s): Speaking & Listening

Purpose: Students will make the connection between their digital behaviors today and their future digital identity (footprint).

DISCUSSION:

A digital footprint is the collective evidence of what we post online and the internet sites we enter. We can control the size of our 'footprint' by limiting the amount of information we provide to the world wide web. This is a decision we make each time we log onto the internet. What we share, who we share it with, and the extent of our connection with others will influence the size of our digital footprint. What makes up your digital footprint? Definitions include:

1. What can be found when you Google yourself.
2. Data collected by different web sites you visit.
3. Data recorded by email, social networking, cell phone and video game companies.
4. Anywhere where you use a username and password.

ACTIVITY:

Ask students how many of the following activities they have done:

- a. Sent an email
- b. Chatted on Google Talk
- c. Filled out a form online
- d. Used iTunes or Amazon
- e. Created a profile on a social media site
- f. Commented on someone's picture
- g. Opened an account on the internet (web 2.0 tools)

People learn about you through these activities. Each of these

things, including visiting websites with cookies and using a search engine like Google, leaves a trail. It's important to know that your communication with other people and what people say about you can also add to your digital footprint. Your digital footprint is made up of things posted intentionally and unintentionally.

Have students trace their footprint or shoe on a blank piece of paper.

Encourage students to fill the footprint with the kind of information they would want to appear in their digital footprint in the future. This can include the online accounts they are currently using. Another way of phrasing this would be: What would you want to appear in a Google search of your name in 10 years?

Hold a gallery walk of the completed footsteps.

FOLLOW-UP:

Common Sense Media has put together this video <http://vimeo.com/6709512> on digital footprints.

Are the comments you leave on sites like YouTube part of your digital footprint? Consider this Good Morning America news story on Rebecca Black after she received threats and hurtful comments on her "It's Friday" video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaYvhblalAM&feature=related>



Helping Everyone with Anti-Bullying,
Respect & Tolerance