

# The Importance of Passwords

TOPIC: ONLINE SAFETY AND SECURITY

GRADES: 6-8

LESSON DURATION: N/A

SOFT SKILLS: COMMUNICATION, AWARENESS, DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

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## Introduction:

- Although some school districts supply student passwords, students have access to devices and need to understand basic safety measures to protect their data. This lesson contains several activities regarding password safety.

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## Materials:

- [Password Safety Tips](#)
- [Activity Sheet](#)
- [Teacher Example](#)

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## Activities:

1. This activity can be used in any middle school course but would fit best into social studies because of the activity included.
2. Begin by asking students to name common non technical ways in which we secure our physical belongings. Answers: locks, padlocks, alarms, safes, safe deposit boxes.
3. What is required in order for someone to access belongings that are protected? (In cybersecurity terms, this is referred to as authentication.) What must a person possess to authenticate their identity and get the belonging? Answers: a key, a combination code, a pin.
4. What online information do we need to protect? Answers: ecommerce, credit cards, identity factors, SSN, physical location, passwords, etc.
5. How do we secure our online information? Answers: usernames and passwords; sometimes encryption. In order to access our information, we must use authentication-we must enter the proper combination of username and password. (If students are tech savvy, they may understand multi factor authentication which requires: 1) something they know (Pin), 2) something they have (ATM card), and/or 3) something they are (Fingerprint scan).)
6. Hand out the Password Tip sheet to students. Discuss the tips that are listed. Can students think of additions to the list? Which tips are easiest to follow? Which are hardest to follow? Be sure that students understand all tips.
7. Application: Allow students to put the tips into action. Have each student choose their favorite historical figure. The teacher can also assign personalities if this activity is done in the midst of a unit of study (Example: Civil War; assign different leaders and famous personalities). The students should then complete the [activity sheet](#). Students will need internet access. Teacher note: As an added activity, students might work with a partner and exchange the passwords

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created in numbers 5 & 6. The students could try to guess the historical figure based upon the passwords created. To test the strength of the password, students should exchange the good passwords first. If they are strong, the partner should not be able to guess. Then the partners can exchange the bad passwords and attempt to guess the identity. They should have more success during this phase.

8. The last activity on the sheet is for students to share the information learned with two adults and then gain signatures to verify the activity. Students could then share the experience of sharing with the adults. Did the adults learn anything new? Did they already have strong passwords? If the teacher wanted to do a quick lesson on data collection and statistics, this activity could be done in a more formalized fashion and students could collect data on password safety from the adults surveyed.

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