

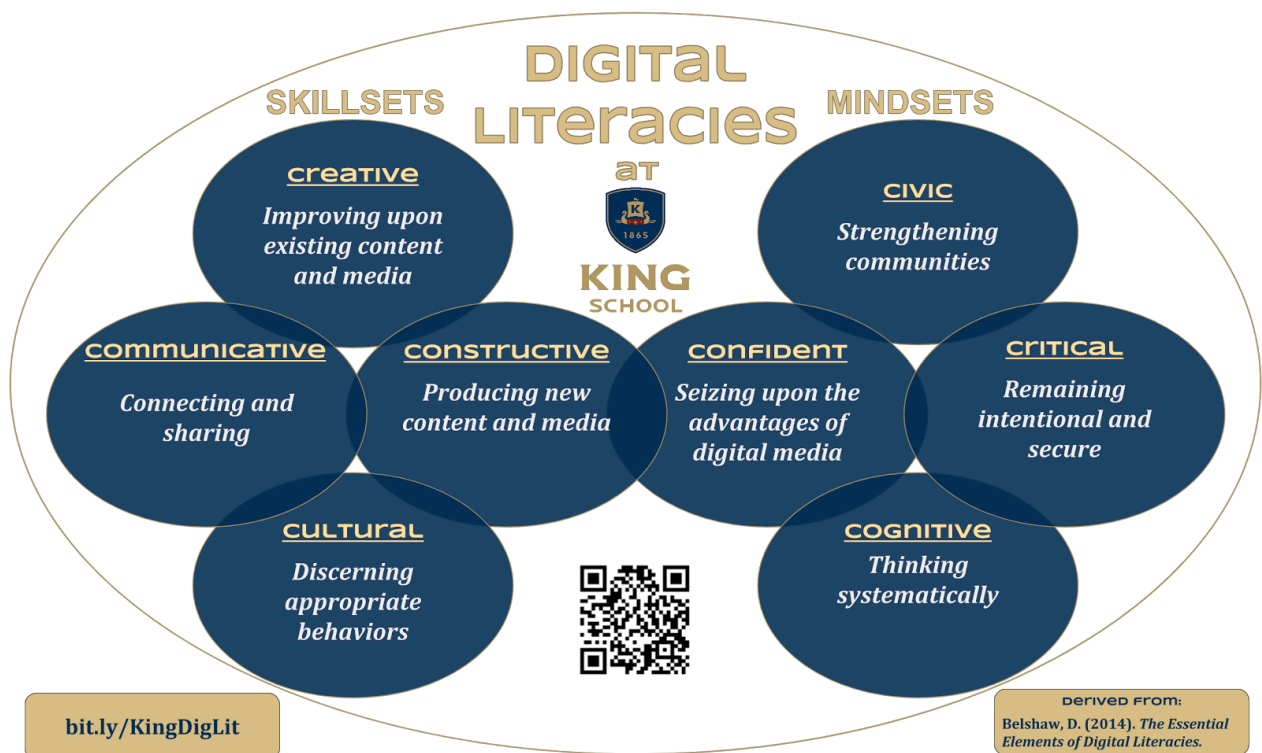
HOME TECHNOLOGY USE AT KING SCHOOL GRADES PK-8 PARENT EDITION

OPPORTUNITIES

Digital technologies unlock a whole new world of possibilities for children to learn, create, connect, and play.

Digital media empower students to . . .

- . . . **learn** deeply through rich multimedia, immersion in virtual environments, and the motivation that comes from educational play.
- . . . **connect** and stay connected with anyone across barriers of time and space.
- . . . **create** their own rich multimedia content and **publish** it for real world audiences.



DILEMMAS

Of course, technologies also present special challenges. These are just a few to consider when regulating home technology use.

Sometimes, digital media . . .

- . . . **can expose children** to dangers like people intent on theft or abuse, to marketers, and to others—now or at any time over the permanent lifespan of digital information.
- . . . **can provoke antisocial behavior** by denying us vocal and physical cues to tell when we're being offensive.
- . . . **can pull us constantly away from the present**, into the “out there” rather than the “right here,” which can distract us from the moment and the people around us, and can disturb us from reflecting inwardly.
- . . . **can be addictive**, leading unsupervised teens to serious social, academic, and health difficulties.



GUIDELINES FOR GRADES PK-8 PARENTS

Consider these guidelines for your student's safe and healthy home technology use:

- **Promote digital media for *creation* rather than just *consumption*.** Technology use does not have to be passive; it offers powerful opportunities for learning, connection, and creativity. Encourage your child's healthy relationship with technology by attuning them early to these constructive possibilities.
- **Limit screen use to specific times and certain zones.** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children consume no more than one to two hours of entertainment media daily, that screens be kept out of children's bedrooms, and that they be kept off at mealtimes. Limiting screens to zones of the home can ensure an adult is present to monitor screen time and media content.

... ***And watch, surf, and game with your children.*** Talk with them about it. Ask them questions, and answer theirs. Establish yourself as a part of your child's digital life, not apart from it.

- **Establish yourself as the gatekeeper to new services.** Children should not sign up for services—nor fill out any form—without your approval. You protect their privacy until they can do so for themselves.

The law requires websites and online services serving children under the age of thirteen to post privacy policies detailing their information practices and to obtain verifiable parental consent before collecting children's data. Rather than comply, popular services like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat under their terms of use do not allow children to join until their thirteenth birthday.

... ***And learn the privacy settings.*** Subscribing is just the first step. Protect your child's personal information by reviewing privacy settings and choosing options that feel right to you. These settings need to be revisited periodically as they are updated. Learn more from the recommended sites below.

- **Establish boundaries for appropriate online communication.** With whom is it appropriate for your child to communicate online? On which platforms? (Note: many games have chat features). About what topics? How should your child respond if someone tries to cross those boundaries?

... ***And establish consequences for bullying behavior before it happens.*** These conversations can combat psychological factors that can make online behavior feel less impactful, and they reinforce King's messaging that our virtues are the same offline or on.

- **Collect your child's passwords.** Position yourself to intervene if necessary. In one King family, each child sealed all her passwords in an envelope which she gave to her parents. The seal signaled mutual trust that she would adhere to guidelines while they would only intervene in an emergency.

... ***And be a friend and a follower*** to your child's accounts. Position yourself to supervise your child's online behavior from accounts of your own.

- **Use parental controls on your home network.** King recommends the free tool from [opendns.com](https://www.opendns.com).
- **Team up with other parents.** Hosting other children? Establish expectations ahead of time. What kinds of technology will they be using? Will pictures be posted on social media? Note: for groups of children, supervising and delimiting technology use is especially recommended.
- **Model appropriate technology use.** Like anything, children learn media use through observation. Monitor your own media habits, set aside times and places to disconnect, and do not text and drive.

Learn more about digital media and children from the following sources:

Books

- *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media* by Mizuko Ito
- *Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives* by John Palfrey and Urs Gasser
- *A Parent's Guide to Online Safety* by Doug Fodeman and Marje Monroe

Websites

- [CommonSenseMedia.org](https://www.commonsensemedia.org)
- [ESRB.org](https://www.esrb.org)
- [ConnectSafely.org](https://www.connectsafely.org)
- [iKeepSafe.org](https://www.ikeepsafe.org)
- [OnGuardOnline.gov](https://www.onguardonline.gov)
- [ParentFurther.com](https://www.parentfurther.com)



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