

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO CREATE A POSITIVE ONE

15+

SUBJECT: Civic Education, Digital Literacy, Citizenship

LESSON TOPIC: Understanding and building a positive Digital Footprint

DURATION: 50 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE/S:

Main objective of the lesson:

Students will understand what a Digital Footprint is, its long-term impact, and how to manage and create a positive online presence.

Competences that students will acquire:

- Understanding the concept of a Digital Footprint and the long term consequences of a negative Digital Footprint.
- Critically evaluating their current digital footprint and the consequences of online behaviour on personal and professional opportunities.
- Understanding online privacy and security settings.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

NEEDED:

- Introduction: Basics of Digital Citizenship in the EU (<https://www.digi-civis.eu/e-learning>)
- Presentation and case studies on digital footprint

METHODS/TECHNIQUES:

- Group discussions
- Case study analysis
- Class presentation and feedback

LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW

PREPARATION:

- Thoroughly go over the Digi-Civis eLearning Course Introduction to discover the basics of digital citizenship in the EU.
- Prepare a presentation explaining digital footprint (including both positive and negative examples). Check our [example](#).
- Prepare case studies showing how digital footprints have affected individuals (positively or negatively).

IMPLEMENTATION:

Introduction (15 minutes)

- Start by asking students to define a “digital footprint” and give examples of their online activities (e.g., social media posts, comments, online shopping).
- Show the presentation on what a digital footprint is and how it can impact personal and professional life in the long term, highlighting both the benefits of a positive digital footprint (e.g., opportunities, reputation-building) and the risks of a negative one (e.g., job rejection, online harassment).

Group Activity: Case Study Analysis (35 minutes)

- Divide students into three groups and give each group a case study of an individual whose digital footprint had a major impact on their life, such as:
 - Example 1: A job applicant whose inappropriate social media posts led to losing a job offer.
 - Example 2: A student who built a positive online portfolio that attracted a college scholarship.
 - Example 3: An influencer loses brand deals due to an old offensive tweet.
- Ask groups to discuss: What went wrong or right in the case study? What could have been done differently?
- Have each group present their case study and their analysis to the class.
- Summarise the main takeaways from the lesson, reminding students that their digital presence is a reflection of themselves and can be a powerful tool if used responsibly.

MORE INFORMATION TO LEARN MORE:

- TeachTarget, [What is a digital footprint?](#)
- LPUB Academic Center, [What is a Digital Footprint?](#)
- LPUB Academic Center, [Think Before Your Share](#)
- Michelle Sadrena Pledger, [Digital footprints](#)
- Nicola Osborne, [What Do Your Digital Footprints Say About You?](#)
- Internet Society, [Four Reasons to Care About Your Digital Footprint](#)
- Common Sense Education, [Teen Voices: Oversharing and Your Digital Footprint](#)

ANNEXES:

- Presentation: https://www.canva.com/design/DAGRMRzohr4/VHBA15heetrN60A0TOWDSg/view?utm_content=DAGRMRzohr4&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor
(created with [Canva](#)).

HOMEWORK:

- Ask students to individually assess their current digital footprint:
 - What personal information or content can be found about you online?
 - Are there any posts, comments, or photos that might reflect poorly on you?
 - Have you taken steps to manage your privacy settings?
 - How will you manage your digital footprint differently moving forward?

ASSESSMENT:

- Monitor students' participation during group activities, assessing students' understanding of the lesson's main takeaways and their ability to critically examine their behavior and apply the strategies discussed in class (e.g., delete harmful content, adjust privacy settings).