



Digital Life 101

Lesson Plan

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Essential Question: What is digital media and what role does it play in our lives?

Learning Overview and Objectives

Overview: Students are introduced to the 24/7, social nature of digital media and technologies, and gain basic vocabulary and knowledge for discussing the media landscape.

Students watch the ***Student Intro Video – Digital Life 101***, which shows the 24/7, social nature of digital media – a change from the media consumption culture of the past. They then make similes about their digital lives and learn that because media connect us in more social and interactive ways than ever before, it is important to carry out online relationships responsibly. This lesson also serves as an assessment baseline for teachers to gain a better understanding of their students' familiarity with digital media and key vocabulary associated with digital life.

objectives

Students will:

- Learn about the 24/7, social nature of digital media
- Explore their digital lives
- Learn that it is important to act responsibly when carrying out relationships over digital media

Materials and Preparation

Materials

- ***Digital Life Intro Video – Digital Life 101***
- **My Media Life Is Like...Student Handout**
- **Got Media Smarts? Student Handout**
- **Digital Life Glossary Student Handout**
- ***Digital Life Parent/Teacher Intro Video***
- **Digital Life Parent Tip Sheet**

Preparation

- Download or stream the ***Digital Life Intro Video – Digital Life 101***, preview video, and be prepared to play video for the class.
- Copy the **My Media Life Is Like...Student Handout** for all students
- Copy the **Got Media Smarts? Student Handout** for all students
- Copy the **Digital Life Glossary Student Handout** for all students
- Copy the **My Media Log Student Handout** for all students (preparation for the My Media lesson, optional)



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Key Vocabulary

- **Media:** Communication, including television, radio, and newspapers, that often reaches and impacts a large audience
- **Digital Media:** Electronic devices and media platforms such as computers, cell phones, digital video, social networking sites, the Internet, video games, and virtual worlds that allow users to create, communicate, and interact with one another or with the device or application itself
- **Simile:** A literary device for comparing two unlike things. A simile is similar to a metaphor, which is another literary device for making comparisons
- **Consume:** To take in, as with food or media in this case

teaching plans

Introduce

REVIEW the Key Vocabulary with students. Discuss some of the differences between media and digital media.

EXPLAIN that one of the major differences between digital media and media such as TV and radio is that digital media generally allow people opportunities for interactive communication — for creation and self-expression. Instant Messaging, for instance, is more “two-way,” because people are talking with one another. Media such as TV and radio are generally more “one-way,” because people generally do not interact with one another through these technologies. **EXPLAIN** that media used to be a lot more one-way before the Internet came into existence. Let them know that people used to consume, or take in, media and messages only through television and radio. But the digital media of today are more two-way. We can now create, share, and communicate in addition to consuming media.

ASK *What are examples of things you do with one-way media, such as TVs or radios?*

Sample responses:

- *Watch TV*
- *Listen to the radio*

ASK *What are some of the ways that people communicate with or share with others over digital media?*

Samples responses:

- *IM*
- *Go on social networks*
- *Text*
- *Talk in virtual worlds*
- *Blog*
- *Upload videos and photos*
- *Play multiplayer games*





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Teach 1: Watch Video

EXPLAIN to students that they are going to watch a video about how digital media are a 24/7 part of our culture – that video game consoles and portable devices, such as cell phones, seem to surround us. Remind students, though, that the media lives of all kids and families are not the same. Some kids are allowed to use more digital media than others, and some kids like these tools more than others.

WATCH the *Student Intro Video – Digital Life 101*. The video touches on the different types of media and digital media that exist, the actions that people take with these technologies, and even specific programs and applications.

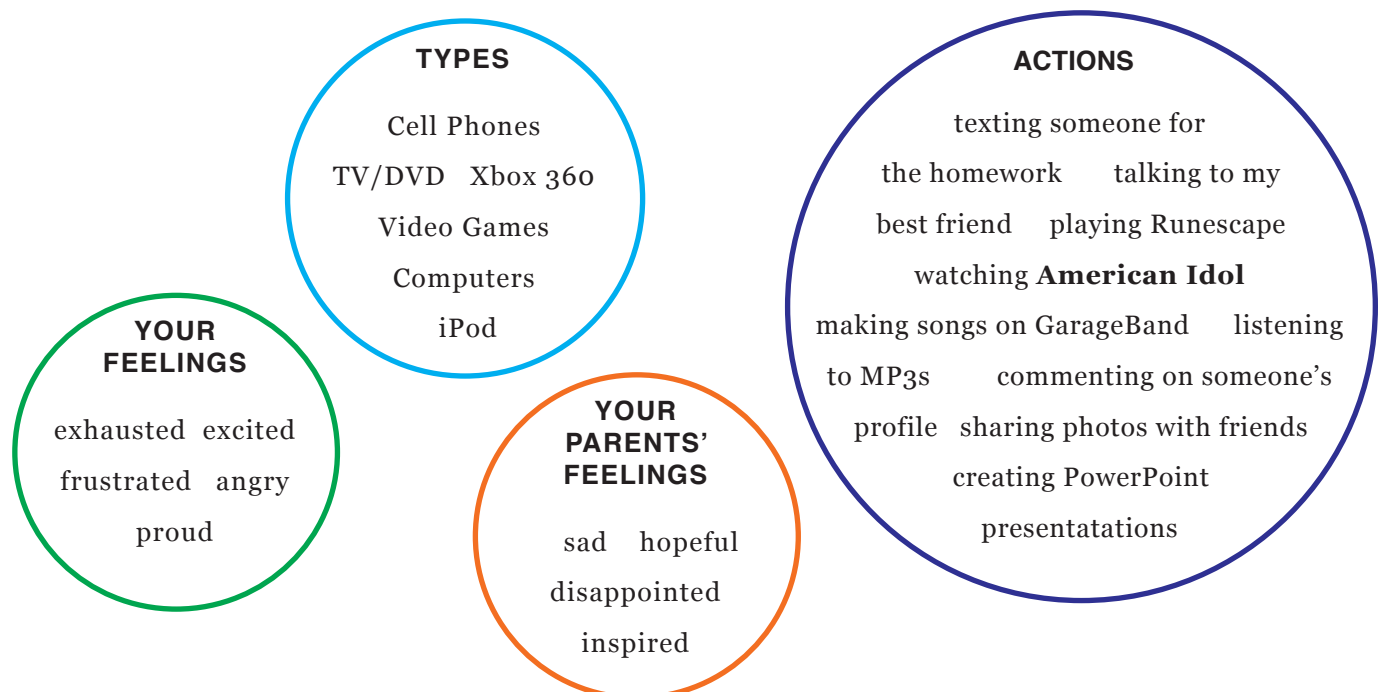
ASK *What are some things you learned from the video?*

Sample responses:

- *Digital media are a 24/7 part of our culture.*
- *Digital media are social. They allow people to build friendships, join new communities, and provide amazing opportunities for creation and self-expression.*

Teach 2: Make a Concept Map

CREATE a concept map on the board that contains the following headings: “Types” of digital media, “Actions” students take with digital media, “Your Feelings” about digital media, and “Your Parents’ Feelings” about digital media. **ASK** students to brainstorm about all four parts of the concept map. **ENCOURAGE** them to list items that are both general (e.g., cell phones) and specific (e.g., playing Runescape).





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Teach 3: Create Similes

Have students fill out the **My Media Life Is Like...Student Handout** in which they create and illustrate a simile about their digital lives. When students are finished, they should **SHARE** their similes. Have them place their similes on their desks and rotate three to four times so they can see different people's similes. Have students share observations about their classmates' similes with each rotation.

You may want to **PROVIDE** the following examples for students of similes:

- Someone who does not use much media at all might say that her media life is like a dry desert because there is little life there.
- Someone might say that his media life is like a track meet because he is exhausted at the end of the day.

Wrap-Up and Assess

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives.

ASK

- *What are digital media?* (Digital media and technologies are electronic devices and media platforms such as computers, cell phones, digital video, social networking sites, the Internet, video games, and virtual worlds, which allow users to create, communicate and interact with one another or with the device or application themselves.)
- *What are two important characteristics of digital media?* (1) They are a 24/7 part of our culture; (2) They are social – people communicate over digital media)

REVIEW that because these digital media tools are social and interactive, it is important to think about how what one does with them impacts others.



Extension Activity

Students turn their similes about digital life into songs. **GROUP** students in fours and fives and ask each group to create a simile about their digital lives. As with the similes by individuals, the simile should be phrased, "My digital life is like a..." and the lyrics should focus on the nature of their digital lives. Have students turn the simile into a country, rock, or rap song called "My Digital Life." They can create the song without computers or with computers using software such as GarageBand.



Homework

Students and parents together take the **Got Media Smarts? Quiz** – an introduction to basic media terms and concepts. Each student should receive a copy of the **Got Media Smarts? Quiz Student Handout** (which includes an answer key) and the **Digital Life Glossary Student Handout** to take home. Students should tell



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their parents that their class assignment is for them to go head-to-head against one another to test their knowledge about digital media. Students can also quiz their parents on the Glossary terms. Students can bring the results of the quiz to school where the class can briefly reflect on their results and share about anything that surprised them. Note: If you are planning for students to do the My Media lesson, provide the **My Media Log Student Handout** and ask students to log their time with different forms of media during the week.

Alignment with Standards — National Educational Technology Standards for Students® 2007

(Source: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007):

1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products or processes
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression

2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

- a. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats

5. Digital Citizenship

Students understand the human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal and responsible use of information and technology
- b. exhibit a positive attitude towards using technology that supports collaboration, learning and productivity