

# Digital Citizenship in the Classroom

Saskatchewan School Library Association

THE MEDIUM – SPRING 2014

Chantelle Anderson



# Digital Citizenship in the Classroom

---

## Saskatchewan School Library Association

To me the sign of a good conference is when I can take away great ideas and directly apply them to my job both as Teacher Librarian and as a classroom teacher. The IT Summit in Saskatoon is one of those conferences, and this year was no exception. I 'tweeted' quotes and links, ideas and apps. One session in particular caught my attention and gave me some great 'food for thought' to take away and that was the session on Digital Citizenship. Presented by [Joanna Sanders](#) and [Andrea Hnatiuk](#) from the Ministry of Education, it gave a good variety of ideas to get started, some theory as to why it's important, and some resources to use in creating our own lessons and programs surrounding digital citizenship. Here is a link to their presentation <http://goo.gl/iFmzZL>. They also put a plug in for the Digital Citizenship Massive Open Online Course (DCMOOC) that the Ministry hosted with [Alec Couros](#) from the University of Regina. The MOOC is complete but the archived copies of all the presentations still exist on the website <http://dcmooc.ca/> along with blogs and other resources. I highly recommend watching the archived presentations as the conversations surrounding them in the chat are phenomenal!

After participating in both the session at the IT Summit and the DCMOOC, I've learned that digital citizenship is more than just telling our students what they should and shouldn't do online. Just as we are teaching them to be responsible and contributing citizens in society, our presence online is quickly becoming a norm. Our students need to understand early how to interact appropriately and safely online, what their presence should look like, and what tools are available to them BEFORE they create that permanent footprint. Giving our students ample opportunities to explore and create is important but not without the proper tools to do so safely and appropriately. Everyone has a different idea or approach as to how to get the digital citizenship point across, but I think it's important not to scare students. There are a lot of messages out there designed to show students the consequences of bad choices online, and I think there is a place for those messages, but after having conversations with my own students I feel that it is more effective to validate what they are doing right and give them more tools to make better choices. We need to model it ourselves and share that in our conversations with our students – for in teaching them to be better digital citizens has made me more aware of my own online presence.

I decided to test out “BYOD” (Bring Your Own Device) in my classroom and had several posters to help support the conversation and manage the devices. One poster I used was one that is becoming quite popular:



<http://www.preventingcrime.ca/think>

After a conversation about research skills and the validity of Wikipedia, I discovered that a couple of my students had changed the Old Dutch Foods page on Wikipedia to make themselves the Founders! Perfect teaching opportunity! Then we had an issue with some pictures that were posted on Snapchat .....again, teachable moment! I felt I was adding too many symbols on the side to the poster and created a new one to go along with our discussions.



Our new favourite saying in class now is “Just because you can, doesn’t mean you should”! There are some great statistics, ideas, activities and tools found on the [Media Smarts](#) website. What’s great about it is, it’s Canadian. Most anything to do with Digital Literacy can be found on that site. There is a whole section for Teacher Resources, class tutorials, and tons of ideas to get the conversations going in your classrooms for all ages. Through the DCMOOC I’ve discovered more resources to help foster these conversations and lessons on Twitter and Google+ using the hashtags #digicit and #dcmooc. There is also a Google+ Community dedicated to dcmooc as well. In response to the need for resources and the realization of the importance of this topic there will be several new initiatives and documents coming from the Ministry so stay tuned and start the conversations!