

# Educator Guide

**Welcome!** Digital Compass is an innovative way to give students in middle school the freedom to explore how decisions made in their digital lives can impact their relationships and futures. Through the popular choose-your-own-path format, students play through the perspective of one of eight main characters, each of whom is facing a different digital citizenship dilemma. The varied story paths and multiple decision points encourage students to play repeatedly in order to explore alternative courses of action.



## Making the Most of Digital Compass

Please refer to the accompanying **Quick Start Guide** for suggestions on how to get started. Throughout this guide are best practices for implementation and ease of use. Feel free to use these suggestions in the way that works best for you and your students.

You can use Digital Compass in one of two ways:

1. Use Digital Compass as a stand-alone way to onboard students to digital citizenship.
2. For a blended learning approach, use Digital Compass and follow up with a suggested teacher-facilitated lesson from our **K-12 Digital Citizenship Curriculum**.

Check out **Appendix A** for a summary of the research behind the design of Digital Compass.

## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Find facts and gather data for conscientious decisions
- Synthesize information and evaluate options
- Assess situations in order to make informed judgments
- Reflect on decisions and determine alternative choices
- Build interpersonal empathy by role-playing and taking the perspective of others
- Develop skill-based competencies through game-based learning
- Apply learnings to real-world situations



# The Experience

Each module includes an interactive story, an aligned mini-game, and suggested extension activities.

Interactive Story	Mini-game	Extension Activities
A minimum of 45 minutes combined		Time will vary
<p>Each story is aligned to one of our <b>eight K-12 Digital Citizenship curricular topics</b>. Each story has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 endings</li> <li>• 23 decision points</li> <li>• 32 paths</li> <li>• 50 possible combinations</li> </ul> <p>These positive and not-so-positive twists and turns emphasize the wide range of consequences in a student’s daily digital life.</p>	<p>At the end of the first path of each story, students are met with a skills-based mini-game. Each game has randomized content for repeated play. The players’ game scores and times are recorded on scorecards. After playing through the game once, it is “unlocked,” and students have the option to replay each time they hit an ending. Students can “X” out of a game at any time, but incomplete scoring will not be captured on the scorecard.</p>	<p>For a rich, cross-curricular approach, we suggest having your students engage in a reflective creative writing exercise so that they are able to reflect or elaborate on the current issues raised in the eight stories. If you are open to having students stretch their imaginations, share <b>Appendix B</b> for eight ideas for creative writing prompts, or have them apply their real-world lens with the eight reflective writing prompts in <b>Appendix C</b>.</p>



## INFORMATION LITERACY

### Citation Infestation

With competing demands of an overpacked schedule, Jay debates taking some shortcuts to spin his science project into solid gold. If only he could fine-tune his own critical eye when it comes to researching online. How will you help him get through the next 48 hours?

**Mini-game Goal:** Drag the moving bugs to the pins in order to put the citation into proper MLA (Modern Language Association) format.

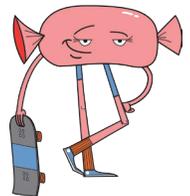


## PRIVACY & SECURITY

### Sticky Situation

Miko finds herself in a sticky situation after signing up for the newest app that everyone is obsessing over. Out of the skate park, she experiences twists and turns as she stumbles over how to protect her privacy. How can you help her protect her online identity?

**Mini-game Goal:** Guide Miko to skate to the left or right to choose the stronger password choice.



## SELF-IMAGE & IDENTITY

### Kung Fu Fibber

Hutch is determined to master all things sports related, but he has yet to learn how to master his own self-image online. Caught up in the glory of it all, Hutch comes face-to-face with his toughest competitor — the truth — both online and offline. How can you encourage Hutch to give 110% on and off the field?

**Mini-game Goal:** Help Hutch work on his chops. Decide which messages are okay to “post” and which he should “pause” and think twice about.





CREATIVE CREDIT & COPYRIGHT

## Hack-a-wrong

For this year's hack-a-thon, Seven is determined to make his mark with a winning invention. But how can he truly own his creative process when he finds "inspiration," as well as distractions, at every turn? Can you help him keep his eye on the prize?

**Mini-game Goal:** For each category — copyright, trademark, or patent — drag three matching items into the vortex and toss out the rest.



CYBERBULLYING

## Digital Heartbreak

Known for keeping a low profile, Rhoda is thrown onto a rollercoaster of digital drama when her friend gets swept up into a new romance. Some say, "All is fair in love and war," but what should she do when the two collide and drama blooms? How can you help Rhoda deal with the ups and downs of digital life?

**Mini-game Goal:** Help Rhoda become an upstander. Decide whether the statements are true or false to move Rhoda forward and get her home.



INTERNET SAFETY

## Break It Down

Tempted by the glitz and glam of those Hollywood lights, Breaker gets caught up in promoting his popular dance moves. Yet his digital footprint threatens to spin out of control as he searches for the public spotlight. Can you help Breaker manage his journey to insta-fame?

**Mini-game Goal:** Help Breaker follow the rules of the road by determining which course of action he should take with each prompt. Should he go for it and post, pause and think about it, or stop and take no action?



RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNICATION

## Insta-slammed

Even though she's one of the most popular girls at school, Pepper still has a lot to learn when it comes to being a good friend. Caught up in the newest app craze of Cute or Brute, Pepper is forced to take a hard look at her own not-so-cute behavior. How can you help Pepper take a hard look in the mirror at her own behavior?

**Mini-game Goal:** Help Pepper sort her messages. Swipe the messages into one of two buckets — positive or negative.



DIGITAL FOOTPRINT & REPUTATION

## Me, Me, Meme

Determined to land the internship of her dreams, Wink goes head to head with her best friend in order to win the attention of her dream employer, but at what cost? She soon finds that fighting for the spotlight may tarnish her digital footprint. How can you convince Wink to shine without crossing the line?

**Mini-game Goal:** Help Wink work on her profile. Choose what to post and what to delete.



## Create an account

Students can start a new game or resume a prior game. Students can simply create a username to get started. Usernames should be all one word and should be 12 characters or less. There are no passwords needed. For more information regarding this and our privacy policy, visit [www.digitalcompass.org/game/index.html](http://www.digitalcompass.org/game/index.html).

## Assessment

**Quantitative:** As students work through a module, a scorecard records their progress. Each scorecard has two types of scores:

- Progress Score: The percentage is based on the number of paths completed (X/32).
- Game Score: For each mini-game, students receive three scores and time recordings:
  - **FIRST** (initial)
  - **LAST** (most recent)
  - **BEST** (highest)

For scoring, correct answers earn 500 points. Correct answers in a row act as power-up multipliers (e.g., 500 points, 1000 points (500 x 2), 1500 points (500 x 3)). Incorrect answers subtract 100 points.

The scorecards display bronze, silver, and gold badges for both the progress on the story as well as the game scores. Students can “save” their individual scorecards or their master scorecard, which summarizes all games played, by printing it in the Web version or saving it to the photo album on tablets.

**Qualitative:** After completing the interactive experience, encourage students to reflect on their decisions, behaviors, and attitudes. Share one or more of the recommended writing extension activities (Appendices B & C) as another means of assessment. You may want to assign one prompt per story, or you can ask students to pick whichever of the prompts intrigues them the most.

As a class, complete the accompanying writable rubrics by focusing on the skills you want your students to demonstrate. Often, teachers use the rubrics to assess and give feedback on a student’s work. Additionally, you can have students use the rubric to assess their own work, which is a great reflective practice.

## Home-to-School Connection

Consider sending home **Appendix D** to share with families what your students have been doing in class. Remember, anyone can access Digital Compass, so families can play through the stories at home, too.

Welcome! Choose an option to begin.

start new game

resume game

Ready to get started with Digital Compass? First, create a username:

(click here)

Your username should be all one word. You can use up to 12 characters. Please make it memorable but do not use your real name.

cancel start

**TIP:** Pick safe usernames that don’t have any identifiable information and be sure to record them in a safe place as there is no way to recover a lost account name.

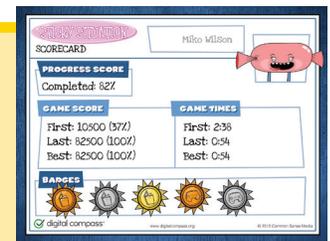
**TIP:** The mini-games track how long the games were played. As to not frustrate student but encourage them, the timers count up; students can try to beat their previous times.

### Story Badges:

- Bronze:** reached 1 ending
- Silver:** reached 3 endings
- Gold:** reached 9 endings

### Game Badges:

- Bronze:** “completed the game” (1st gameplay)
- Silver:** “great score, great time” (80% or better)
- Gold:** “flawless gameplay” (100%)



**TIP:** Within Edmodo, students can upload a screenshot of scorecards to their “backpacks.” They may want to create a Digital Compass folder for all eight scorecards, which they can share with you.



### Tell us what you think!

Send us comments, questions, and suggestions at [schools@commonsense.org](mailto:schools@commonsense.org). We would love to hear from you and your students!

## Research-based Design

Our design and development process relied heavily on research. We dove into kids' developmental needs as well as game design ideals. Read below to see some of the thought behind our decisions, explained by Dr. Michael Carter, PhD.

### What role can gaming play in a classroom/learning environment?

Scholars and practitioners have for decades studied the use of games in classrooms and found that good games that foster learning prove to engage students, particularly disaffected students, in such a way as to improve their grasp and retention across a wide spectrum of subject matter (Malone, 1980; Gee, 2008). Role-playing games and simulations particularly help learners develop skills and intuition because they invest in the decisions they make and persist to do better (Clark et al., 2014a). In short, not only do the majority of teachers who use games in their classrooms consider them to be an effective tool for learning (Banville, 2013), but research demonstrates that learning games produce measurable gains among the students who play them (Clark et al., 2014b).

### How is this approach developmentally appropriate?

Reports on, and frameworks for, successful middle grade schools emphasize that curriculum must be relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory, and that assessment must allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills (Andrews et al., 2007). Learners in early adolescence are particularly sensitive to the presence or absence of *emotion* in their activities, and active learning motivates them more than lectures or textbooks (Armstrong, 2006; Bishop & Pflaum, 2005). Around the age of 11 or 12, children learn to think about abstract concepts and, as well, adolescent egocentrism emerges — an attentiveness to what others are thinking of them (Anthony, n.d.). It is a very good time for adolescents to “practice” by way of role-playing and taking the perspective of others, for this is when they begin to perceive problems in several dimensions and start to think strategically (Blakemore, 2006).

### Why is the 2nd person, “you,” versus “I” impactful?

Narrators have spoken to digital gamers since the very beginning, nearly 40 years ago, when Will Crowther's original *Adventure* text game announced, “YOU ARE STANDING AT THE END OF A ROAD BEFORE A SMALL BRICK BUILDING. AROUND YOU IS A FOREST. A SMALL STREAM FLOWS OUT OF THE BUILDING AND DOWN A GULLY.” Players responded by typing, “GO IN,” and thus went down the “rabbit hole” to explore the colossal cave. When graphics were added to such games, tokens such as those used in chess and checkers and Monopoly and Dungeons & Dragons were replaced with player characters and avatars. Players can at the same time be *in* the game and be playing it. This increases their engagement, since it is they who are making choices played out in the scenario.

### How does play through an avatar affect inquiry-based learning?

Learners who participate in gameplay through the person of an avatar, a representation of themselves, usually behave in a fashion consistent with the character of their chosen surrogate. They will, though, be more outgoing and risk-taking when acting through their avatar (Messinger et al., 2008). Moreover, studies done over the last decade demonstrate that the consistency effect carries over into real life. Kids who play the “good guy” in a game behave better when they're done (Yee, 2009; Yoon et al., 2014).

### How can kids build empathy through perspective taking?

Research suggests that playing a prosocial game increases interpersonal empathy and decreases the pleasure players take in others' misfortune (Greitmeyer et al., 2010). Players acting in a manner that allows them to understand and to feel the emotions one would in a real-life situation are more prone to understand others' thoughts and feelings in such situations (Chmielarz, 2013).

## APPENDIX A

### **Do boys and girls play through this model differently?**

Research has found that boys play games for achievement-oriented reasons and are more aggressive than girls (Williams et al., 2009). However, in multiplayer games, qualitative analysis suggests that players who demonstrate empathy with their avatars' genders are able to form positive interpersonal relationships that allow them to accept others' expressed identities (Osborne, 2012). So players making choices for an avatar of a different gender become more likely to understand challenges from the point of view of someone of that gender and to behave more empathetically to their dilemma.

### **How does repetitive, exploratory play affect real-world decision-making?**

An inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning seeks to foster intellectual engagement and foster deep understanding (Stephenson, n.d.). If play is considered the creative tension between rules and freedom, between what is known and unknown (Thomas & Brown, 2011), then play as a way of practicing real-world situations becomes rehearsal for those very situations and the challenges they present. The player is ready to confront the dilemmas and make the right choice.

### **How can fantastical (i.e., outrageous) scenarios be applicable to/impactful for real-world situations?**

Researchers have found that a number of factors influence a learner's ability to apply new knowledge, including the nature of the learning experience and the contexts for the initial learning and the new situation to which it may apply (Darling-Hammond et al., 2003). The study of game transfer phenomena covers not only cognitive behaviors in real life that derive from engaging gameplay, but also affective behaviors. One early study (Anderson, 1983) demonstrated that imagining performing behaviors as the main character in a script changed personal intentions for several days after. Games allow people to adopt virtual identities. The appeal of games is due in part to their ability to provide players with novel experiences that let them "try on" ideal aspects of their selves that might not find expression in everyday life. Research has found that games have the greatest influence on emotions when players' experiences of themselves during play were congruent with players' conceptions of their ideal selves (Przybylski et al., 2012).

### **How is playing with positive, neutral, and negative outcomes effective?**

Cognitive evaluation theory/self-determination theory predicts that interpersonal events and structures (e.g., rewards, communications, feedback) that encourage feelings of competence and autonomy will enhance intrinsic motivation. Choice and the opportunity for self-direction appear to enhance intrinsic motivation, as they afford a greater sense of autonomy (Korteling et al., 2011). Having players' decisions lead to different outcomes engages players and encourages them to try different paths through difficult situations.

### **What purpose do embedded mini-games serve?**

Traditionally, mini-games are interspersed with role-playing games both to reinforce what is being learned and to give the player a palpable sense of progress (Frazier et al., 2007). The more concrete the concept embodied in the game, the more likely the player is to grasp the concept and retain it (Illanas et al., 2008). The knowledge and skills the players have acquired in the role-playing games serves to help them solve the puzzles more effectively (Jonker et al., 2009).

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## APPENDIX A

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## Extension Activities: Reflective Writing Prompts

1. Think back upon your decisions. Which choice did you make that led you the most astray? How applicable do you think that scenario is to your daily life?
2. How does playing with negative outcomes, even the fantastical ones, help you apply new thinking to your real world?
3. Why is the digital world filled with so many ups and downs? What do you think are the best opportunities? What are the pitfalls that you and your peers need to watch out for?
4. Did you find that you played with the positive or negative choices first? Why? What lessons stood out to you, and how do they apply to your own life?
5. What other digital dilemmas or ordeals were not covered in this story? What is another related issue that you see your peers grappling with quite often?
6. Were there any characters or situations that prompted you to think twice about particular digital behaviors? How so? Which lessons would you pass along to a younger sibling or friend?
7. Which character do you most relate to? Why? How are you similar? In what ways are you different?
8. Can you make any personal connections to the story? Think about a particular decision or ending. How did it relate to your real life?

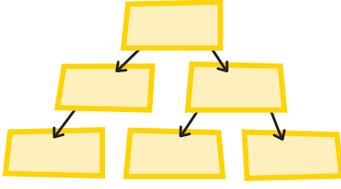
**Tech it up: Consider recording your thoughts digitally. You could even journal in a podcast, video, or multimedia format.**

- Explain Everything
- Educreations
- VoiceThread
- QuadBlogging
- Mural.ly
- Prezi
- Mozilla Popcorn Maker
- Animoto

## Reflective Writing Rubric

Attributes	4	3	2	1	0
	Strong; Consistent	Effective; Reasonable	Developing; Inconsistent	Emerging; Limited	No evidence
<b>Organization &amp; Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus</li> <li>▪ Sequencing</li> <li>▪ Transitions</li> <li>▪ Fluency</li> <li>▪ Progression</li> </ul>					
<b>Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ideas</li> <li>▪ Details</li> <li>▪ Techniques</li> <li>▪ Pacing</li> </ul>					
<b>Craft</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voice</li> <li>▪ Word choice</li> <li>▪ Description</li> <li>▪ Dialogue</li> <li>▪ Style</li> </ul>					
<b>Conventions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grammar — mechanics &amp; usage</li> <li>▪ Spelling</li> <li>▪ Punctuation</li> </ul>					
<b>Total score:</b> <input style="width: 50px; height: 30px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> /16					

## Extension Activities: Creative Writing Prompts

Writing Prompts	
Traditional	Tech It Up
One decision can send a character down a completely different path. Write an alternative ending for one of the Digital Compass story lines by focusing on changing the penultimate decision.	Use <b>Toontastic</b> or <b>GoAnimate</b> to create a dramatic digital story complete with animation, voice-over, and music.
<p>Create your own choose-your-own-adventure story. Start with a positive, a neutral, and a negative ending and work backwards to map out a story tree.</p>  <p>Then, pick a character and a theme to craft an engaging narrative using the second-person point of view (“you”).</p>	Build interactive webpages using <b>Office Mix</b> (new from PPT) or <b>Keynote</b> . Create two decision buttons on each page, and hyperlink each button to other story slides.
Think about a digital dilemma from your own life. How can you share your lesson learned? Write a fable based on a digital dilemma. Create some animal characters and try to sum up the lesson into a moral at the end.	Try <b>Story Jumper</b> to illustrate your own storybook.
Science fiction and fantasy have always been popular genres. From <i>Ender’s Game</i> to <i>Harry Potter</i> , these tales have wrapped valuable lessons in fantastical, out-of-this-world elements. Create your own story in a futuristic world that is bombarded with digital life ups and downs. What conflicts will your cast of characters encounter?	Use <b>Story Dice</b> or <b>Rory’s Story Cubes</b> to help inspire your setting, characters, and conflicts for plot twists.
Breaking news! Something has happened somewhere in Anywhere! Take on the role of a journalist and report on the 5 W’s of one of the situations (positive or negative) in Digital Compass: who, what, where, when, why.	Try the Printing Press from <b>Read, Write, Think</b> , or the newspaper template in Microsoft Word, to format a front page of a newspaper. What related advertisements might you see?
Consider “interviewing” one or two of the characters. Create a list of 10 questions to ask them about kids’ digital lives today. Consider how their personalities might shine through in their quotes and their perspectives on your questions.	To bring a character to life, try <b>Fotobabble</b> or <b>VoiceThread</b> (which allows you to collaborate with others).
What if you were to write a “Dear Abby” advice column for your peers? What questions would you want to tackle? And what would your suggestions and recommendations be?	Choose a character in <b>Tellagami</b> to dispense your sage advice.
Give a snapshot of a day in the life of a teenager. How does digital media play a role (for better or worse) from sunup to sundown?	Use <b>Pixton</b> , <b>Comic Life</b> , or <b>Make Beliefs Comix</b> to bring your narrative to life as a graphic novel.

## Creative Writing Rubric

Evidence of writing process:

- Brainstorming     
  Drafting     
  Revisions     
  Editing     
  Publishing

**Total score: \_\_\_/5**

Attributes	4	3	2	1	0
	Strong; Consistent	Effective; Reasonable	Developing; Inconsistent	Emerging; Limited	No evidence
<b>Organization &amp; Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus</li> <li>▪ Sequencing</li> <li>▪ Transitions</li> <li>▪ Fluency</li> <li>▪ Progression</li> </ul>					
<b>Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ideas</li> <li>▪ Details</li> <li>▪ Techniques</li> <li>▪ Pacing</li> </ul>					
<b>Craft</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voice</li> <li>▪ Word choice</li> <li>▪ Description</li> <li>▪ Dialogue</li> <li>▪ Style</li> </ul>					
<b>Conventions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grammar – mechanics &amp; usage</li> <li>▪ Spelling</li> <li>▪ Punctuation</li> </ul>					
<b>Attributes score: <input type="text"/> /16</b>					
<b>Writing process score: <input type="text"/> /5</b>					
<b>Total score: <input type="text"/> /21</b>					

# ✓ common sense digital compass



**Want to take a glimpse into your child's 24/7 digital world?  
Want to experience the ups and downs of today's digital life?  
The digital world is full of decisions:**

<b>Should I share?</b>	<b>What do I believe?</b>	<b>Do I post?</b>	<b>What should I comment?</b>	<b>Can I copy?</b>
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Sit with your kids and explore the fundamentals of digital citizenship through these eight animated, choose-your-own-adventure stories. Make good (and not-so-good) decisions as you encounter digital dilemmas — all without risking your real-world reputation.

## Play Digital Compass with your kids!

Get the app: Available on the App Store GET IT ON Google play Available in the Edmodo Store or play online at [www.digitalcompass.org](http://www.digitalcompass.org).

Available in Spanish too!

### Common Sense says ...

- Remember to model the behavior you want to see in your kids.
- It's a complex digital world. Talk with your kids about the pitfalls and the opportunities.
- You're never too young to think about safe, responsible, and respectful online behavior.