

## Parent Letter

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### Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Your child is taking part in classroom lessons from the Common Sense Media Digital Literacy and Citizenship curriculum. The goal of this curriculum is to encourage young people to harness the power of the Internet and digital technology for learning, and to become safe, responsible and savvy digital citizens. In the Research and Information Literacy strand of the curriculum, your child will learn that the Internet is a powerful tool for research, communicating, and sharing ideas. Through hands-on activities and classroom discussion, your child will learn effective Internet search skills as well as how to evaluate the quality and credibility of online information.

### What we teach

In this set of lessons, your child will:

- Learn a variety of strategies for finding information on the Internet using keywords, search engines, and directory sites
- Practice evaluating the credibility of websites and online sources of information
- Learn how to correctly cite online sources
- Learn to think critically about the intentions of commercial websites

### What families can do

Common Sense Media takes a holistic school-community approach to digital literacy and citizenship and provides parent educational resources to help you support your child's learning. As we complete these lessons in class, we will be sending home parent tip sheets, links to online videos, and an occasional homework activity for you to do with your child. We encourage you to read and view the parent materials, have fun with the homework activities, and use this as an opportunity to share and learn about research and information literacy together. If you have access to the Internet at home or at work, you can visit the Common Sense Media website at [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org) and take a look at the parent resources on kids and media.

Here are some tips you can use to teach your children about research and information literacy:

- **Help kids get effective results for online searches.** Choose search terms carefully, add more words to narrow the search, and use synonyms. You can also look into searching shortcuts, such as using quotes around words to get an exact phrase.
- **Ask questions to evaluate websites**, such as *Who wrote this?*, *What is the source of information?* and *When was this updated?* to determine a website's credibility.
- **Compare multiple sources.** Kids should draw on several sites when doing online searches so they can have different sites to compare whether information is accurate.
- **Watch out for ads.** Help your kids notice when advertisers try to target them while they search online, and teach them to question what the ads are saying.

We are excited about embarking on this new curriculum and look forward to sharing more with you about our activities in the classroom in the weeks ahead. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

