**Lesson # 1:** Footprint Activity - Developing Awareness of Digital Traces

**Date:** N/A

**Subject/duration:** 30 -35 minutes

**Grade:** Grade 2 & 3

**Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs):**

**Grade 2** - D3 describe ways they use technologies

**Grade 3** - D2 describe how technology affects individuals and schools

\*\*The PLOs listed here may not be addressed in this particular lesson, but rather in a follow up, or subsequent lesson relating to this topic.

**Objective:** To develop awareness that we leave permanent digital traces online so that students can eventually understand the concept of “digital tattoo,” and digital identity.

**Students will be able to (SWBAT)**: Critically think and reflect on their own digital footprint.

**Background knowledge:** In the context that we are in, most students in our targeted age group are “digital natives.” Most, if not all, have had experience with technology in one form or another.

**Materials:**

- Find an area where we can make footprints (ex. in the dirt, sandlot)

- Chart paper, markers

**Pre-activity/Hook** (10 minutes)**:**

* Take students outside to walk around in the area that you allotted for this activity (see “Materials” section).
* Get students to walk from one place to another (teacher: make sure you see footprints)
  + Alternative: teacher can get a few students to do this part, and get the rest of the class to watch. Ask the onlookers to pay attention to marks made in dirt.
* Discussion: “What do you see on the ground? Lock this image in your mind because we’re going to discuss this when we get back inside.”
* Take a picture of the footprints (iPad, iPhone, etc.)
* Alternatives: dirt, mud, clay, paint, sand, sidewalk chalk to trace footprints

**Activity** (10 minutes)**:**

Discussion - Teacher: “You are all Internet experts, and I am coming to you for some help. I want to find a picture of (insert topic of your choice)[[1]](#footnote-1) on the Internet. You are now my teachers. How can I do that? What are the steps I need to take?” (Record steps on chart paper so that there is a visual on how many steps are taken)

Example of a list students can come up with:

1. Open Internet Explorer/Firefox.
2. Go onto Google Images.
3. Type in (topic of choice) and press “search.”
4. Click on one picture. If you do not like it, need to go back to the image search.
5. Click on another picture. If you do not like it again, need to go back.
6. Continue until you find a picture you like.

**\*\***Lesson enhancement: If your classroom/school has technology options (SMART Board, or projector) go through actual steps outlined above. A student helper can navigate search page while teacher scribes steps on chart paper.

*Discussion*:

* “Look at all of these steps we needed to take in order to find an image that we liked. Did you know that in each of these steps, we’re leaving something behind? Who remembers what we did outside on the ground - what did we leave behind? Footprints! In each step, we’re leaving behind our footprints, but they’re invisible and you can’t see them. But they’re there!”
* Explain and show what search history is, and how Google tracks most recent or frequent words in search bar. Preparing a visual template of a Google page on chart paper or a whiteboard would be ideal. If you do have technology in the class, see below.

\*\*Show students the drop down menu on Google (our last search is at the top), and history. This shows that the computer saves what we do, and so does the Internet, just like footprints. On the computer, we can see what has been saved, but on the Internet, our “footprints” are invisible to us.

**Possible follow-up activity:**

* Pair up with a partner. With your partner, think of something you both do on the Internet (e.g. games, YouTube, Google, etc.) and write down a list of the steps you take to show all the invisible footprints you leave behind.

**Assessment:**

*What to assess-* Checklist or anecdotal notes: “Do students understand that we leave invisible “footprints” while navigating the internet?”

*How to assess-* Ask small groups (whenever there’s time) “What do we leave behind when we search and use the internet?” Possible student answers: “Invisible traces”, “footprints”, “marks of our internet searching,” etc.

**\*** If suggested follow-up activity was done, use student writing as tool for assessment (see “Possible follow-up activity” section)

**Reflection:**

* What went well? What did or did not work?
* What kind of front loading was missed?
* What concepts need to be revisited in the next lesson?

**Resources:**

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-TffXBZFUQ>

* A short video made by students about digital footprint

1. Some popular images among this age group are: Angry Birds, Minecraft characters, One Direction, Justin Beiber, American Dolls, Lalaloopsy dolls, and Tech Decks. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)