Digital Literacy Progression Lesson

Essential Question: How can I help build safe, kind, and respectful communities at school and online?

Grade level: 4th grade
Duration: 30 minutes (2 class periods if the extension activity is used)
Objective: Students will understand what phishing is, identify warning signs of phishing scams, and reflect on how to keep personal information safe online.
Prior Knowledge: Students learned about privacy concepts in 2nd grade Digital Literacy lessons *That's Private!* and *Keeping Online Accounts Safe* and in the 3rd grade Digital Literacy lesson *Protecting Our Online Accounts*. These lessons address not sharing personal information online, keeping their student ID private, closing out of accounts when finished, and creating strong passwords. Students are introduced to PII in the 4th grade Digital Literacy lessons and practice identifying how media can trigger an emotional response.
Recommended Content Collaboration: This lesson can be done at any point in the school year. If the extension activity is used, it can be an extension of students' study of animal defenses in their Q2 EL unit or animal adaptations in Q4 Science.
Key Common Sense Media Themes: Privacy & Safety

Learning Targets:

🎯**I can explain ways to protect myself from phishing and other online scams.**

Standards

NC.DLS.DC.2.b
Students engage in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online or when using networked devices.

NC.DLS.DC.2.d
Students manage their personal data to maintain digital privacy and security and are aware of data-collection technology used to track their navigation online.

Materials

Common Sense Media Lesson Plans and materials (log in with Google to view):
Gone Phishing
Print out Slide 12 to use as an anchor chart
Resist the Bait! Student handout
Don't Trust Fish by Neil Sharpson illustrated by Dan Santat (2025)
Paper/drawing materials and/or Adobe Express

Lesson

Explain the purpose of the lesson:

> *Today, we're going to build upon what we've been learning about staying safe online by learning how to protect ourselves from online scams.*

Read aloud *Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson. Review the concepts that are presented in a silly way throughout the book:

- Who is the creator and why did they create this (if asked during the first few pages, it appears that it might be someone wanting to share facts about animals, but that changes as the book progresses).
- What emotions is the creator trying to get you to feel?

Explain that, while this book is fun and a little silly, it illustrates how you can't always trust the information and media that you see. You don't always know who the creator is, or what their motivations are, so you have to be cautious so you don't fall for a scam or a trick.

Use the Common Sense Media Lesson Gone Phishing.

Display slide 12 or refer to your anchor chart.

> *You've been learning about ways that animals use defenses to protect themselves or how they adapt to survive in their environments. As people, we also need to use our defenses and adapt! Use paper and drawing materials or Adobe Express to create an image of yourself and show the defenses or adaptations you need to be safe in an online environment.* (Ideas might include: strong lungs for taking deep breaths to stop and manage emotions before clicking on a link, keen eyes for looking for the source of information, extra long pointer finger for showing adults when you see something confusing, etc.)

Differentiation

Prompt students to draw the emojis on slide 12 to code the Resist the Bait! Strategy cards to help cue them about the behavior. Assign one student in each group to read aloud the scenarios during the game.

Extensions

Use Adobe Express to create a parody book titled *Don't Trust Phish*.

- Display slide 10 from the lesson to show behaviors phishing scammers use.
- Challenge students to use Adobe Express to design a fish that has adaptations that make it a "phish". Write a sentence in the style of the book *Don't Trust Fish* that explains why the phish shouldn't be trusted.
- Print out some of the pages and display as posters, or combine the pages into a digital book to read aloud.

Academic Learning Model

[Quick overview of how your lesson addresses the Academic Advancement Learning Model (overview here).]

- Lever 1: Strategic observation and listening should occur during discussions to make note of misconceptions and students' mastery of the learning targets/goals.
- Lever 2: Students actively participate through structured activities to increase comprehension.
- Lever 3: Activities allow students to explore and express their identities.