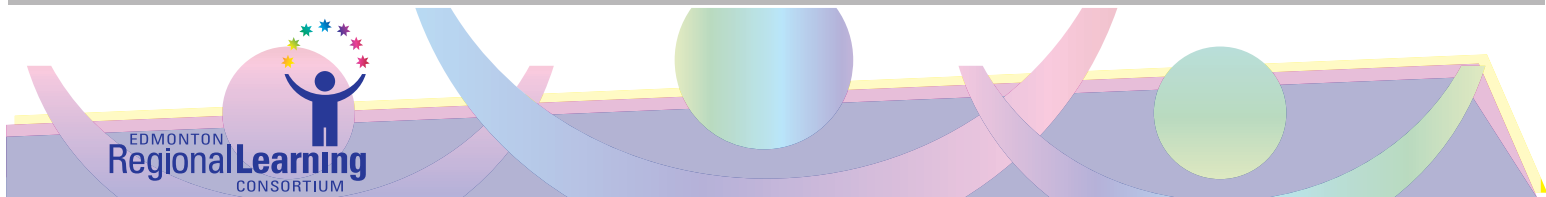Read Alouds • Shared Reading • Small Group Reading Instruction • Writing • Phonological Awareness • Word Work • Speaking and Listening • Viewing, Visualizing and Representing • **Digital Literacy** • Cross-Curricular Literacy

COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY GUIDES
GRADES K-6

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DIGITAL LITERACY
GRADES 1-6

OVERVIEW

Digital Literacy is an ability to use, understand and create digital texts. It includes skills such as knowing how to seek out trustworthy information online; knowing how to navigate digital environments; understanding the potential hazards of online activities and how to protect yourself; and recognizing the characteristics of a good digital citizen.

SNAPSHOT

There are a number of digital literacy support tools and frameworks available to guide teachers.

1. Alberta Education Learning and Technology Policy Framework - In 2013, Alberta Education released a number of Technology Policy Directions with the intent that teachers are expected to develop, maintain and apply the knowledge, skills and attributes that enable them to use technology effectively, efficiently and innovatively in support of learning and teaching.

Alberta Education - Learning and Technology Policy Framework: *https://archive.education.alberta.ca/admin/technology/policyframework/*

Alberta Education Video - Policy Direction 1: *Student-Centred Learning: https://archive.education.alberta.ca/media/9255683/policy%20direction%201.mp4*

2. ISTE standards for students: *https://www.iste.org/standards/standards/for-students-2016*

Access to the ISTE 'I am a Digital Age Learner' classroom poster: *http://info.iste.org/iste-student-standards-transform-the-classroom-poster*

3. Media Smarts, Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy is a website with a wealth of resources on this topic including research, information for parents, teacher tools and a blog. In 2016, they released a Digital Literacy Framework that has links to lessons organized by grade level divisions and address these six key areas of digital literacy :

- Ethics and Empathy
- Privacy and Security
- Community Engagement
- Digital Health
- Consumer Awareness
- Finding and Verifying
- Making and Remixing

Use, Understand & Create: A Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools: *http://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/pdfs/digital-literacy-framework.pdf*

> **In order to be literate in today's media-rich environments, young people need to develop knowledge, values and a whole range of critical thinking, communication and information management skills for the digital age.**
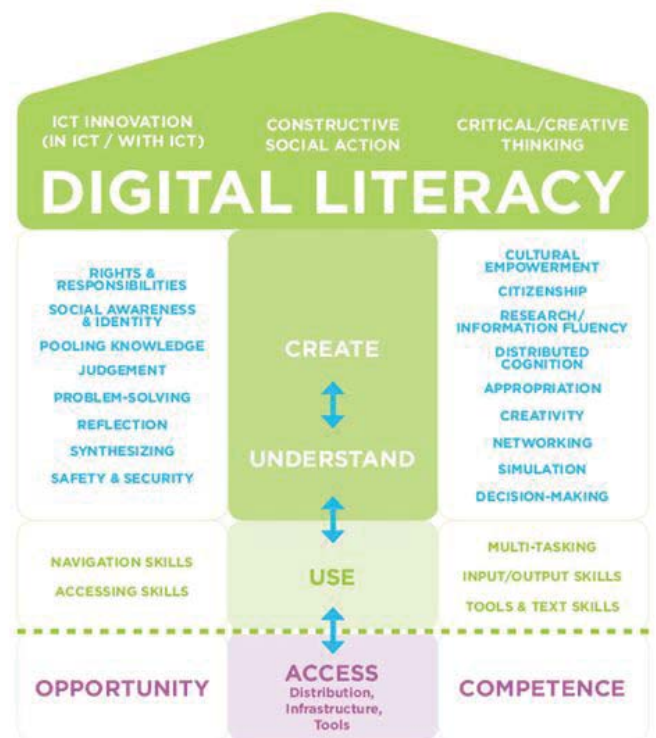>
> **- Media Smarts**

Image source: http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy-fundamentals/digital-literacy-fundamentals

DIGITAL LITERACY
GRADES 1-6

RELEVANCE TO PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Digital literacy is relevant to all five general outcomes in ELA: exploring (GO 1) and responding to texts (GO 2), managing information (GO 3), enhancing communication (GO 4) and respecting and collaborating with others (GO 5).

ELA Program of Studies, p. 3:

In today's technological society, people access information and find enjoyment in print, as well as other language forms. For example, oral communication and visual media are becoming increasingly important. Often these forms are used in combination with one another and in conjunction with print. Therefore, texts refer not only to print but also to oral and visual forms that can be discussed, studied and analyzed. In addition, texts are affected and influenced by how they are transmitted, whether by computer, television, radio or book. Students need knowledge, skills and strategies in all six language arts [listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing] to compose, comprehend and respond to such texts.

CONSIDERATIONS

• Where is your school currently regarding technology? What access do students have to technology? Is your school a BYOD school? Is there a scope and sequence for digital technology in your school division?

• How might you use technology to enhance literacy instruction? How might technology be used in literacy stations and to allow for differentiation? How might technology allow students to practice literacy skills, improve their fluency, self-correct and show what they know?

• How can technology be used to enhance learner outcomes rather than be taught in addition to content?

Blog post: 7 Skill Students Need for Today's Classwork:
http://askatechteacher.com/2015/07/22/7-skills-students-need-for-todays-classwork/

Blog post: What is the 21st Century Lesson Plan:
http://askatechteacher.com/2015/03/24/what-is-the-21st-century-lesson-plan/

Blog post: 7 Reasons Why Digital Literacy is Important for Teachers:
https://rossieronline.usc.edu/blog/teacher-digital-literacy/

International Literacy Association, Post, Feb 2016: Knowing the Difference Between Digital Skills and Digital Literacies, and Teaching Both (see more posts on ILA Blogs: Digital Literacies and App a Day):
https://www.literacyworldwide.org/blog/literacy-daily/2016/02/03/knowing-the-difference-between-digital-skills-and-digital-literacies-and-teaching-both

Competencies - Alberta Education (2016)
There are 8 competencies that can be applied to learning experiences and that students need to develop and apply for successful learning. Many of the competencies (e.g., Critical Thinking and Managing Information) are particularly relevant when focusing on digital literacy:
http://erlc.ca/resources/resources/cross_curricular_competencies_overview/

RESOURCES

Commonly used tools in elementary classrooms:
• **Microsoft Office Tools** - Microsoft Office, Microsoft 365, OneNote, Sway, Snip
• **Google Applications** - Drive, Gmail, Calendar, Classroom, Chrome Apps & Extensions,
• **Literacy Apps:** http://www.readingrockets.org/literacyapps
• **Learning Management Systems** - Google Classroom, Edmodo, Schoology, Moodle
• **Publishing or ePortfolio tools** - Google Sites, FreshGrade, Edublogs, Kidblog, Weebly, Seesaw,
• **Video Conferencing** - Skype, Google Hangouts, PolyCom
• **Social Media** -Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat
• **Presentation and Learning Tools** (Pear Deck, Pictello, Book Creator, Quizlet)
• **Online Books** - Tumblebooks, Epic! , Who's Reading, Storyline Online, Reading A-Z, Raz-Kids - can give parents an online login code, and Bookflix
• **Global Read Aloud** - teachers around the globe read a common book and try to make as many global connections and conversations as they can. Some people choose to connect with just one class, while others go for as many as possible. This event runs annually October-November with a new book chosen each year.
• **2Learn.ca** - lessons, resources, student sites, image gallery, and Spirit of Alberta site (updated in 2016)

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- **Pobble 365** - Literacy site provides a daily photo with a story starter, question, sentence challenge, fixing sick sentences and drawing pictures (visualizing and representing): *http://pobble365.com/*
- **Newsela** - features levelled non-fiction news articles, text sets, biographies and libraries with short articles including primary source documents - updated daily: *https://newsela.com/*
- **Storybird** - an online educational site for collaboratively creating stories and picture books, featuring professional art: *www.storybird.com*

PLANNING IDEAS

Curriculum outcomes need to drive lessons, tasks and projects. Technology is incorporated when appropriate and serves to enhance instruction and learning. It is essential to teach and reinforce digital citizenship skills every time students engage in digital learning tasks.

Here is an example of a series of tasks for a particular set of outcomes. Students would do the inquiry or task as indicated in the left column and then respond and/or link their digital creations showing what they know and can do in the right column.

Canada's Geography	Student Response
All About Canada *http://www.2learn.ca/kids/ listSocG5-3.aspx?Type=1*	What 2 things did you learn during your walk through this website: 1. 2.
National Parks of Canada: Research one Canadian national park. Write an advertisement about that park. *http://www.pc.gc.ca/listing/ np-pn/recherche-search_e. asp?p=1*	Create your advertisement and add the link here.

A FEW THOUGHTS:

A teacher's use of technology in the classroom mirrors their everyday digital literacy practices.
@katrina_tour

21st Century Education won't be defined by any new technology. It won't be just defined by 1:1 technology programs or tech-intensive projects. 21st Century Education will, however, be defined by a fundamental shift in what we are teaching - a shift towards learner-centered education and creating creative thinkers.
Karl Fisch

"The technology itself is not transformative. It's the school, the pedagogy, that is transformative."
Tanya Byron

Digital literacies are not solely about technical proficiency but about the issues, norms, and habits of mind surrounding technologies used for a particular purpose.
Doug Belshaw, educational researcher

Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is most important."
Bill Gates

"Kids are growing up on a digital playground and no one is on recess duty."
— Kevin Honeycutt, educator

edutopia.org

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CONSULTANT TIPS

Basic implementation would look like this...

- Use technology to enhance and support student learning, primarily used for individual activities - spelling games, listening to digital stories, composing texts using Google docs, etc.

- Teach students how to be good digital citizens. Provide explicit lessons and guidelines for respecting others, using and sharing information, photos, etc.

A more impactful implementation might look like this...

- Use technology to enhance school/home connection. Use apps such as Remind 101 that send text updates to parents. Post materials on Google classroom that students/parents can access at home. Host a classroom blog or portfolio site. Provide access to online literacy sites such as Raz Kids or Spelling City that parents can use at home with their children.

- Guide students to use technology in a purposeful way, self-select the right tools and involve them in co-creation and sharing of their work. For example, students can collaboratively compose and record a story on the Toontastic app, post a video on weebly class blog so parents and grandparents can see what they've been doing, or read each other's poems on the Google Classroom Class Stream and post comments.

- Collaboratively work with grade level colleagues to implement and evaluate effective use of digital literacy components within the classroom.

Someone who has the basics mastered and could go the extra mile might look like this...

- Guide students to create meaningful content that is presented in a unique way and/or shared with a bigger audience - helping students to post on Twitter about a social action project; communicating with polar explorers or doing action research with astronauts during their mission; creating a parody of a common song and remixing it using digital tools; or booking a Classroom Skype or Google Hangout with a children's literature author.

- Become a digital leader. Support colleagues and students in their implementation of digital literacy across classroom, school, division and region.

- Do action-research and publish your discoveries, lessons learned, etc. Share your growing expertise with a broader audience.

- Inspire students to take bigger risks with digital tools, stretch their thinking, creativity, problem solving, and collaboration skills.

- Revisit learning approaches and assessment practices. Is there a way to use digital technology to go further? E.g. Create a virtual city in Minecraft where students can bring to life key concepts to be mastered in Science, Math, Language Arts, etc. Give students a week to delve into a personal challenge and create a digital product to share what they have learned, e.g. learn coding and design an app about First Nations, electrical circuits or the life cycles of animals.

CHALLENGES/PITFALLS/CONSIDERATIONS

Limited access to resources and technology	Students do not need to be 1:1 to integrate tech well. Group students in pairs or small groups. Consider letting students bring their own devices.
Teacher comfort in teaching digital literacy to students; incorporating this type of literacy into everyday learning	Try one new thing at a time. Once you feel comfortable with it, then move on to something new. Teachers do not need to be the expert. Students often know more than teachers when it comes to tech. Use student tech experts to teach you and their classmates.
Assuming that all students are digitally savvy.	Not all students have the same access to technology at home. Furthermore, it is not the preferred learning mode for all children. Nor do they inherently understand how to use it wisely. While students may generally be comfortable clicking and navigating wherever they want to go, are often keen to personalize their devices and shape their online persona as well as spend hours accessing online media content, they have not necessarily been taught the nuances of being responsible digital citizens. Just look at how many computer viruses suddenly infect machines from their random surfing. Many students are incapable of solving problems when they arise or know how to avoid them. Students need continued guidance in the ever-evolving online world.
Class has limited access to devices or a school computer lab.	Technology should become ubiquitous. Rather than a dedicated 30 minutes in the lab 3 times per week, students should be able to grab one of the classroom ipads when needed (akin to reaching for a calculator or a ruler). They can do a quick search, work on their project for a short while or listen to an audio book at their literacy station.
Students are distracted by the technology.	Students need guidance in this area. In fact, many adults do too. What can we do to limit the distraction? Discuss and model strategies for them. Strategies can be as simple as eliminating notification settings on devices and giving students timers or tangible end goals so they maximize time on devices. Create classroom rules about appropriate use. Student-driven, engaging projects are more likely to lead to focused work with fewer distractions.

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Assessment tools that can be used with students:
- E-portfolio - example *FreshGrade*, Seesaw, Kidblog, Edublogs, Weebly, Google Sites
- Google Classroom, Google Forms
- *Kahoot*
- *Formative*
- *Socrative*
- *Plickers*
- *Zaption*
- *Poll Everywhere*

MODIFICATIONS /INCLUSIVE APPROACH

- Word prediction, speech to text, text to speech (Read Write Google, WordQ SpeakQ , etc.), Wikipedia-Simple English.
- iPad & Apps- accessibility features, communication board apps
- Learning technologies that support inclusion: *http://www.learningtechnologiesab.com/*
- Physical resources such as grippy cases and flexible seating

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE...

✔ Students are motivated and passionate about their learning. They ask questions not just to find answers but because they are genuinely passionate about a topic. They are keen to learn more deeply.

✔ Students are engaged in innovative projects they initiated.

✔ Students are able to choose appropriate digital tools for the task. They have competent keyboarding and searching skills, use critical analysis to ensure the integrity of the information they find and respect the intellectual property of digital content.

✔ All students in the class have access to basic assistive tech tools and use them effectively.

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The Open University lists four big skill categories when asking learners to self-assess digital literacy skills. How good are you at:
- understanding digital literacy practices (e.g. digital footprint, personal safety, etc.),
- finding information,
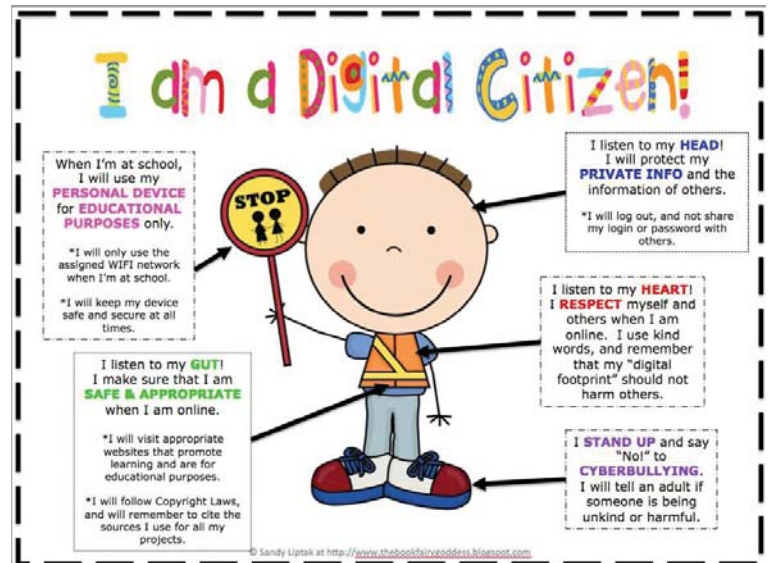- using information, and
- creating information?

Source: *http://www.open.ac.uk/libraryservices/beingdigital/ accessible/accessible-pdf-35-self-assessment-checklist.pdf*

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