
LESSON **12**
GOOD CITIZENSHIP

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Students will distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior.
- Students will recognize personal boundaries, rights, and needs.
- Students will respect, accept, and appreciate alternative points of view and individual differences.
- Students will understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology, and practice legal and ethical behavior.
- Students will participate in discussions; ask and respond to probing questions to acquire and confirm information about respectful communication.

Objectives

Students will become aware of how their background and experiences affect the way they view the world and interact with other people.

Students will identify and practice the behaviors of a “Good Digital Citizen.”

Materials Needed

- Poster paper and coloring supplies for each student (“Starter”)
- Board or chart paper and markers (“We Do”)
- “Citizenship Chart” activity sheet for each student (“You Do”)

Starter (10 minutes)

Begin the lesson by explaining to students that everyone has their own experiences, their own personal history, and their own filter through which they see the world. These experiences are like eyeglasses through which a person sees everything. (*Distribute the poster paper and coloring supplies to students.*) Direct students to draw their own large pair of eyeglass frames, designing them in any fashion they choose. In the lenses, students should depict items, people, etc. from their lives, such as favorite foods, family, pets, sports, books, musicians, and books—anything that reflects their experiences. They may include words but should be encouraged to draw pictures. Tell students as they are drawing, “These glasses represent the experiences through which you see the world.”

Teacher Presented Knowledge/I Do (20 minutes)

Allow students to look at their peers’ glasses and notice the similarities and differences between glasses. Tell students, “Each of us has our own glasses. Every time someone looks at you, they are seeing you through their own glasses. Our view and understanding of the world are changed by the experiences we go through. As a good citizen, it is important to respect others’ different experiences and views of life.”

Then, tell students, “Another way we view the world and reflect ourselves to the world is through social media and the Internet. Can anyone tell me what I mean when I say this?” Allow for student responses and guide students to understand that what a person does on the Internet is often the only reflection others may see of them. (*To help students understand, ask if any of them follow a celebrity on Instagram or streamer on Twitch or YouTube. Ask students if they feel that they “know” them due to their social media account/streaming account. Guide students to understand that these platforms (and the Internet in general) are a “lens” through which others can get a glimpse of a person's life.*) Tell students, “It is not only important to be good citizens in public, but it is also important to be good citizens online.”

Guided Student Practice/We Do (20 minutes)

Tell students that they are going to come up with their own class definition of “Good Digital Citizenship.” In order to do so, ask students to describe ways they can be kind, careful, and responsible on the Internet. Write students’ responses on chart paper or on the board. (*Sample responses could include not posting anything mean about others, not messaging strangers online, not logging on to someone else’s account without permission, reporting inappropriate things.*) Remind students that it is very important, as a “Good Digital Citizen,” to always be respectful of other people online. They must remember that everyone has their own glasses, and the Internet is not a place to tease others for their life experiences and/or views of the world. Tell students to treat anything they say online as if they will be there forever.

Following the brainstorm, direct the class to come up with their own definition of a “Good Digital Citizen.” Write this definition at the top of the paper, and then, underneath the class-made definition, write “As Good Digital Citizens, We Will...” and make a bullet point for each way the students suggest a “Good Digital Citizen” can be kind, careful, and responsible. (*You can choose to have students “pledge” to be a “Good Digital Citizen” by signing their names on the chart paper.*)

Student Independent Practice/You Do (20 minutes)

Stress to students that, in addition to good digital citizenship, there are many other ways they can show good citizenship. Direct students to work in small groups to brainstorm ways that they can be good citizens by making the world a better place at school, at home, and in their community. Have students write their group responses on the “Citizenship Chart” activity sheet.

Closure (5 minutes)

To close the lesson, remind students that each person in our community has their own unique life experiences that shape who they are. It is important to respect all our differences and to work together to make the community, including the online community, better. Also, tell students, “How you behave online can be a major reflection of who you are. ‘Good Digital Citizens’ always strive to be kind, careful, and responsible online.”

Student Assessment

1. What are three ways you can be a “Good Digital Citizen”?
2. Why is it important to be a “Good Digital Citizen” online?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Art Extension

Have students work as a group to create a poster, collage, or comic strip depicting good citizenship.

Drama Extension

Role-play being a good citizen in school, at home, and in the community. Using chart paper, write down the ways that students show good citizenship.

ELA Extension

Have students write about what “good citizenship” means to them and how they plan to be good citizens.

Literature Extension

Read *Being a Good Citizen* by Mary Small. This story provides examples of how students can be good citizens. After reading the story, have students create and sign a Good Citizenship contract where they agree to do things to help make the world a better place this year.

Literature Extension

Read *Only One You* by Linda Kranz. Direct students to listen for the advice that Adri’s parents share with him. After reading the story, write the advice on chart paper or on pebble-shaped construction paper. Ask the students, “Which of the following words of wisdom do you find to be the most important and why?” Allow students time to share. Then, focus the discussion on the part of the story where Adri is told, “There’s only one you in this great big world...make it a better place.” Explain to the class that when someone does something to make our world a better place, they are being a good citizen or showing good citizenship.

Social Studies Extension

Host a weekly “Current Events Day” and assign each student a week to bring in a current events news article of interest. Have students write a brief summary of the article and why they chose to share it, and allow them time to present articles to the class.

CITIZENSHIP CHART

I am going to make this world
a better place by...

At school	At home	In my community