

Competency: Online Safety

Protecting your privacy

Core Concepts

Cookies: Computers store small text files placed in there by the sites you visit that collect information about your computer system and the webpages you view.

Geo-Tracking: Location services can be convenient for automatically adding location information (geotags) to photos. Some people also use location services to post their locations to social networking sites, such as Facebook. Be aware, however, that others can use your location information, too.

Anonymous: Someone who can't be identified based on the information at hand.

Third-party: A person or company other than you and the owner of the website you visit.

Privacy options: Choices a website might give you about what it does with your information.

Lesson:

Ultimate Goal: Know how security settings are used and why, and how to disable them should you wish to do so.

Learning Intentions:

- Students will be able to identify ways in which personal information is accessible online.
- Students will be able to navigate to, and change, settings on their social media profiles.

Success Criteria:

- I can identify how information is shared online.
- I can explain the risks of not protecting my privacy.
- I can manage my privacy settings to protect my privacy.

- Resources:
 - Computer lab/mobile laptop cart/tablets, with internet access.
 - LCD projector.
- Tell your class the following story:
 - *Our principal has hired a research company to collect information that will help us make the school better for you. Several observers will watch students and record where each of you goes, how many times you go there, and how long you stay there, including to the water fountain, your locker, the bathroom, the cafeteria, and to visit another student. You will be identified only by a number.*

At the end of the day, the research company will put all the data together and write a report for the principal.

- Ask students to think about what you just told them, and how they feel about it. Have them jot down any questions or concerns they have, or think other students might have. Then have them share their thoughts with the class.
- Guide students to consider the following questions:
 - Who else might see the information?
 - Can people's identification numbers be linked to their name by the principal?
 - Do you think any of the information should remain private?
 - Do you think you will be allowed to review the data collected about you?
 - Are you satisfied with the explanation that the information is needed "to make the school better," or do you want to know more about how the information will be used?
- Explain that the story you told is not true; no one will be collecting information about them in the school.
 - However, this is the kind of information that many websites collect whenever you visit them. Companies can learn all kinds of things about you, based on where you go and what you do when you're online.
- Define the key vocabulary term anonymous. Explain to students that most people think no one knows who they are or what they do when they are online. Believing they are anonymous is why people sometimes do things online that they would not do face to face. However, it's nearly impossible to be completely anonymous online.
- Ask students if they post information about where they are. Show the following video:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abgRCmkm6No#t=25>
 - Discuss the video. Could this happen to you? Are you aware that your photos contain information about your location?
 - Facebook privacy: <https://vimeo.com/105198517>
- Activity
 - Have students access the security settings of one of their social media accounts.
 - Students should evaluate and consider changing their current settings.
 - Place students in groups of three. Each student will explain which security settings they accessed, what features they can control, which settings they changed, and why they made the changes.

Sources:

- <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/educators/lesson/whats-big-deal-about-internet-privacy-6-8>
- <http://www.internetsociety.org/online-identity-overview#overlay-context=>