



# Digital Citizenship Pledge

## Essential Question

*How do you create a positive online community?*

## Lesson Overview

Students will establish group norms to create a positive online community that promotes responsible and respectful digital behavior within their classroom.

Students collaborate in creating a digital citizenship pledge outlining their collective social norms for exploring in and interacting with the digital world.

## Learning Objectives

*Students will be able to ...*

- establish expectations and norms for the group related to appropriate online behavior.
- participate responsibly and respectfully in an online community.
- collaborate on a classroom motto about digital citizenship.

## Materials and Preparation

- Copy the **We the Digital Citizens Pledge Student Handout**, one per group of two or three students.
- Print out one copy of the **We the Digital Citizens Pledge** as a poster for your classroom wall (which can be printed in black and white or in color, sizes 8.5" x 11" or 11" x 17").

## Family Resources

- Send home the **Digital Life Family Tip Sheet (Elementary School)**.

**Estimated time:** 45 minutes

## Standards Alignment –

### Common Core:

**grade 3:** RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.4, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.4, SL.6, L.3a, L.6

**grade 4:** RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.4, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.4, SL.6, L.3a, L.6

**grade 5:** RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.4, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.1d, SL.4, SL.6, L.3a, L.6

**NETS•S:** 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2d, 3a-d, 4a-c, 5a-d, 6a, 6b, 6d

## Key Vocabulary –

**community:** a group of people with a common background or shared interests

**expectation:** something one looks forward to or assumes will occur

**digital citizen:** a member of a worldwide community linked by the Internet

**pledge:** a promise, an oath, or a commitment

**motto:** a memorable phrase that a group chooses to represent itself; a slogan



## introduction

### Warm-up (5 minutes)

**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary term **community**.

**ASK:**

*What are some communities that you are a part of?*

Sample responses:

- sports teams
- religious groups
- volunteer groups

**DISCUSS** how your class also constitutes a community.

**INVITE** students to explain the Key Vocabulary term **expectation**, then share the definition.

**ASK:**

*What expectations do we have for being a part of our classroom community?*

Sample responses:

- treat each other kindly
- be respectful
- follow the rules

*Why do we want our communities to have these kinds of behavior expectations?*

Encourage students to reflect upon how expectations let us all know how we are supposed to interact, work, and get along with one another. Without such guidelines, people might find it difficult to have that communal spirit.

**DISCUSS** how participants in a community (e.g., your class) ought to agree on what's appropriate and what's expected to create a safe space (a shared set of norms and expectations) related to digital citizenship. In doing so, they will help build and maintain a culture of digital citizenship for your class's online communities.

## teach 1

### Expectations Brainstorm (20 minutes)

**ASK:**

*Are you part of any online communities?  
What kinds are you a part of?*

Sample responses:

- gaming communities
- virtual worlds (e.g., Club Penguin)
- school groups (e.g., Edmodo, a blog)

*How are online communities different than offline communities? How are they similar?*

Sample responses:

- You may not know everyone personally in an online community.
- People meet face to face offline, but people do not have in-person contact online.
- People in both communities usually have similar interests or goals.

*What are some examples of how you can be a good member of one of these communities?*

Sample responses:

- Welcome all members.
- Follow the rules or guidelines of the group/community.
- Encourage others to follow the community's guidelines as well.

**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary term **digital citizen**.

**EXPLAIN** that as members of online communities, your class is going to outline the kinds of expectations you all have for being good digital citizens.

**DIVIDE** the class into small groups of two or three students.

**DISTRIBUTE** copies of **We the Digital Citizens Pledge Student Handout**, one per small group.

**REVIEW** the expectations outlined on the pledge as a whole group.

**INSTRUCT** students to brainstorm for five minutes in their small groups about additional expectations that they feel are important for an online community. Have them fill in the last two speech bubbles on the handout.

## teach 2

### Classroom Collaboration (15 minutes)

**INSTRUCT** students to reassemble to share their ideas. As a whole group, decide on two additional expectations to add to the poster version of your classroom's We the Digital Citizens Pledge.

**DEFINE** the Key Vocabulary word **motto**.

**INSTRUCT** students to break into their small groups again to spend five minutes creating a motto that encapsulates the class's community pledge. You may want to share examples of popular mottos/slogans, such as Nike's "Just do it™," Subway's "Eat fresh™," and Apple's "Think different™."

**GUIDE** students to reassemble and share their ideas. As a group, decide on a motto for your class community. Add this motto on the poster of the classroom's We the Digital Citizens Pledge.

**INVITE** each student to sign the We the Digital Citizens Pledge poster to indicate his/her commitment. (Younger students can trace their hands and cut out the shape to adorn the edges of the pledge.)

## closing

### Wrap-up (5 minutes)

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives. You may want to ask students to reflect in writing on one of the questions, using a journal or an online blog/wiki.

#### ASK:

*What is a pledge?*

A pledge promises a commitment by the person agreeing to it. It helps build an agreed-upon sense of community.

*What are you agreeing to in signing the We the Digital Citizens Pledge?*

In signing the pledge, each student is agreeing to the stated terms and is committing to being an upstanding community member, aka a digital citizen.

*Which part of the digital citizenship pledge is most meaningful to you?*

Answers will vary.



# WE, THE DIGITAL CITIZENS, PLEDGE TO...

SIGN HERE:

COMMUNICATE  
RESPONSIBLY  
AND KINDLY WITH  
ONE ANOTHER.

PROTECT OUR OWN AND OTHERS'  
PRIVATE INFORMATION ONLINE.

STAND UP TO  
CYBERBULLYING.

RESPECT EACH OTHER'S IDEAS AND OPINIONS.

GIVE PROPER CREDIT  
WHEN WE USE  
OTHERS' WORK.

SIGN HERE:

# Digital Citizenship Pledge

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1. When you sign a pledge, you are \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) signing a letter to a friend
- b) making a promise to do something
- c) explaining why something is true

2. Why do many teachers go over classroom expectations every year?

- a) They want to build a classroom community that has common expectations.
- b) They want to have students debate the classroom rules.
- c) They want to tell students what to do.

3. Which of the following statements probably is NOT on a digital citizenship pledge?

- a) We pledge to stand up to cyberbullying.
- b) We pledge to finish all of our homework every night.
- c) We pledge to keep private information private.

# Digital Citizenship Pledge

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1. When you sign a pledge, you are \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) signing a letter to a friend
- b) making a promise to do something**
- c) explaining why something is true

*Answer feedback*

The correct answer is **b**. A pledge is a type of promise.

2. Why do many teachers go over classroom expectations every year?

- a) They want to build a classroom community that has common expectations.**
- b) They want to have students debate the classroom rules.
- c) They want to tell students what to do.

*Answer feedback*

The correct answer is **a**. Groups of all sorts (classrooms, sports teams, organizations) often have agreed-upon expectations to help build communal spirit.

3. Which of the following statements probably is NOT on a digital citizenship pledge?

- a) We pledge to stand up to cyberbullying.
- b) We pledge to finish all of our homework every night.**
- c) We pledge to keep private information private.

*Answer feedback*

The correct answer is **b**. One expectation that digital citizens may agree upon is keeping their own and others' private information private. They may also pledge to be upstanders, not bystanders.