GRADE	TIME	TOPICS
7	**45 mins.**	• Digital Footprint & Identity • Digital Citizenship

The Power of Digital Footprints

How might our digital footprints shape our future?

Our digital footprints can impact our future. What others find about us online shapes how they see us or feel about us. Help your students learn about their digital footprint and the steps they can take to shape what others find and see about them online.

Students will be able to:

- Define the term "digital footprint" and explain how it can affect their online privacy.
- Analyze how different parts of their digital footprint can lead others to draw conclusions -- both positive and negative -- about who they are.
- Use the Take a Stand thinking routine to examine a dilemma about digital footprints.

Key Standards Supported

COMMON CORE

L.7.6, RI.7.4, RI.7.10, SL.7.1, SL.7.1a, SL.7.1b, SL.7.1c, SL.7.1d, SL.7.2, SL.7.6, W.7.2, W.7.4, W.7.9b, W.7.10

CASEL

1a, 1e, 2a, 2c, 3a, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5f

AASL

I.A.1, I.A.2, I.B.1, I.B.3, I.C.1, I.C.4, I.D.1, I.D.2, I.D.3, I.D.4, II.A.2, II.A.3, II.B.1, II.B.2, II.B.3, II.C.1, II.C.2, II.D.1, II.D.2, II.D.3, III.A.1, III.A.2, III.B.1, III.B.2, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.1, III.D.2, V.A.1, V.A.2, V.A.3, V.C.1, V.D.1, VI.A.1, VI.A.2, VI.D.1, VI.D.2, VI.D.3

ISTE

1d, 2a, 3b, 3d, 4b, 4d, 7b, 7c, 7d

What You'll Need

Some resources below are available in Spanish

IN CLASS

- Lesson Slides
- Video: What's in Your Digital Footprint?
- Truth Be Told
  Handout
  Teacher Version
- Lesson Quiz

FOR FAMILIES

- Family Activity
- Family Tips
- Family Engagement Resources

Lesson Plan

Warm Up: **Every Time Online**   10 mins.

1. **Project Slide 4** and tell students they're going to watch a short video about being on the internet. Ask students to pay special attention to the images they see. Show the video **What's in Your Digital Footprint?** Allow two minutes for students to discuss the images with a partner. Images include:

   - a lighthouse
   - a copier
   - a whisper in the ear
   - a stadium and a jumbotron
   - a permanent marker

2. **Ask**: *According to the video, what do these images have to do with the term "digital footprint"?*

   Invite students to respond. Confirm that a **digital footprint** is *all the information online about a person either posted by that person or others, intentionally or unintentionally*. (**Slide 5**) Explain that, like the images show, a digital footprint can reveal a lot about someone (lighthouse, whisper in ear), it can be shared widely (copier and stadium/jumbotron), and it's permanent (permanent marker). These images remind us that a digital footprint is **persistent**, which means it *lasts a long time.*

3. **Ask**: *Using only one word, how does it make you feel knowing that everything you do online is stored and can be searched for, shared, or even broadcast?*

   Do a whip-around, where each student shares their answer when you point to them. Answers will vary but may include *worried*, *confused*, *curious*, or *scared*.

4. **Explain** that what you do online is different from what you do in person because the audience who sees it is invisible.

   Define **invisible audience** *as unknown or unanticipated people who can see information about you posted online.* (**Slide 6**)

   Say: *For example, imagine a friend from preschool you haven't talked to in years follows you on Instagram and is part of your audience. What if he shows your posts to his mom? Or takes a screenshot to send to his cousin? Or, what if you don't realize that your Instagram posts are getting saved and archived, and they pop up years later once you've forgotten about them? These are all examples of invisible audiences that you probably weren't thinking about when you made a post.*

   Ask: *Who might be part of the invisible audience that would search for information about you or posted by you online?*

   Call on students to respond. Explain that it includes both people they know personally and people they don't. It might include:

   - old friends
   - colleges or schools they apply to
   - possible employers
   - scholarship committees
   - leaders of groups or organizations you want to join

5. **Pair up** students. Ask: How might people who don't know you see your posts, or posts about you, differently from those who do? Take turns sharing your ideas with your partner. Responses may include:

   - They might make incorrect judgments about you based on incomplete information.
   - They might misinterpret something you post because they don't have the whole context.

Analyze: **Search for a Host**   10 mins.

1. **Say**: *Let's look at how a digital footprint might be used to draw conclusions about people and their reputations and abilities.*

    Arrange students into groups of four or five.

    Distribute a copy of the **Truth Be Told Student Handout**. (Note: This is a lengthy handout, so you could also print just a couple of copies per group. Students will be analyzing pieces of "evidence" in the handout. You can also print only pages 6–7 for students, which is where they write their responses.)

2. **Ask** a student to read aloud the instructions of Part 1. In groups, have students look through the evidence for Iliana and Drake. Then have them discuss the question in the handout: *Does anything you see make you think twice about either candidate?*

    Invite groups to share out their responses.

Take a Stand: **Truth Be Told**   20 mins.

1. **Explain** that in the next activity, the class will be using the steps of Take a Stand to consider whether the digital footprint of one of the candidates should affect if they are allowed to keep the job.

    Take a Stand is a thinking routine for exploring perspectives on dilemmas about community and civic life. **Learn more** about teaching with digital dilemmas and thinking routines.

    Read the directions for Part 2. Then, display the new piece of evidence (**Slide 7**).

2. **Give** students one to two minutes to read through the new evidence, or invite two students to take turns reading out loud as the different characters.

    Ask: *After seeing this evidence, do you think that Iliana should be fired? Why or why not?*

3. **Show** the steps of Take a Stand (**Slide 8**) and facilitate the class discussion. Have students follow along and take notes on their handout.

    Note: Use the **Teacher Version** of the handout for guidance and suggestions for an enriching discussion. (This will take the majority of time in this step!)

4. **Say**: *The aim of this activity was not to lead you to a "right" answer. Rather, the goal was to slow our reactions down, take time to listen to different perspectives, and be reflective about our stances on this dilemma about a digital footprint.*

   Explain that listening to others' perspectives can also help us discover shared beliefs or values, even when we disagree on how to resolve specific issues (if possible, give an example that surfaced during the discussion -- e.g., two students who had different stances but were both thinking about people's rights).

   Understanding how and why we don't see eye to eye can support greater mutual understanding and more productive dialogue about how to resolve issues in our society and world.

5. If time permits, invite students to share one insight from the discussion. Sample responses:

   - It helped me understand other people's points of view even if I didn't agree with them.
   - It allows us to get different perspectives on situations from our peers, and to better understand what to do and how to deal with the situations.

6. **Optional**: If time permits, have students discuss one or more of the questions in Part 3 of the handout.

Wrap Up: **Your Digital Footprint**   5 mins.

1. **Say**: *Your digital footprint is somewhat in your control and also somewhat out of your control. You can make decisions about what you post about yourself and what you send to others. However, your footprint, what you post, and what others see about you can have a big impact on your life. So it's important for you to think carefully as you share online and add to your digital footprint.*

2. **Project Slide 9** and invite students to suggest ways they might be able to monitor and shape their digital footprint. List their suggestions on the board. If not generated in the discussion, provide the following ideas to the list:

   - Think before you post, because many things you do online will add to your digital footprint.
   - Remember to review your privacy settings.
   - Perform a search on yourself every so often to see what your digital footprint looks like.

5. **Have** students complete the **Lesson Quiz**. Send home the **Family Activity** and **Family Tips**.

Additional Resources:

1. **Extend the lesson:** Reinforce the learning objectives from this lesson by having your students watch our **Digital Connections video series**. The videos address key digital citizenship topics like:

   - Practicing media balance
   - Being kind online
   - Staying safe when using tech
   - Identifying misinformation online

   There are six videos, and each includes reflection questions and a quiz. The series can be completed as a self-guided activity, as homework, or even as part of a future digital citizenship lesson.