

# Communication Curriculum

## Lesson 4

### Social Media & Your Online Presence

#### Lesson Overview:

**Students will continue the Communication Curriculum by completing the following steps: 1) screening the Social Media & Your Online Presence video and considering pros and cons of social media and a digital footprint 2) conducting a digital footprint audit**

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## Communication

### Lesson 4 Social Media & Your Online Footprint

#### Lesson Overview

During this lesson, you will guide students to consider the benefits and drawbacks of having a digital footprint. They should also consider how they can curate their own digital footprint to their advantage. After a class discussion, students will conduct an online footprint audit to assess the state of their own footprint.

#### Time Frame:

1½-2 hours, including time for students to complete independent work

#### Core Concepts:

- A digital footprint is all of the online content that includes your name, personal information, and image.
- Your digital footprint can say a lot about you – both positive and negative.
- It is a good idea to audit and curate your digital footprint so that it reflects you in a positive light.

#### Lesson Objectives:

In this lesson students will:

- Consider the importance of their online presence in terms of academic and/or professional goals.
- Audit their own online presence (footprint) with an eye towards professionalism and personal safety.

#### Materials Needed:

- [Lesson 4 Video: Social Media & Your Online Presence](#)
- Online Footprint Audit (worksheet)
- Computer/tablet/smartphone with internet access

#### Step 1: Introduce the Lesson

Explain to students that in this lesson they will explore the role of social media and online communication in their personal and future professional lives.

**Step 2: Activate Prior Knowledge**

(5-10 minutes)

Ask students what they think the term *digital footprint* means. Invite students to jot down a few examples of how they might have a digital footprint, themselves. Circulate as students write and choose a few good examples to write on the board and discuss as a class. If the students appear to be stumped, ask them to think about online websites where their name might be published.

**Step 3: Present the Social Media & Your Online Presence video**

(20 minutes)

Facilitate a discussion after viewing the video. You may wish to solicit questions and comments from the students first. You can use these suggested discussion points to deepen the conversation and student thinking:

- What are some examples of *your* digital footprint? Do you all have the same footprint? Why or why not?
- How can a digital footprint be positive or negative? Why should we care?
- What are some of the pros and cons of social media?
- What are some of the pros and cons of having a digital presence, in general?
- The video suggests that we should each be the *curator* of our online content. What is a curator? Do you think this is a useful way to approach your digital footprint? Why or why not?
- What are some steps you have taken in the past or that you could take to curate your digital footprint?

**Step 4: Conduct a Digital Footprint Audit**

(30-60 minutes)

Explain to students that an audit is a complete and careful examination of a set of records. Today they will each conduct an audit of their own digital footprint.

Distribute the Online Footprint Audit and review the bulleted lists. Offer an opportunity for students to ask questions for clarification.

Ask students to go through the various steps of the audit. Encourage them to really dig into the details of the various places where their name, personal information, and photographs

are found. This step will be most meaningful if completed with internet access and may be completed in class or as homework depending upon computer and internet accessibility. You may wish to encourage students to complete or review the audit with their parents.

Provide written or one-on-one feedback to students.

### **Step 5: Discuss**

(20-30 minutes)

Once the students have completed the audit, come together as a class to discuss their reflections on the experience. Start by opening up the discussion to questions or reflections from the students. You may wish to guide the conversation using the following questions:

- Were there any surprises for you when you conducted the audit? What were they and why did they surprise you?
- Did you find the audit useful? Why or why not?
- What are some steps that you took or plan to take as a result of the audit?
- Was there anything missing from the audit that you think should also be taken into consideration when reviewing a digital footprint?

### **RESOURCES**

Share these resources to help students improve or positively build their online presence:

- [Protecting Your Online Identity and Reputation](#)
- [Online Safety](#)
- [Teen Internet Safety Tips](#)
- [Why Personal Branding Begins at an Early Age \(and What to Do About It\)](#)
- [3 Ways College Applicants Can Improve Their Online Brands](#)
- [3 Ways Savvy Teens Can Showcase Themselves Using Social Media](#)

For an example of how one girl has used her online presence to make a global difference check out Saphira Howell's TED talk - [How an Online Presence Moves Teens Worldwide](#).