

## How To Be a Good Citizen Online

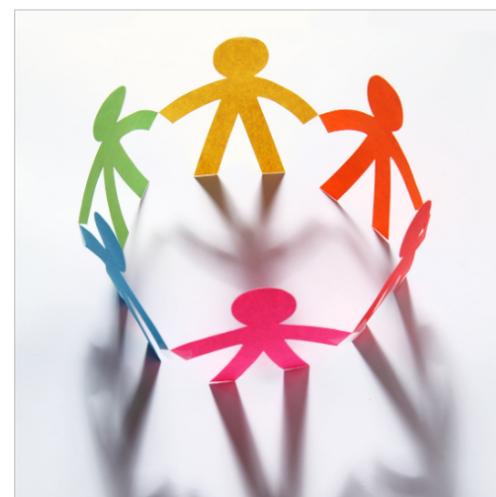
Now that your children understand the guiding principles of “good citizenship,” it’s time for them to think about how they might exhibit these principles in online communities they already belong to, or will belong to in the future. Because many online communities lack guidelines or have rules that are unclear (or buried in their “Terms of Use”), it’s important to help them understand how to be good citizens even in these digital spaces!

Key Standards—Common Core ELA, 5th: W.5.2, W.5.2.a, W.5.2.b, W.5.2.d, W.5.2.e, W.5, W.5.4, SL.5, SL.5.1, SL.5.1.a, SL.5.1.b, SL.5.1.c, L.5, L.5.1, L.5.1.d. 6th: W.6.2, W.6.2.a, W.6.2.b, W.6.2.d, W.6.2.f, W.6, W.6.4, SL.6, SL.6.1, SL.6.1.a, SL.6.1.b, SL.6.1.b, L.6, L.6.1, L.6.1.d, L.6.1.d, L.6.6. ISTE: 2a, 2b, 3d. CASEL: 3a, 3b, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 5a, 5b, 5d, 5e, 5f.

## Learning Objectives

Youth will...

- Reflect on the principles of good citizenship.
- Think about online communities they belong to, or will belong to.
- Consider how to apply the principles of good citizenship to online communities



## Introducing The Lesson

Ask your children if they have ever played soccer. Chances are most of them will have played this game at one time or another, or at least have a general understanding of how the game is played. Have them explain the rules of soccer to you. Ask: *Would you enjoy playing this game if there were no rules? If no one kept score or if the field had no boundary lines? What if players could foul whenever they felt like it, without any consequences?* Explain that without rules or guidelines, games like soccer are no fun to play. Challenge your children to think about how the same might be true online. Without guidelines, rules, or principles, playing or engaging with others online can get out of control and end up being no fun either.

## The Lesson

1. Ask your children to recall some of the **offline** communities they mentioned belonging to in your previous activity. Guide them as they reflect upon how they exhibit the principles of good citizenship within those communities.
2. Next you want your children to think about **online communities**. Explain that these are **any digital spaces where members interact and communicate with one another**. Tell your children that they are about to explore how the same principles that guide us offline, help us when we are online too.

## The Lesson, continued

- Ask your children to make a list of some online community they might belong to now or in the future (i.e., TikTok, AmongUs, YouTube, Google Classroom, Instagram, Snapchat). It doesn't matter if they actually belong to the online communities they list or not.
- Next, on a large piece of paper have your children write **one** of the five principles you discussed during the last activity (honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility, courage) at the top of the page. Below it have them write (or draw the logo of) **any one** of the online communities from their list.
- Challenge them to think of ways they might exhibit their principle within that online community. For example, they might show respect for others on Fortnite by refraining from using foul language; or courage in a group chat by not sending or responding to text messages late at night.
- Then ask your children to turn their papers over to the blank backside. Ask them to think of the **possible consequences of NOT demonstrating that principle** within the online community they chose. For example, a possible consequence of **not** showing compassion on YouTube might be that a recipient of negative comments might feel hurt or depressed, or decide never to post a video again! Additionally, sometimes just seeing negative or offensive comments encourages others to post the same and might start a barrage of unkind words. Likewise, showing compassion or kindness in digital spaces can inspire others to do so too.
- Wrap-up by explaining to your children that participation in any online community is a huge responsibility and that these principles can help guide a community member's actions.



Actual Student Work

## Goal

To help your children take responsibility for their behavior by exhibiting the principles of good citizenship whenever they engage with others, online or off.