NetDay Cyber Security Kit for Schools

Computer-Savvy Families:
A Story about Cyber Security for Children

Introduction: This short, entertaining story discusses the importance of computer security and online safety for children. The story was written by Diane Horton, a 4th grade teacher, and is appropriate for 3rd – 5th graders.

For Classroom Use: Teachers are encouraged to read the story aloud with their class and use the content to discuss computer safety with students. There are also lesson suggestions for how to use the story to illustrate grammar rules. NetDay urges teachers to send the story, along with the companion, *"Computer-Savvy Families: Action Items to Secure your Home Computer,"* home with the students to encourage families to learn together about safe computing practices.

For Families: Read this story with your children, and discuss how your family is practicing safe computing in your home. Use the *"Computer-Savvy Families: Action Items to Secure your Home Computer"* to find practical suggestions about improving your home computer use and care, and also how to keep your children safe and secure in the online world.

About NetDay: NetDay's mission is to connect every child to a brighter future by helping educators meet educational goals through the effective use of technology. NetDay (www.NetDay.org), a national non-profit organization known for its successful school wiring programs, today manages community and web-based programs that promote enhanced student achievement through the effective use of technology.

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A Story about Cyber Security for Children

This is the story of a family, and since families come in many arrangements, you will have to fit the story to your family. My story has a girl named Nina and her parents Mame and Perry.

Mame and Perry were very good parents, loving their daughter and wishing to "make the world her oyster." (A phrase that means if you have money, you can have anything you want.) While they had an abundance of love, they didn't have the kind of money it takes to give Nina the world. Every night after putting Nina to bed, Mame and Perry would sigh and say, "If only we could give our only child the gift of knowing all the beautiful and wondrous places in this world -- to bring her the art, music, literature and culture of civilizations old and new. Why, if we had the money, we could even send her exploring through space to discover the universe!"

At this very moment, a magical robot named Grok heard their wish. "Your wish was intercepted in virtual reality, and I'm here to tell you that it's not money you need, but technology. A home computer with Internet access (and a few fun games) is the only thing needed to bring the world – the universe – to your beloved Nina."

Perry and Mame jumped up and down with excitement. At last they could give Nina every opportunity, every experience, and all knowledge at her fingertips – and they never had to leave home! They began to thank Grok with great enthusiasm, when suddenly s/he shouted, "Silence!"

"The world, the universe is full of wonder and beauty and great knowledge, but it is also full of danger, difficulties, and challenges. As loving, responsible parents you must educate yourselves, and then your daughter Nina, in cyber safety. Think of a computer

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as a passport to universal travel. You wouldn't leave the safety of your home without travel plans. You will need a computer use plan as well."

"I'm going to make this easy. There are eight points in a computer use plan and they conveniently spell the word C-O-M-P-U-T-E-R. I provided boxes so you can check off each item as you learn it and put it into practice. And by the way, I'm a robot made by teachers, so there could be a quiz at the end of this lesson."

☐ **C** – **C**entral location is important. We can all **"C"** (see) the **c**omputer. It must be a place that's **C**onvenient for everyone, and some place that **c**an be seen from a distance. A **c**entral location is like a great seat at a baseball game. You can **C** everything so well.

☐ **O** – **O**nly **O**pen email from friends. If you don't know whom it's from, delete it *before* **o**pening **o**r reading it. Unknown email is a rotten apple you can't throw in the trash fast enough.

☐ **M** – **M**onitor your child's computer use. Limit Internet, email, instant **m**essaging, and chat room access. **M**ake sure you always know where your child is going, where s/he's been, and with whom. **M**ake sure you know who her "friends" are online. **M**eticulous **m**onitoring keeps computer **m**isuse at a **m**inimum.

☐ **P** – **P**asswords and other **P**ersonal information are secrets. Never give anyone account information like your **p**assword, address, **p**hone number, or **p**ersonal information about your age or appearance over the **p**hone or by email. **P**sst! Wow, **p**asswords and **p**ersonal information must be kept secret.

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☐ **U** – **U**se available anti-virus software. Protecting your home computer from viruses is an important part of keeping your computer healthy, happy, and a valuable member of the family. If you treat your computer with loving concern, you will have a friend for many years. You can purchase any commercially available anti-virus software at a computer store, or download it from the Internet.

☐ **T** – **T**ake the **T**ime to backup your files. Keep backup copies of all the files on diskettes or re-writeable CD-roms. Make sure these backup copies are stored in a safe place. **T**his will be a lifesaver if your computer ever breaks down. Or if you accidentally delete files.

☐ **E –** Email attachments can cause viruses, so you should never open email attachments that you are not supposed to be receiving, and also if you receive a strange email from a friend's email address, send them a message before opening the email attachment just to be sure it is not a computer virus.

☐ **R** - **R**esponsible parents know the web sites their child has visited and track the work done on the computer. This **r**esponsibility applies to children of all ages.

Quiz: A Story about Cyber Security for Children

(I warned you there could be a quiz.)

Use the acronym C-O-M-P-U-T-E-R to find the following:

1. a simile

2. a metaphor

3. an example of alliteration

4. an example of onomatopoeia

5. an example of personification

6. a sentence fragment

7. a run on sentence

8. what responsible parents do

Bonus!: Find the phrase that originated in a Shakespeare play.

Extra Credit: A teacher designed and built Grok. What do you think s/he looks like?

Draw it. List or draw some of the capabilities of a teacher-designed robot.

Quiz Answers: A Story about Cyber Security for Children

Answers:

1. A **c**entral location is *like* a good seat at a baseball game.

2. Unknown email *is* a rotten apple you can't throw in the trash fast enough.

3. **M**eticulous **m**onitoring keeps computer **m**isuse at a **m**inimum.

4. *Psst*! *Wow*, **p**asswords and **p**ersonal information must be kept secret.

5. Protecting your home computer from viruses is an important part of keeping *your computer healthy, happy, and a valuable member of the family.* If you *treat your computer with loving concern, you will have a friend for many years.*

6. Or if you accidentally delete files.

7. **E**mail attachments can cause viruses, s0 you should never open **e**mail attachments that you are not supposed to be receiving, and also if you receive a strange **e**mail from a friend's **e**mail address, send them a message before opening the **e**mail attachment just to be sure it is not a computer virus.

8. **R**esponsible parents know the web sites their child has visited and track the work done on the computer.

Additional Activities: A Story about Cyber Security for Children

Bonus! Extra Credit: The phrase "make the world her oyster" or more accurately,

"Why, then the world's mine oyster, Which I with sword will open," is from

Shakespeare's play The Merry Wives of Windsor (II, ii, 2-3).

Hint: You could have looked that up on your computer using the Internet. That's what I

did. It was easy, and it only took me a few minutes. Ah, the advantages of technology

– used responsibly of course!

And they all lived happily, safely, and intelligently ever after.

The Beginning

(of a wonderful relationship with your computer).