

Lesson plan: Communication Skills - Digital Communication

Try this sample lesson from New *Open Mind* Advanced (C1) level, which looks at raising students' awareness when interacting digitally, whether it's through email, social media, using online banking or shopping or other areas. This lesson encourages learners to consider issues of digital privacy and look at ways to protect themselves online.

Level: Advanced / CEFR C1

Time: approx 45-60 minutes (or longer depending on how the activities are used)

How to use this lesson:

The lesson can be used for the whole class, who can work in pairs and small groups. Download and print out the [provided Student's Book pages](#) so each student has a copy.

Step 1: Understand the potential threats to digital privacy. (Ex. A, Ex. B, Ex. C)

Step 2: Think about practical steps to take to increase digital security. (Ex. B, Ex. C, Ex. D, Ex. E)

Step 3: Institute digital security measures in your everyday online routines. (Ex. E)

Lead-in

Read the target skill aloud and invite the students to tell you what they think *protecting digital privacy* means. Ask the students if they or anyone they know has had any negative experiences related to digital privacy issues. To start, you could recount an experience of your own, real or invented, (*your credit card information was stolen when you made an online purchase, and the thief ran up a large amount of credit card debt.*) Then highlight the three-step strategy to develop the skill of *protecting digital privacy*.

A

- Have the students read the instructions and then make a list of all the online services and accounts they use regularly. Refer them to the pieces of information in Ex. A and ask them to tick the boxes of items that an identity thief could potentially find online. Ask them to consider all the information about themselves that they have put online or that can be found online in other places.

B

- Put the students in pairs. Ask them to compare their answers to Ex. A, and then use these to imagine what might happen if any online information got into the wrong hands. Refer them to the example of attracting spam to their email address, and then have them make a list of their own ideas. Allow time for discussion before inviting the pairs to share their lists with the class.

C

- Ask the students to stay in their pairs from Ex. B, and read the instructions. Have them decide on their roles: Student A and Student B. Ask them both to read the whole article, with Student A reading the paragraphs *Your Software* and *Your Browser* more carefully, and Student B focusing more on the paragraphs *Your Email*, *Secure Payments* and *Privacy Policies*.
- Circulate while they read and help with any vocabulary required (keystroke: *a single action of pressing a key on a keyboard*; to disable: *to stop a machine or system from working properly*; to configure: *to arrange the parts of something, especially computer software, so that it works in the way you want it to*; padlock: *a portable lock that has a D-shaped bar on top that moves when you open the lock with a key, typically fixed to bicycles and suitcases for security*).

- Have the students cover the text and paraphrase the basic advice in their paragraphs to their partner. They can elaborate on the information or add their own examples and anecdotes if they wish.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS**Software and browsers:**

You should use good anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software to protect your computer from viruses that let hackers get hold of your personal information. You should also configure your browser so that it doesn't allow websites, adverts, or anything else that you don't want.

Email, secure payments and privacy policies

You should have different email addresses for your personal mail and for online shopping. That way, you won't get spam in your personal email. When you buy something online, look for the padlock symbol because it means that it's a secure site. Make sure that websites have a privacy policy. They have to explain how they will use your data. It's better not to use a site if it doesn't have a privacy policy.

Extra: note-taking

As one partner paraphrases the advice in their paragraphs, have the other student take notes. Then ask them to change roles (speaker/listener). Then have the students compare their notes with the original text and look for any differences or omissions. Ask the students to provide feedback to their partner about what they noticed.

D

- Put the students in groups and ask them to read the online forum question. Elicit what advice the person wants (*tips on making up effective passwords*). Have them discuss what advice to give the writer and to note the key points. Encourage them to bring their personal knowledge and experience to this task.
- Direct the students' attention to the examples in the **How to say it** box, and encourage them to use the expressions in their discussion.
- Allow time for the discussion. Then invite each group to tell you one of their tips while you write it on the board. Continue until there are no more original ideas remaining. At the end, have students vote on the best idea presented.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Change passwords on a regular basis. Change your passwords at least every 90 days to reduce the chance that a computer criminal can gain access to your computer or online accounts. Don't use the same password across multiple sites.

E

- Rearrange the groups so that different students are working together. Ask them to review the entire lesson and decide which three pieces of advice they would give to a friend who was concerned about online privacy. Encourage the students to think about frequency of the problem occurring, seriousness of the consequences and ease of prevention when prioritising advice.
- Allow time for the discussion and then ask the groups to share their ideas with the class. Choose one or two students to oversee the creation of a class list of advice. If possible, have the students present their combined advice in a printed list of tips and notes or on a webpage.

F

- Discuss the questions with the whole class. Ask the students to say what they feel are the most useful points they learnt from this skill and how the information they obtained might be useful in the domain of **Self and Society**, either now or in the future.
- Have the students work in pairs to discuss the two questions and share any changes that they personally intend to make to their online habits to safeguard their privacy. Extend the discussion with the whole class, and make a list of answers to item 2 on the board.

REFLECT

- Ask the students to read the **Reflect** question.
- Elicit ways to protect digital privacy (*changing passwords to professional email accounts regularly, avoiding talking about colleagues or confidential work on social media sites, protecting company data from theft by following company procedures for data handling, not saving essays or assignments on school computers, etc.*).
- Give the students time to think about different situations in the domains of **Work and Career** and **Study and Learning** where the skill of knowing how to protect digital privacy would be useful.
- Elicit the following ideas: *handling confidential material at work, working on class projects in which students are exchanging documents or chatting in forums, applying for jobs posted online in public forums, etc.*

RESEARCH

- Explain the task and make sure the students understand what they have to do.
- Suggest some websites that list common types of cyber crimes, such as *Norton* and *Computer Weekly*. Also suggest that, as an alternative, students talk with people they know who have been victims of cyber crimes.
- Ask the students to take turns presenting their example of an internet scam or another example of cyber crime to the whole class. Have them explain where they found the information and how they came to know about it. Encourage the class to ask questions and make comments after each presentation.

Teacher's notes taken from Unit 3 of *Open Mind* Advanced (C1). Notes can also be used with *masterMind* 2nd edition level 2. Click on the links below to find out more and download samples from other levels..
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