Digital Citizenship Lesson Plan

Marketing to Kids

General Topic (as defined in the Digital Literacy Framework)	DB3
Digital Citizenship b) Privacy and Security	
Applicable Grade Range	
K-2	
Outcome(s) to be Addressed	
The student understands that the purpose of product websites is to encourage buying the product and is aware of methods used to promote products on these sites.	
Importance / Significance of Lesson	
Students need to realize that the websites that they play on are built by companies in order to sell toys and other products to them. Even though the games are fun and the pictures look really cool, the company then wants kids to ask their parents to buy the things they see online. Students need to understand that it is okay to play on these sites, but that the real purpose is to sell merchandise.	
Duration	
20 minutes	
Overview	
Teachers will take students on a web tour of two websites and students will try to find all the advertisements contained within.	
Required Resources	
Computer hooked up to a projector	

Lesson Plan and Extension Activities
Start off by talking about advertisements and what they are. Talk about examples that students might have seen on TV or in a magazine and outline that advertisements try to get people to buy things that the company sells. Often times the things that are advertised are not even things that people need. But companies play on people's emotions by saying their product is cool or exciting or that you'll have more fun and be more popular if you use their brand. Using a computer hooked up to a projector, take students to http://www.lego.com/en-us/ and help them pick out anything that is an advertisement as you move around in the site. Play some games, watch some videos and explore a number of the tabs available on the site. Do the same with http://www.barbie.com/en-ca On this site the advertisements are more subtle. All of the 'figures' that are featured can be bought, but there are no direct ads to be found. Students may relate to dolls or toy sets that they have or want but there are no specific advertisements for products. Note that sometimes there will be a pop-up ad at the end of a game, sometimes there are banner ads that run down one side of the website. Sometimes there are 'featured products' or 'buy now' tabs that users can click on to shop directly from the site. Always, the activities that you do or games that you play will have a similar product that is available to purchase online or in stores. Finish by reminding students that the purpose of product websites is to sell products to people. The games can be fun and exciting, but are meant to encourage people to want to buy the toys.
Adaptations
Older kids could watch the video at https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/selling-to-kids-tips and discuss the various ways that advertisers try to reach them and what to remember when they come across advertisements online. This lesson could be modified to include apps that students use on mobile devices. Again, banner ads, ads at the end of a level or direct options to make purchases are present, however, often there is no tangible product to purchase – just more lives or bonus features to be used in the app itself.

Additional Resources
https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/selling-to-kids-tips http://www.greatschools.org/students/media-kids/506-media-selling-to-kids.gs
Cross-curricular Outcomes Also Addressed
Language Arts – reading for information

~developed by Kristin Sward, 2014