

4565: Computing Foundations for a Digital Age

Unit 2

Day 1 Lesson Plan: What is a Digital Footprint?

Objective

Students will explain what a digital footprint is and how it can impact their future.

Word Bytes

- **Digital Footprint** – The trail of data you leave behind every time you go online.
- **Online Reputation** – What others think about you based on what they see online.
- **Data Tracking** – The way websites, apps, or companies collect info about your activity.

Materials

- Internet-connected device
- Digital Footprint Reflection Sheet (optional printable or Google Doc)

Activities

Hook: Google Yourself

- Students search their name in Google (or use a school-friendly alternative like typing their name and city into a search engine) and reflect on what appears. For younger students or those with limited digital presence, they may reflect on family or fictional digital personas.

Discussion: Who Sees Your Digital Trail?

- Prompt students to think about who might view their digital footprint:

Teachers, coaches, college admissions officers, future employers

Bad actors like scammers, hackers, or online predators Ask: "What do you think people could learn about you based on what you've posted or shared online?"

Mini-Lesson: What Is a Digital Footprint?

- Explain the concept of a permanent online trail. Emphasize that even deleted content may still be stored, shared, or archived elsewhere.

Case Studies: Real-World Consequences

- Share stories (articles or short news clips) about teens or public figures who faced consequences (positive or negative) due to something they posted online. Facilitate a reflection or group discussion: "What would you do differently in their shoes?"

Reflection Activity

- Students complete a short reflection:
 - What does your digital footprint say about you?
 - What do you want it to say in 5 years?
 - What is one small change you could make starting today?
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Word Bytes Dictionary Update

Students add "**digital footprint**," "**online reputation**," and "**data tracking**" to their Word Bytes dictionary with examples.

Suggested examples:

- Digital Footprint – A list of videos you've watched and posts you've liked.
- Online Reputation – What a future employer might think after reading your public comments.
- Data Tracking – A website noticing you searched for shoes and showing you shoe ads later.