



Follow the Digital Trail

Essential Question

What information is appropriate in a digital footprint?

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Lesson Overview

Students learn that the information they put online leaves a digital footprint or “trail.” This trail can be big or small, helpful or hurtful, depending on how they manage it.

Students follow the digital information trails of two fictional animals. They make observations about the size and content of each trail, and connect these observations by thinking critically about what kinds of information they want to leave behind.

Standards Alignment –

Common Core:

grade K: RL.1, RL.3, RL.4, RL.10, RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4, W.2, W.5, W.7, W.8, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.2, SL.3, SL.4, SL.6, L.6

grade 1: RL.1, RL.3, RL.4, RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.5, W.7, W.8, L.6

grade 2: RL.1, RL.3, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.2, W.5, W.7, W.8, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.3, SL.6, L.6

NETS•S: 1a, 1d, 2d, 3d, 4a-c

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- learn that the information they put online leaves a digital footprint or “trail.”
- explore what information is appropriate to be put online.
- judge the nature of different types of digital footprints by following the information trails of two fictional animals.

Key Vocabulary –

digital footprint: the information about you on the Internet

trail: a path or track

permanent: there forever

Materials and Preparation

- Preview the video “Follow the Digital Trail,” and prepare to show it to students.
- Cut apart the Digital Trail Squares (found at the end of the lesson plan), keeping the elephant and mouse squares separate. Be prepared to lay out each animal’s “tracks” in different locations in the classroom after the lesson introduction.
- Copy the **Animal Tracks Student Handout**, one for each group of four.

Family Resources

- Send home the **Privacy and Digital Footprints Family Tip Sheet (Elementary School)**.



introduction

Warm-up (5 minutes)

EXPLAIN students that they are going to watch a video about footprints (but maybe not the kind of footprints they are used to).

 **SHOW** students “**Follow the Digital Trail.**”

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

ASK:

What information does Head suggest NOT sharing online?

Private information:

- full name
- address
- phone number
- age
- birthday
- school name

What information does Head think is okay to share online?

Personal information:

- hobbies
- favorite things

REMIND students that they need to be careful about their digital footprints. It is okay to share *personal* information online, but they should never share *private* information online.

teach 1

Follow the Digital Trail (15 minutes)

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **trail**.

PLACE the Digital Trail Squares on the ground, face down, in two different trails, keeping Mizzle the Mouse’s and Electra the Elephant’s trails separate from each another.

SHARE the stories of Mizzle and Electra. These animals decided it would be fun to put some information about themselves online. They went onto www.wildkingdom.com and posted information. The only problem is that they forgot to ask their mamas if it was okay first.

EXPLAIN to students that they are from the Things Big and Small Detective Agency. An evil human has hired them to find out as much as possible about Mizzle the Mouse and Electra the Elephant. The more the detectives learn, the better for their plan to take over the animal kingdom.

DIVIDE students into groups of four. Tell them that each group should have a detective that will keep detailed notes.

DISTRIBUTE the **Animal Tracks Student Handout** to each group.

INVITE students to go on a hunt for information. Let them know that the information that Mizzle and Electra post can be seen by anyone, including the detectives. Each group should follow the digital trail of both animals, starting with the mouse and then the elephant. Stagger the groups so they follow the trails at slightly different times. Students should fill out their handout as they go.

teach 2

Digital Footprints (20 minutes)

INVITE each group to report to the rest of the class what they learned about each of the animals, using the **Animal Tracks Student Handout**.

	Mizzle the Mouse	Electra the Elephant
1. Whose full name do you know?		x
2. Whose house could you find?		x
3. Whose birth date do you know?		x
4. Whose username and password do you know?		x
5. Who let out a secret on the Internet?		x
6. Which animal can you describe better from his or her photo?		x

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **permanent**.

ASK:

Who can the detectives find out more about, and why?

Electra, because we now know where Electra lives, what she looks like, and private and personal information about her life. Point out to students that having a bigger digital footprint means the detectives can learn more about them too.

What kind of information is okay to share on the Internet? What kind of information is NOT okay to share on the Internet?

Appropriate: personal information like interests, hobbies, and favorite things

Inappropriate: private information like full name, address, phone number, age, birthday, school, name, and hurtful information about others

Mizzle says some funny things about himself on the Internet. What are they?

He says he likes Swiss cheese, his photo is of cheese, and he has a pet flea.

Is there anything that Electra posted on the Internet that could become a problem for her? If so, what and why?

Private and personal information (e.g., address, full name) allows others to learn more about her. This could be unsafe. Saying that she fights with her brother could hurt her brother's feelings because it is public.)

CREATE a chart with students that summarizes which information is okay to share online and what is not okay.

Okay to Share	NOT Okay to Share
Interests	Address
Hobbies	Full name
First name	Information that would hurt others

DISCUSS how Mizzle and Electra both had very interesting information online, but Mizzle used better judgment about what was most appropriate to post. Mizzle had a smaller digital footprint. Electra put some information online that might make her unsafe or might upset her brother.

REMIND students that the Internet is a public space where people they do not know will likely see their information. And this information is very hard to remove. It is basically permanent.

EMPHASIZE that it's important for students to ask their parents or caregivers for permission before sharing information about themselves online.

closing

Wrap-up (5 minutes)

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives.

ASK:

What is a digital footprint, and what did Mizzle's and Electra's footprints look like?

A digital footprint is the information about you on the Internet. Mizzle's footprint is pretty small and does not reveal private or personal information. Electra's is large and contains information that could make her unsafe or upset others.

What kind of information is okay to share on the Internet? What kind of information is NOT okay to share on the Internet?

Appropriate: interests, hobbies, first name.
Inappropriate: full name, address, hurtful information about others.

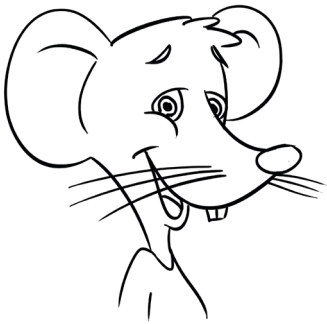
Can you put interesting and funny information online and still be appropriate?

Absolutely. Just look at the information that Mizzle posted.

Mizzle the Mouse

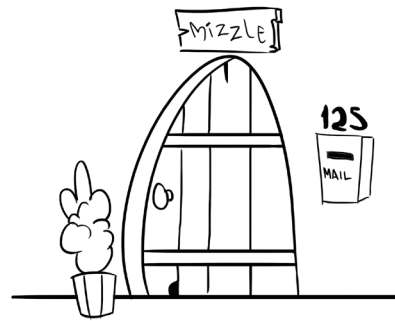
Name:

Mizzle



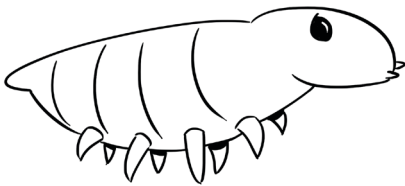
Where you live:

Mouse hole



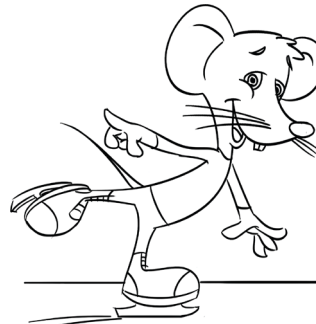
Pet's name:

Frank the Flea



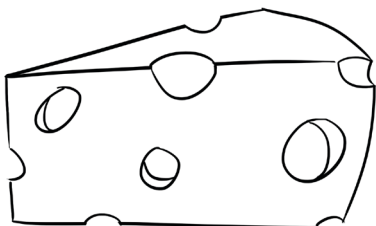
Favorite hobby:

Ice skating

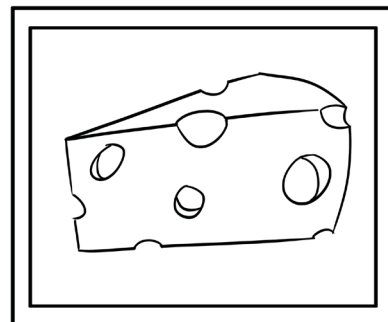


Favorite food:

Cheese



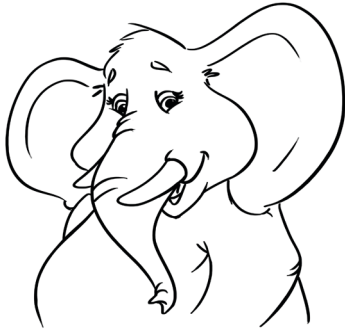
My favorite photo:



Electra the Elephant

Name:

My full name is:
Electra Ella Elephant



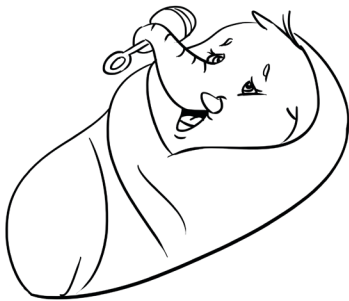
Where you live:

123 Water Hole Lane,
Peanuts, Ohio



Birth date:

February 21, 2010



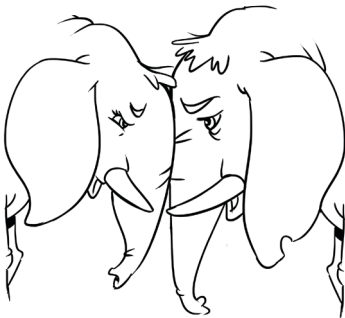
User name: gray_toes

Password: bamboo

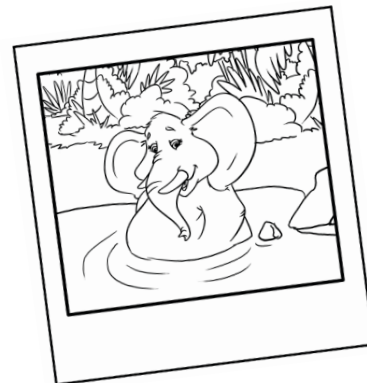


Secret:

My brother and I
fight all the time



My favorite photo:



Follow The Digital Trail

Directions

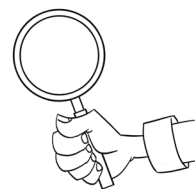
Follow the trails of Mizzle the Mouse and Electra the Elephant. Fill in the chart below. Then answer the questions.

	Mizzle the Mouse	Electra the Elephant
1. Whose full name do you know?		
2. Whose house could you find?		
3. Whose birth date do you know?		
4. Whose username and password do you know?		
5. Who let out a secret on the Internet?		
6. Which animal can you describe better from his or her photo?		

Question

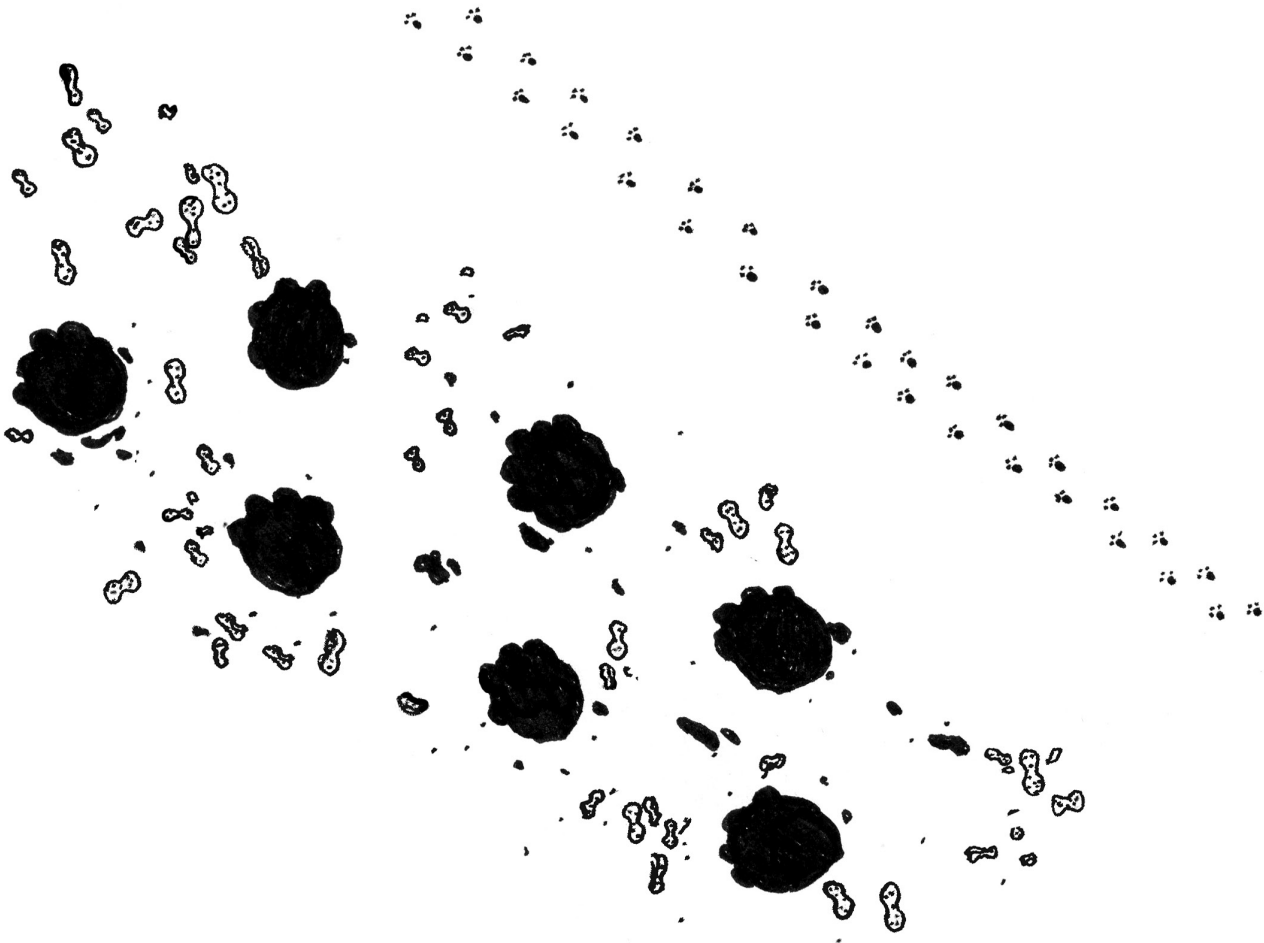
1. Who can the detectives find out more about, and why?

2. Which animal has a bigger digital footprint?



3. Mizzle says some funny things about himself on the Internet. What are they?

4. Is there anything that Electra posted on the Internet that could become a problem for her? If so, what and why?



Follow the Digital Trail

1. What is a digital footprint?

- a) A track that animals leave behind
- b) Shoes that you buy on the Internet
- c) The information about you on the Internet

2. What kind of information is safe to share online?

- a) Your birth date
- b) Your first name or computer username
- c) Your address

3. Which animal below has the digital footprint that leaves him or her most unsafe?

HINT: Think about which animal shares the most private information online.

- a) Fran the Fish
- b) Betty the Bird
- c) Tony the Tiger

	A) Fran the Fish	B) Betty the Bird	C) Tony the Tiger
Hobbies	Swimming	flying	going to the 3rd Street gym
Address	the sea	a nest	523 Green Street
Other	pet's name is Frank	I love seeds!	My real name is Thomas

Follow the Digital Trail

1. What is a digital footprint?

- a) A track that animals leave behind
- b) Shoes that you buy on the Internet
- c) The information about you on the Internet**

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **c**. Your digital footprint is the information about you online, such as a news story with your name in it or something that you write online.



2. What kind of information is safe to share online?

- a) Your birth date
- b) Your first name or computer username**
- c) Your address

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **b**. It is okay to share your first name or your username online. But sharing your address or birth date could make your information unsafe because other people might use your information to pretend to be you!

3. Which animal below has the digital footprint that leaves him or her most unsafe?

HINT: Think about which animal shares the most private information online.

	A) Fran the Fish	B) Betty the Bird	C) Tony the Tiger
Hobbies	Swimming	flying	going to the 3rd Street gym
Address	the sea	a nest	523 Green Street
Other	pet's name is Frank	I love seeds!	My real name is Thomas

- a) Fran the Fish
- b) Betty the Bird
- c) Tony the Tiger**

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **c**. Tony the Tiger put private information online, like his address, which is not safe. Fran and Betty shared information, but they did not share anything private about themselves.