



Future Ready Minds:

Digital Citizenship, AI Literacy and Critical Thinking for Tomorrow's World

High School Workbook



Editors:
Janna Nobleza
Suresh Korapati
Andrew Culley
Emelen De Jesus

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Digital Citizenship



How to Use this Section



Learning Objectives

- By the end of these lessons, students will be able to:
- Explain how digital identity, reputation, and data profiles are formed, and evaluate how their online actions contribute to long-term opportunities and impressions.
- Analyze how tone, context, platform norms, and audience expectations shape digital communication, including conflict, relationships, and community dynamics.
- Demonstrate strategies for communicating ethically and responsibly online, including managing disagreements, repairing harm, and contributing to positive digital spaces.
- Describe how persuasive design, dopamine-driven feedback loops, and multitasking affect attention, focus, decision-making, and long-term digital habits.
- Identify characteristics of credible information and explain how algorithms, bias, and emotional triggers influence what they see—and believe—online.
- Practice evaluating digital content using research-based strategies to distinguish reliable, manipulated, or AI-generated information.
- Make informed, ethical decisions about what they create, post, share, amplify, or respond to in digital environments.
- Reflect on how their digital choices, habits, and creative contributions shape their well-being, relationships, future pathways, and long-term digital legacy.

Learning Rationale

High school students are entering a stage where their digital choices carry real-world impact. Research across media literacy, adolescent development, and digital behavior shows that teens increasingly use technology to shape identity, maintain relationships, complete academic work, build creative portfolios, and explore emerging career pathways. Their online presence becomes part of how colleges, employers, and communities interpret who they are—while algorithmic systems influence what they see, how they communicate, and how they understand the world.



Equips students with the skills and insight needed to navigate that complexity with confidence.



Students learn how digital identity is constructed, how communication and conflict unfold online, how attention is shaped by persuasive design, how information is manipulated, and how data flows through the broader digital economy.



Prepares them to make thoughtful choices now while building a digital foundation.



Students become intentional digital participants—capable of evaluating information, communicating responsibly.

Pre-Assessment

For each statement below, rate how well you understand the idea by choosing one of the following:

- I strongly agree with this statement.
- I agree with this statement.
- I disagree with this statement.
- I strongly disagree with this statement.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I understand how my online actions contribute to my long-term digital reputation.				
I know what information about me appears online when someone searches my name.				
I understand how colleges, employers, or programs may view my digital identity.				
I understand how platforms and algorithms create data profiles about me.				
I feel confident navigating disagreements or conflict in online spaces.				
I know how to communicate ethically and respectfully in group chats, comments, or online communities.				
I understand how features like notifications, autoplay, and scrolling are designed to capture attention.				
I can recognize when my attention or focus is being pulled away by digital tools.				
I understand how multitasking affects my learning and productivity.				

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I can tell when information is biased, misleading, or incomplete.				
I understand how algorithms influence the information and posts I see online.				
I know how to check whether an image, video, or article is reliable or manipulated.				
I understand what deepfakes and AI-generated media are and how to identify them.				
I understand how companies collect and use my personal data.				
I understand the ethical concerns around things like tracking, biometrics, and targeted advertising.				
I know how to build or improve my digital presence for future academic or career goals.				
I know how to evaluate whether my online presence reflects my values and goals.				
I feel prepared to make thoughtful digital choices as I move toward adulthood.				



Digital Identity: Reputation, Permanence & Future Pathways

Essential Question

How does my online identity shape the way others see me now—and the opportunities available to me in the future?

Core Idea

Your online identity is part of your long-term reputation, shaping how others see you and what opportunities you may have in the future.

What You Will Learn



At the end of this lesson, I will be able to:

- Explain what digital identity and digital footprints are and how they are formed.
- Analyze how online actions—posts, comments, searches, and interactions—shape long-term impressions and future opportunities.
- Identify what information about you is publicly visible online and how platforms build additional data profiles.
- Reflect on whether your current digital presence aligns with your goals, values, and future pathways.
- Consider steps you can take to shape a more intentional and positive digital identity.



Digital Identity: Reputation, Permanence & Future Pathways

Your digital identity is the story that forms about you based on what you do online—what you post, what you like, what you search, and even what you don't say or do. Whether you think about it or not, every digital action adds another “piece” to how you're seen.

And that identity doesn't exist only on your social media pages—it also lives in how platforms interpret your behavior behind the scenes.

In high school, your digital identity becomes more important than many people realize. Colleges, employers, teams, clubs, and scholarship committees can get a sense of who you are by searching your name or scanning your public profiles. Algorithms also build their own version of your identity, using your clicks, views, and interactions to predict what you like, what you believe, and what you might do next.

Your online identity isn't something to fear—it's something you can shape with intention. You have the ability to tell a story about who you are and what matters to you. Understanding how that story is formed gives you more control over how the world sees you and how you see yourself.

What Shapes Your Digital Identity?

Your identity online is influenced by many different elements, including:

- Your posts: photos, videos, captions, texts, comments, stories, and status updates
- Your interactions: likes, shares, follows, subscriptions, reposts, and group chats
- Your participation in online communities: fandoms, gaming spaces, forums, clubs
- Your engagement patterns: what you click, pause on, comment on, or search for
- Your digital history: old accounts, past usernames, saved data, and deleted posts (which may still exist somewhere)
- How the platform sees you: data profiles built from your behavior, preferences, and habits

Each of these leaves a trace—some public, some private, and some invisible to you.

Digital Footprints: More Than Just Posts

A digital footprint includes everything you intentionally post and everything that's collected about you automatically. Even when you don't post anything, you still leave a trail. Your digital footprint includes:

- Photos or videos you post or are tagged in
- Public comments or replies
- Old accounts or forgotten profiles
- Search histories and browsing patterns
- App activity, location data, and device information
- "Shadow data" collected by platforms, even when you're not actively using them

Some footprints fade or become less visible over time, but many persist in backups, archives, caches, or screenshots.

Reputation and First Impressions

Your digital identity can influence first impressions long before you meet someone in person. For example:

- A college admissions officer might see your public posts.
- An employer might scan your LinkedIn or search your name.
- A coach or advisor might see a video you were tagged in.
- A creator or collaborator might look at your social presence before working with you.

People may also form opinions based on your tone, humor, interests, or the communities you participate in. Even neutral or everyday posts can communicate values or personality.

Algorithmic Identity: What Platforms Think About You

Platforms don't just collect data—they interpret it. They build “profiles” designed to predict:

- What content you'll click
- What ads you might respond to
- What communities you might join
- What products you might like
- What beliefs you might have
- What kind of person you might be (age, interests, personality traits, habits)

These predictions aren't always accurate, but they do influence what you see. This can shape your digital environment in ways you may not realize. Your algorithmic identity is different from your public identity—but both influence your digital experience and the opportunities that come your way.

Shaping Your Digital Story

Your digital identity is not fixed. You can shape it intentionally through the choices you make today and the decisions you make going forward. You can influence your digital identity by:

- Being thoughtful about what you post
- Reviewing old content and choosing what still fits you
- Checking what appears online when you search your name
- Adjusting your privacy settings
- Being intentional about the communities you join
- Sharing content that reflects your goals, interests, and values
- Understanding how your data is being used
- Contributing to digital spaces with kindness, respect, and clarity

Your online story can evolve as you do. You are allowed to grow, change, refine, and improve the identity you present to the world.



What parts of your online presence support the future you want—and what parts might need rethinking or updating?



Activity 1: "Search Yourself" Audit

Search your name online using at least two variations (e.g., full name, name + school or town, Username or gamer tags). Look at the results that appear — images, videos, old accounts, tags, bios, etc. and record the information below. If nothing about you appears, reflect on why and how that affects someone's first impression of you.

What appears that you expected?	
What appears that surprises you?	
What do these results suggest about your digital identity?	
What impressions might someone who doesn't know you form about you?	
What is something you want to adjust or monitor going forward?	



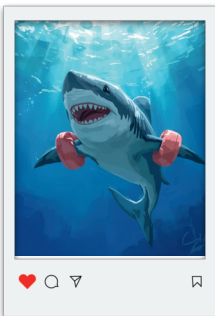
Activity 2: Digital First Impressions Challenge

Read each fictional profile and write a short “first impression” of the person—based only on their posts, comments, likes, or tags.

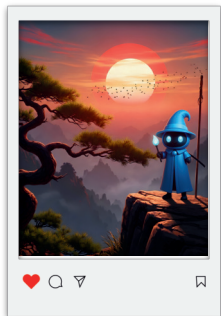


Profile A

- Posts mostly memes
- Is usually sarcastic
- Uses captions like “Don’t take life too seriously”
- Follows celebrity and comedian accounts



Fear me... once I master the doggy paddle.



Great, an alien with a torch. What could possibly go wrong?



She didn't choose the cool life... the cool life chose her.

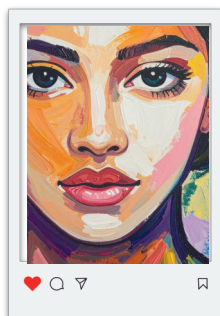


Profile B

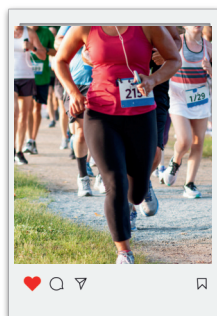
- Posts about volunteering or projects she’s doing
- Shares her artwork on social media
- Comments are positive or encouraging
- Follows famous artists, celebrities, and nonprofit organizations



Come help at the food pantry this Saturday.



From my favorite artist!



Join us as we raise money at the school's 5K!



Profile C

- Posts very personal things
- Can be argumentative in the comments section
- Isn't shy to post about friend drama
- Reposts inspirational quotations
- Follows celebrity and fashion accounts



If you know, you know.



Trying to believe this... even when people make it hard.



Guess I learned who my real friends are.

Which profiles seem responsible? Funny? Overly personal? Confusing?

How might your online presence give similar first impressions?



Activity 3: "What If This Goes Viral?" Scenarios

Read each "viral moment" scenario. For each situation, answer:
What impression might people form?
How could this affect someone's future opportunities?
What would be a better decision before posting?

You post a joke that your friends understand, but taken out of context, it looks rude or offensive.

A friend tags you in a late-night party picture you didn't approve and the post is public.

You argue in the comments on a video and someone screenshots your angriest line.

You post a casual selfie, but someone in the background is doing something embarrassing.

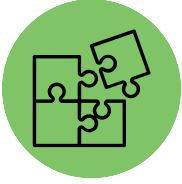
You send a frustrated DM to a friend. They screenshot it and share it in a chat.

You edit a photo heavily for fun, but people assume you were trying to hide something.

An old meme you made years ago is found and shared, even though it no longer represents you.

While trying to share something with a close friend, you accidentally upload it to your public story.

Someone tags you in a post where you barely appear, plus the message doesn't align with your values.



Activity 4: "Future You" Digital Pathway Planner

Imagine your "Future You" in 3–5 years — in college, a job, a team, a creative role, or a program you care about. Write a short description of that future identity: goals, values, interests. Identify 3–5 digital actions that would support that future identity. Choose one action to implement this week.

My future goals include _____

I want my digital identity to show that I am _____

Digital choices that support this future:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

One change I will make this week _____



Activity 5: Clean-Up & Intentional Choices Checklist

Pick one online space to review (IG, TikTok, Discord, YouTube, gaming profile, etc.) and complete the checklist and reflection below.

Changes I made	Why these changes matter
<input type="checkbox"/> Updated Bio	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adjust privacy settings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review tagged photos	
<input type="checkbox"/> Curate highlights/pins	
<input type="checkbox"/> Remove outdated posts	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	

Explore More

Watch & Learn – Watch the Common Sense Media video “Oversharing and Your Digital Footprint” (Link: <https://youtu.be/ottnH427Fr8?si=CP6utiSjVe9yjFKa>)

As you watch, think about: How does this video connect to the idea that your digital identity becomes part of your future opportunities?

Design a Tip for Others – Create a short, helpful tip for younger students about digital identity and digital footprints. Think of it like a message you wish someone had told you earlier.



My tip: _____

Identity Tune-Up Action Step – Identify one small action you can take this week to share your digital identity more intentionally. For example:

- Updating a bio to better reflect who you are now
- Reviewing old posts or tagged photos
- Organizing or curating your highlights or pinned content
- Exploring communities that align with your goals and interests
- Adjusting privacy settings to match your comfort levels
- Sharing something that reflects your creativity, values, or strengths

What action step will you take? _____



2

Digital Communication: Relationships, Conflict & Online Behavior

Essential Question

How do my words, tone, and reactions online shape my relationships, reputation, and the communities I participate in?

Core Idea

Digital communication can strengthen relationships or escalate conflict depending on tone, context, and how messages are interpreted. Understanding how communication works online helps you build healthier connections.

What You Will Learn



At the end of this lesson, I will be able to:

- Explain how tone, timing, and platform context influence the meaning of digital messages.
- Identify common causes of online miscommunication, such as sarcasm, ambiguity, emotional distance, and linguistic drift.
- Analyze how digital conflict unfolds and how actions like commenting, screenshotting, tagging, or resharing can escalate or de-escalate a situation.
- Recognize how your communication contributes to the climate and culture of online communities.
- Demonstrate strategies for communicating with clarity, empathy, and responsibility.
- Reflect on how communication choices affect relationships and reputation.



Digital Communication: Relationships, Conflict & Online Behavior

Digital communication is powerful. A message you send in seconds can travel farther, last longer, and affect more people than you ever intended.

When you communicate online, your words don't just reflect what you say—they reflect who you are. A positive comment can encourage someone. A careless reaction can spark drama. And a thoughtful message can rebuild trust or repair a relationship. Understanding how communication works digitally gives you more control over your relationships and your online identity.

Digital communication removes context. Without tone, facial expressions, or timing, people rely on assumptions to fill in the gaps. Some common reasons miscommunication happens include:

- Tone is unclear – Sarcasm, jokes, or short replies can come across as rude, annoyed, or dismissive when you didn't mean them that way.
- Messages are read at the wrong time – Someone might read your message when they're stressed or upset and interpret it differently than you intended.
- Linguistic drift – Words, emojis, and phrases mean different things to different people or friend groups.
- Filtered attention – People skim or multitask online, so they may miss important context or nuance.
- Lack of immediate feedback – In person, you can correct misunderstandings instantly. Online, they can snowball before you even know they happened.

Online communication isn't "worse" than face-to-face communication—it's just different. Understanding those differences helps you avoid unnecessary conflict.

How Conflict Escalates Online

Conflict online often escalates faster than conflict in person because digital platforms amplify emotion and reduce pause time. Screenshots, shares, tags, and public comments add more layers.

Here are common patterns:

- Quick replies lead to reactive messages
- Screenshots spread messages beyond their intended audience
- Posts encourage "taking sides"
- Group chats intensify emotions
- Assumptions fill in missing context

Recognizing these patterns helps you step back and respond with more control—not just emotion.

How Your Communication Shapes Online Communities

Every digital space you're part of—group chats, fandoms, school forums, Discord servers, gaming communities—has its own culture. Your communication affects that culture.

You help shape communities when you:

- Set a positive tone in conversations
- Show empathy when someone shares something personal
- Avoid piling onto drama or conflict
- Think before resharing or screenshotting
- Encourage respectful conversations
- Help de-escalate misunderstandings

Negative communication spreads quickly, but positive communication spreads too. When you choose to communicate thoughtfully, you strengthen the online spaces you're part of.

Ethical Communication Online

Ethical communication means being aware of how your words affect others—intentionally or unintentionally. It’s not about being perfect, overly formal, or “walking on eggshells.” It’s about making choices with care and empathy.

Ethical communication includes:

- Thinking before posting or commenting, especially when emotions are high
- Respecting privacy—your own and others’
- Not sharing screenshots or private messages without permission
- Avoiding vague posts that invite drama
- Using your influence responsibly
- Knowing when to pause before responding

If You Experience or Witness Cyberbullying

Sometimes online communication goes beyond miscommunication or conflict and becomes harmful. Cyberbullying can include repeated hurtful comments, sharing private messages, posting embarrassing content, excluding someone from group chats, or encouraging others to pile on. It can happen quickly and feel overwhelming — but there are clear ways to protect yourself and others.

If it happens to you:

- Don’t respond right away — pause before reacting.
- Block or mute the person causing harm.
- Save screenshots or evidence if you need to report it.
- Tell a trusted adult (teacher, counselor, parent) who can help you navigate next steps.
- Remember: someone else’s choices online are not your fault.

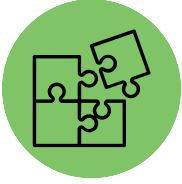
If you see it happening to someone else:

- Don’t join in, react, or spread the message.
- Offer quiet support to the person being targeted (“I’m here if you need anything”).
- Report the post, comment, or account on the platform.
- Your calm, respectful presence can help de-escalate the situation.

Cyberbullying doesn’t define you — or your community. How you choose to respond can make your online spaces safer, kinder, and more supportive for everyone.



What’s one small communication choice you could make that would help create a more positive space in your group chats or online communities?



Activity 1: Tone Test: Same Message, Different Meaning

With a partner, read each message and rewrite the same message three different ways using punctuation, emojis, spelling, timing, or extra words. For each of your three versions, describe what tone the message communicates (happy, annoyed, sarcastic, confused, excited, etc.).

OK.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Whatever

**Can we
talk?**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

sure...

With your partner, discuss:

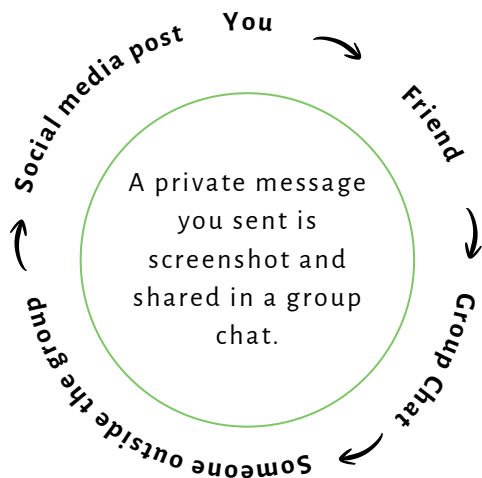
- How differently can the same message be interpreted?
- What is the tone of each of the different messages? How can you tell?
- What makes digital communication difficult?
- What helps make digital communication more clear?



Activity 2: Screenshot Ripple Effect

Read the scenarios and then map out the “ripple effects” by showing how the message spreads from one person to another. For each step, describe how tone or meaning might change as more people see it. Finally write what the sender could have done differently to prevent escalation.

Example:



Instead they could have:

- Reworded the message to be clearer
- Told the message privately in person
- Asked the friend not to share the conversation

You send a sarcastic joke to a close friend. They screenshot it and send it to another friend, who doesn't get the joke and thinks you're being serious.

Instead they could have:

- _____
- _____
- _____

You vent privately about being stressed with a group project. Someone screenshots your message and shares it in the project group chat.

Instead they could have:

- _____
- _____
- _____

When Ripple Effects Become Cyberbullying

Sometimes a single screenshot or message isn't just a misunderstanding — it becomes cyberbullying when the situation grows, repeats, or turns hurtful.

In pairs or small groups, read the following scenarios and decide where the moment shifted from miscommunication to harmful behavior.

1. What choices made the situation worse?
2. What could someone have done at any step to stop the harm or support the person targeted?
3. Now that it's turned into cyberbullying, what could you do to help the person?

A friend uses a face-altering filter on someone's photo as a joke. Another person screenshots it, adds text that mocks their appearance, and shares it widely.

You post a group photo. Someone screenshots it, crops out everyone except one person, and adds a caption that makes them look like they did something embarrassing. The edited version gets shared in group chats.

Someone screenshots a video frame or pauses a school livestream at an awkward moment, turning it into a meme that gets shared without the person's permission.

A student uses a face-swap or AI tool to put another student's face onto a harmless but embarrassing meme. It circulates and people assume it's real.



Activity 3: Repair or Escalate?

Read the list of possible responses to a digital conflict and color code each response into one of three categories:

- Repairs Conflict - color this **GREEN**
- Escalates Conflict - color this **RED**
- Uncertain / Depends on Context - color this **YELLOW**

Apologize privately.	Screenshot and send to a friend.	Respond immediately while upset.	Ask for clarification.
Ignore the message.	Make a vague post about it.	Talk face-to-face.	Add an emoji to soften the tone.
Ask if you can talk privately about the issue.	Post a reaction meme about the person.	Reply with 'K.'	Mute the conversation for a few hours.
Reply with sarcasm.	Subtweet or vague-post about the person.	Re-read the message to check if you misunderstood.	Admit if you overreacted.



Activity 4: Boundary-Setting Practice

Read each situation and write how you could set a respectful boundary.

A friend keeps messaging you late at night.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

Someone posts you in their story without asking.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

A group chat is stressing you out.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

Someone wants to argue in DMs.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

A friend pressures you to FaceTime or hang out when you need time alone.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

A person you barely know keeps reacting to all your posts or messaging you constantly.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

Your friend expects instant replies and gets upset when you don't respond fast enough.

What I could say/write: _____

Why does this wording work well? _____

Explore More

Watch & Learn – Watch the Above the Noise video “Does the Internet Make You Meaner”
(Link: <https://youtu.be/ofx8hN5JyZM?si=xk48XcHgm9-rfnoD>)



As you watch, think about:

- How does being behind a screen change the way people communicate—both positively and negatively?
- What makes it easier to type things you might not say in person?
- How does tone, anonymity, or distance affect conflict or misunderstandings?
- What communication choices can help you show clarity, empathy, and responsibility online?

Design a Tip for Others – Write one helpful tip for younger students about communicating kindly and thoughtfully online.

My tip: _____

Clear Communication Action Step – Choose one small change you can make this week to communicate more clearly or avoid misunderstandings online.

What action step will you take? _____

3

Attention & Digital Well-Being: Tech Design, Focus & Autonomy

Essential Question

How does technology shape my attention, and what choices can I make to stay in control of my focus, habits, and well-being?

Core Idea

Understanding how digital design and daily choices affect your focus empowers you to use technology in ways that support your goals and well-being.

What You Will Learn



At the end of this lesson, I will be able to:

- Explain how digital platforms use design features to capture and hold attention.
- Describe how multitasking, constant switching, and digital interruptions affect focus, productivity, memory, and emotional well-being.
- Identify your own digital habits and patterns that influence attention.
- Recognize early signs of digital overwhelm, distraction, and mental fatigue.
- Evaluate which digital choices support concentration, balance, and well-being—and which do not.
- Practice strategies for increasing autonomy over your digital habits, such as pausing before clicking, setting boundaries, creating focused time, and adjusting notifications.



Attention & Digital Well-Being: Tech Design, Focus & Autonomy

Your attention is one of the most valuable things you have. It affects how well you learn, how clearly you think, how deeply you rest, and how meaningfully you connect with people around you.

In today's world, technology is designed to compete for your attention every minute of the day. Every notification, buzz, badge, recommendation, and autoplay feature is engineered to grab your focus and keep you engaged—sometimes longer than you planned.

When you understand how digital design influences your habits and moods, you gain more control over how you use your time, your energy, and your mind.

How Tech Design Pulls on Your Attention

Most digital platforms are built around the “attention economy”—the idea that your time and focus are limited, valuable, and worth competing for. This competition shows up in the features you use every day:

- Infinite scroll: keeps content flowing so you never “finish”
- Autoplay: starts the next video before you can decide
- Notifications: encourage you to return again and again
- Badges and streaks: reward you for checking in
- Personalized recommendations: predict exactly what you'll click next
- Vibration patterns and sounds: create urgency, even when nothing is urgent

These design choices make it easy to lose track of time or switch from task to task without noticing.

Why Multitasking Isn't What It Seems

Many people believe they can multitask: watch a video, check messages, and do homework all at once. In reality, the brain doesn't truly multitask—it switches rapidly between tasks, and each switch costs time and mental energy.

Multitasking can lead to:

- More mistakes
- Slower work time
- Shallower focus
- More stress
- Difficulty remembering information

You might not notice it in the moment, but over time, constant task-switching affects how your brain processes and stores information.

Signs Your Attention Is Being Pulled

Sometimes distraction feels obvious—other times it sneaks up on you. Common signs include:

- Checking your phone “just for a second” and losing 20 minutes
- Feeling restless when you're not scrolling
- Opening multiple tabs and forgetting why
- Refreshing apps out of habit, not interest
- Struggling to focus on homework or conversations
- Feeling mentally tired even after doing “nothing”
- Needing background noise or constant stimulation

Building Habits That Support Your Focus

Small, intentional choices can help you take charge of your digital habits and support your focus.

Helpful strategies include:

- Pausing before clicking: “Do I actually want to open this right now?”
- Turning off non-essential notifications
- Creating focused time: 10–20 minutes device-free while studying
- Using timers to limit endless scrolling
- Keeping devices out of sight during work or rest
- Setting boundaries with friends (“I’ll answer later, I’m working”)
- Taking short breaks without screens



What is one digital habit you want to be more intentional about, and why?



Activity 1: Autoplay Trap Investigation

Open a platform you regularly use (YouTube, TikTok, Instagram Reels, Netflix mobile, etc.) and spend 2 minutes observing only how the app tries to keep you watching.

Record every design feature you notice (countdown, previews, endless swiping, reaction buttons, suggested videos, etc.).

Design Feature Noticed	What It Encourages Me To Do	Why It Works



Activity 2: Notification Audit

Look at your device's notification settings or use the fictional settings screen on your worksheet and categorize them using the chart below.

Then adjust or recommend changes to help you maintain focus and reduce overwhelm. Write a short reflection about one notification you want to change and why.

Important (things you need immediately)	Useful but Not Urgent (things you want, but not right away)	Not Necessary (distractions)

My notes & reflections: _____



Activity 3: Habit Loop

Think about one small digital habit you have—checking your phone, opening an app, refreshing a feed, scrolling when bored, etc. Break it down into the three parts of a habit loop:

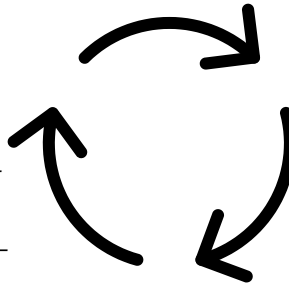
- **Trigger** — What causes you to open your phone or app?
- **Action** — What do you do automatically?
- **Reward** — What feeling or benefit do you get from it?

Record your habit loop and then choose a different action that could give you a similar reward without pulling your attention away as much. Write the new, redesigned habit loop using the same trigger and a healthier action.

My habit loop:

Trigger: _____

Reward: _____

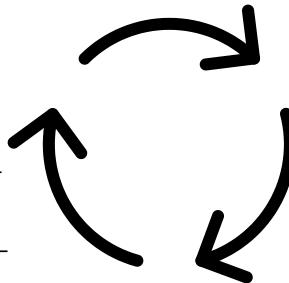


Action: _____

A new habit loop:

Trigger: _____

Reward: _____



Action: _____



Activity 4: Digital Habits Reflection & Focus Plan

Reflect on your recent digital habits and create a plan for staying more focused on the things that matter most to you.

When do you usually check your phone? _____

What apps pull your attention the most?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

When do you feel most distracted? _____

What helps you focus? _____

What are the signs that you are getting overwhelmed with media?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

How do you think multitasking affects you? _____

Goal #1: _____

Goal #2: _____

What change do I want to make this week, and how will it help my attention or well-being?

Explore More

Watch & Learn – Watch the Above the Noise video “Mind Control: How Apps Use Design Tricks To Hook You”

(Link: <https://youtu.be/EY13xhNYsJw?si=P3VQdU96RvvqUgQs>)



As you watch, think about:

- How do rapid app-switching and constant checking affect your focus, memory, or stress level?
- What design features—notifications, infinite scroll, streaks, autoplay—are intentionally created to pull your attention?
- What is one change you could try this week to protect your attention or reduce digital distractions?

Design a Tip for Others – Write one helpful tip for younger students about staying in control of their tech use and protecting their focus and well-being.

My tip: _____

Focus Action Step – Choose one small, realistic change you can make this week to support your attention—something you actually want to try.

What action step will you take? _____
