



Digital Literacy Skills Assessment User Guide

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PART ONE: Introduction

This user guide is intended for anyone who administers or interprets results of the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment. The Digital Literacy Skills Assessment is not a standardized test. Instead, it is a flexible instructional tool that programs may adapt to fit their needs, whether for intake, orientation, goal setting, or instructional planning. Practitioners are encouraged to use the assessment as a conversation starter to help them explore students' past experiences with technology, understand their strengths, and support them in identifying meaningful goals.

The most likely users of this guide include instructors, digital literacy specialists (DLs), and student support coordinators (SSCs), although administrators, tutors, and other staff may also find the guide useful. The goal of this guide is to support consistent, thoughtful use of the assessment across programs and to help practitioners integrate digital literacy more intentionally into their instruction and student support services.

The assessment was field-tested during development with an adult education program, and insights from those practitioners informed both the wording of the assessment and the recommendations included in this guide.

Digital Literacy Skills Assessment

The Digital Literacy Skills Assessment is a tool to help adult education staff and students engage with the Digital Literacy Skills framework more effectively. The assessment is designed to help practitioners identify learners' current digital literacy skills, support goal-setting, and monitor progress over time.

The assessment mirrors the structure of the [Digital Literacy Skills checklist](#), using the same four skill areas and three developmental levels. Unlike the original checklist, the assessment includes simplified language, brief definitions for each skill, and explanations of why the skill is important, all of which were intended to support student comprehension. Although some technology-related vocabulary is unavoidable, the reading level of the Digital Literacy Skills has been intentionally adjusted to approximately the 6th–8th grade range to make the assessment more accessible for a wide range of adult learners.

What are the Digital Literacy Skills?

The [Digital Literacy Skills](#) are part of Pennsylvania's Foundation Skills, alongside the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), and the Transferable Skills. The Digital Literacy Skills framework includes four core skill areas, including Basic Computer and Mobile, Internet, Communication, and Information Literacy. Each skill area is defined and supported by a set of competencies organized into three developmental levels. These levels help educators identify where a learner is currently performing and what growth might look like over time.

The Digital Literacy Skills framework provides educators with a clear structure for teaching and monitoring essential digital skills that support students' educational, workforce, and personal goals. By outlining core skill areas, defining what it means to be digitally literate, and identifying benchmarks for growth, the framework helps instructors to intentionally integrate digital literacy into instruction and build learners' confidence and adaptability in today's technology-driven world.

Assessment Planning

Thoughtful planning is key to successfully integrating the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment into instruction or program activities. Before introducing the assessment to students, program personnel should consider its purpose, timing, and delivery method within their specific context.

The assessment's adaptability makes it appropriate for a variety of uses. An instructor in a high school equivalency (HSE) class may administer it with the goal of using the results to guide lesson planning. An SSC may use it during intake or orientation to identify the digital skills learners need to reach academic or career goals. A team of English as a second language (ESL) instructors might use it collaboratively to ensure consistent integration of digital literacy support and instruction across multiple class levels.

Practitioners should use the assessment in the way that works best for their instructional context. Although the assessment is organized around broad skill areas, instructors can make the questions more specific by connecting them to the applications or tasks their students regularly use in their classrooms. For example, instead of asking whether a student can "use software," an instructor might ask whether the student can complete core tasks in Microsoft Word, navigate Canvas, or use Burlington English. Similarly, programs that focus on workforce readiness may adapt items to reflect digital tasks required on the job, such as using spreadsheets or word processing software, uploading documents, or communicating professionally by email. These small adaptations help make the assessment more relevant and meaningful for students while providing instructors with clearer insight into the digital skills that matter most in their setting.

When planning, educators should reflect on three guiding themes:

- **Purpose:** Why are you using the assessment? Will it help guide instruction, identify goals, inform intake, and/or measure growth over time?
- **Format:** How will you administer the assessment – on paper, electronically, or both? Will students complete it independently, in small groups, or as a class?
- **Use of Results:** How will you use the information gathered? Will you use results to inform individual goal setting, class planning, or program evaluation?

Taking time to address these questions in advance helps ensure a smoother experience for both staff and students. It also encourages consistency and intentionality across instructors or program sites using the tool.

Preparing Students for the Assessment

Careful preparation is essential to ensuring a positive experience for students. Before administering the assessment, program staff should clearly explain its purpose and reassure students that it is not graded. The assessment is designed to help learners identify their current strengths and set goals for growth, and this framing is likely to lead to higher engagement and more meaningful results.

Introducing the concept of digital literacy before the assessment can also be helpful. A brief discussion about how digital skills support education, employment, and everyday life helps students connect the assessment to their goals. Providing examples, such as using digital tools for completing work, managing schedules, or using search strategies to find reliable information, can make the task more relevant.

Students who are English language learners or who have limited experience with technology may need additional support. Previewing key vocabulary, allowing students to work with a partner, or completing one section at a time can make the process more accessible. In the field-test, most ESL students who completed the online version used translation tools and were able to work independently or collaboratively with success.

Across settings, the most effective assessment experiences occur when students understand that the overall purpose is to guide learning and support goal setting. Instructors report that conversations about the assessment often spark meaningful discussions about students' past experiences, challenges, and aspirations with technology that can inform instruction and strengthen the learning community.

Administering the Assessment

The Digital Literacy Skills Assessment can be used flexibly to suit a variety of learning environments. It can be delivered during intake, orientation, classroom instruction, or program evaluation, depending on the program or instructor's goals. Some staff may choose to administer the full assessment at once, while others prefer to focus on one or two sections at a time.

The assessment may be completed either on paper or electronically, depending on available technology and the digital skill levels of students. The mode of delivery can influence the level of student independence. In a field-test, most learners completing the online version were able to navigate the assessment on their own or with minimal support. In contrast, the paper-based version allowed for more guided conversation, clarification, and reflection. Regardless of delivery method, instructors are encouraged to maintain a supportive, goal-oriented atmosphere. Remind students that the purpose is self-assessment and growth, not performance. Allowing time for questions, clarification, and discussion will enrich the process and provide useful insights into student confidence and experience with technology.

A paper copy of the assessment is available for download on the [Digital Literacy page](#) of the PAAER website. The Digital Literacy and Distance Education (DLDE) Project also has the assessment available in Google Forms. To request a copy of the assessment in Google Forms, please [contact](#) the DLDE Project.

To complete the assessment, students will need to rate their skills for each item on the assessment by selecting the level that best describes their current ability: Getting Started, Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 (see screenshot below). Each skill also includes a space where students can add notes or examples to illustrate their skills or describe how they use technology in their daily lives. These notes can provide valuable insight for instructors when interpreting results and planning instruction.

2. Internet			
This section explains what the internet is and how to use it.			
Skill Description	Skill Levels	My Level	Notes
<p>2.1: Internet Safety</p> <p>What is the internet? The internet is a global connection of millions of computers that allows people to find information and communicate.</p> <p>Why is it important? Knowing how to safely use the internet helps you find what you need safely.</p>	<p>Level 1: I know what the web browser is on my device (e.g., Chrome or Safari) and can follow directions to get online. I am aware of basic safety issues.</p> <p>Level 2: I can use the web browser on my device to get online on my own. I can use a new web browser, fix basic problems, and prevent safety issues with help.</p> <p>Level 3: I can use any web browser to get online, connect devices to the internet, and fix problems. I know how to prevent safety issues from happening.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Getting Started <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	

Students may need support when determining the level that best represents their current skills. Instructors can refer to the [Appendix of this guide](#), which contains a copy of the assessment with leveled examples of the Digital Literacy Skills. These examples are not an exhaustive list of every skill, but rather illustrative samples that demonstrate the kinds of abilities a learner might show at each level. Instructors may find these examples helpful in guiding students' self-ratings and discussions about digital skill development.

At the end of the assessment, students are encouraged to complete the Digital Skills Reflection section. This section invites students to consider their results as a whole and respond to the following questions:

1. What are one or two areas where you have stronger digital skills? How does having these skills help you?
2. What are one or two digital skills that you would like to improve? How would having these skills help you?
3. How will you improve your digital skills? Your teacher, tutor, or the internet can help you find ways to build the digital skills you want to improve.

These reflective questions help students identify their strengths, set meaningful goals, and take ownership of their learning. Anyone administering the assessment is encouraged to adapt or expand the reflection questions to meet the goals of their program or classroom.

Using the Assessment Results

The results of the assessment serve as a foundation for goal setting, instructional planning, and ongoing reflection. They are not intended to produce a numerical score but to provide a qualitative picture of students' digital literacy development.

Instructors can use the results to identify individual or class-wide priorities, align academic lessons with students' digital literacy goals, and select resources that target specific skills. Over time, re-administering the assessment can help measure growth and demonstrate progress toward both educational and career readiness outcomes.

If using the assessment with an entire class, it may be helpful to administer it using an online program like Google Forms. This will allow you to download and analyze the results in a spreadsheet, which could make it easier to spot class-wide trends and skill gaps in students' digital skills. Instructors can use this information to target these needs and integrate those digital skills into their lessons and classroom routines to help students build the target skills. The results of the Google Forms assessment can also be emailed to students by enabling email collection in the settings. Alternatively, creators can release scores immediately after submission or manually via email.

When multiple instructors or staff members within a program administer the assessment at the same time, it can be especially valuable to collaborate when reviewing and interpreting the results. Program-wide or team-based discussions allow staff to identify common strengths, shared skill gaps, and trends across classrooms or learner groups. Collaboratively reviewing results can support coordinated instructional planning, help ensure consistency in how digital literacy skills are addressed, and inform program-level decisions such as professional development priorities, resource selection, or the integration of shared digital skills routines. This collaborative approach also creates opportunities for instructors to share strategies, align expectations, and support one another in embedding digital literacy into instruction.

The reflection section at the end of the assessment encourages students to think about their strengths, areas for growth, and strategies for improvement. The [Digital Literacy page](#) on the PAAER website includes a curated list of resources organized by digital literacy skill and level, making it easy to find materials aligned with the leveled skills that make up the assessment. For example, an instructor who finds that most of their students need to work on getting to Level 1 of Digital Literacy Skill 3.1 (Sends and Manages Email) can locate the Communications resources on the Digital Literacy page and browse the teacher-vetted, Level 1 resources for building students' email skills.

Observations from the Field-Test

The DLDE project field-tested the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment with a few Adult Basic Education (ABE) and ESL classes. Several valuable observations emerged from those tests that may be helpful for those who are planning to use the assessment in their own programs.

Be Clear About the Assessment's Purpose

Students in the field-test were informed that the purpose of the assessment was to help them identify their current digital literacy skills and set personal goals for improvement. They were also told that their teachers would use the results to better understand their needs and integrate technology into instruction more effectively. When the assessment was framed in this way, students responded positively and showed genuine enthusiasm for participating.

Student Support Needs Vary

In the ABE classes, most students were able to complete the entire paper-based assessment independently within 20 to 30 minutes and required minimal support. In contrast, many ESL learners needed additional assistance with technical vocabulary when completing the paper version; however, ESL students using the online version of the assessment were generally able to work more independently. Most ESL students used translation tools on their phones to aid understanding. Administering the assessment one section at a time also appeared to increase engagement and comprehension among ESL learners.

Encourage Conversation Around Digital Literacy

Completing the assessment led to meaningful classroom discussions about students' past experiences with technology and their future goals. These conversations provided valuable insight into students' motivations and helped instructors identify areas where technological instruction could be most impactful. Common topics included a desire to improve professional communication skills, explore information technology courses after earning a GED, and pursue technology-related career opportunities like those students had in their home countries.

PART TWO: Sample Scenarios of Assessment Use

The Digital Literacy Skills Assessment’s adaptability makes it appropriate for a variety of contexts and purposes. An instructor in a high school equivalency (HSE) class may decide to deliver the assessment with the intention of using the results to guide instruction. In a different setting, a student support coordinator (SSC) may use the assessment during intake and orientation to determine which supports students will need to reach their career and personal goals. In a third scenario, a group of English as a second language (ESL) instructors may use the assessment to ensure greater consistency in how they integrate digital literacy across the three levels available at their program.

Whatever the setting and purpose for the assessment, careful planning can result in a smoother experience for both adult education staff and students. The three main factors that users should consider while planning include how they will:

- A. Prepare students for the assessment.
- B. Deliver the assessment.
- C. Make use of individual and/or collective results.

The way adult education staff members respond to all three elements of preparation will change on a case-by-case basis, but careful attention to student preparation, delivery, and follow-up will ensure consistent results across contexts. This is demonstrated in the three sample scenarios below, where the context and purpose for the assessment are unique in each scenario, but the adult education staff members’ attention to planning remains the same. As you read the scenarios, pay attention to the details the staff members consider as they use the assessment and think about which details you will need to plan as you prepare to use the assessment in your own context.

Scenario One: Measuring Growth with Pre- and Post-test Scores

An HSE instructor plans to teach a unit on safe and effective internet search strategies. At the end of the unit, each student will complete a short research project on a topic of personal interest using the search strategies they have learned. The instructor’s purpose for using the assessment is twofold; she will not only pre-assess the students’ current skills in order to plan the unit effectively, but she will also use the assessment at the end of the unit to share pre- and post-test results with students as a measure of growth. The class is in-person only, so the instructor decides to use the paper version of the assessment and decides to only use the Information Literacy portion of the assessment, as it is most relevant to the unit. All students meet or surpass the reading level of the assessment, so the instructor does not plan any accommodation for reading level.

With the purpose of the instructor’s assessment well-established, read the sections below to see how she prepares.

Preparing Students

Before delivering the assessment, the instructor anticipates some of the questions the students may have about the content, format, and purpose of the assessment. The day of the assessment, she begins class by verbally sharing the following information, then opens the floor for questions before the students begin working:

- **Content:** The instructor shares that this is an assessment of the students' information literacy skills. She explains that each of the questions in the self-assessment represents a topic the class will cover once they begin their unit of study.
- **Format:** The instructor explains that the students will be able to complete the assessment on paper and that they will not need to share their results with anyone but her. In case the students are concerned, she explains that the test is not pass/fail, but simply a measure of the students' current skills. Because it is not a formal test, she assures students that they can raise their hand to get clarification from her if they feel stuck at any point.
- **Purpose:** The instructor explains that the purpose of the assessment is to help her determine where to focus her energy during the unit and for students to gain a deeper understanding of their existing digital literacy skills and growth over the course of the unit.

Delivering the Assessment

Once the instructor has explained the content, format, and purpose of the assessment, she distributes copies of the assessment and allows students to work through the materials at their own pace. As students have questions, she provides explanations and support. When all students have completed the assessment, she collects their results and explains that she will return the assessments to the students at the beginning of the next class.

Reviewing the Results

Between the day of the assessment and the next class, the instructor records each student's individual results, as well as compiling a report of the class's overall results. At the beginning of the next class, she returns each student's assessment and shares overall results with the class, explaining that this information will help to guide her instruction.

At the conclusion of the unit, the instructor delivers the same assessment again, but this time, when she collects results, she does so to compare the students' pre- and post-unit results. She shares each student's individual results again, highlighting areas where they demonstrated growth within the Information Literacy competency.

Scenario Two: Establishing Barrier Support During Intake

An SSC wants to get a strong idea of which supports their students need to be successful with their career and personal goals as soon as classes start. To do this, they make the assessment a formal part of their program's intake and orientation process. Students have already completed an online soft-skills inventory as part of their intake, so the SSC decides to also have the students complete the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment directly afterwards.

Preparing Students

The SSC recognizes that students take in a large amount of information during intake and orientation, so they are sure to make the purpose for the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment clear before having students complete it. They explain that there are no right or wrong answers to the assessment and that they plan to use the results to best determine what support, if any, students may need. The SSC leaves plenty of time before and during the assessment for students to ask questions or get help with the vocabulary in the assessment.

Delivering the Assessment

Because the SSC works at a program with open enrollment, they provide intake and orientation to students on an individual basis, including all assessments. The SSC recognizes that some students may come into the program with no digital literacy skills, so rather than delivering the assessment online, they use the paper version to ensure all students are comfortable. Most students can read and understand the assessment, but in case the assessment is too difficult for a student, the SSC uses their computer to queue photos that could help with vocabulary comprehension, and they are also available to answer any questions the students may have while taking the assessment. The SSC also reviews the example skills, presented as "I can" statements, that are associated with each Skill ([see Appendix](#)) to gain a more concrete understanding of each Skill and to share that knowledge with students as needed.

Reviewing the Results

Every time a student completes the assessment, the SSC sits down with them to review their results. When any strengths stand out to the SSC, they point them out to the student, reminding them of the value this brings to their professional goals. When the SSC notes areas that may challenge the student, they point out the tools and services available in the program to help the student improve their skills within those categories. Because of the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment, at the end of the intake and orientation process, the SSC can provide each student with a list of resources that can support them. Those resources include a customized list of computer lab hours and topics that may be of interest to them, information about the program's technology lending program, and activities from the "Resources to Use with Learners" portion of the PA Adult Education Resource's [Digital Literacy page](#) that match the student's scores on the assessment.

Scenario Three: Using Assessment Results to Inform Instruction

A group of ESL instructors is interested in integrating digital literacy instruction into all three levels of classes offered at their program. They decide to use the Digital Literacy Skills Assessment at the beginning of each session to best determine which skills to focus on during instruction. As instructors plan to deliver the assessment, they recognize that learners at different levels may need to focus on specific skills. Since the four topics of the assessment align with these levels, the instructors decide to administer only the sections most relevant to each level:

- **Beginner level:** They will deliver only the Basic Computer and Mobile section of the assessment, as the technology focus is to help students see how technology can be an aid in their language learning.
- **Intermediate level:** These classes have an increasing emphasis on longer-form reading and writing, so the instructors use the Internet and Communication sections to complement their students' increasing reading and writing skills.
- **Advanced level:** The instructors deliver the Information Literacy section of the assessment, recognizing that the more abstract content of information literacy is best presented to the students with the most advanced reading skills. With the topics selected by level, the instructors prepare to deliver the assessment at the beginning of the next session.

Preparing Students

On the first day of the new session, instructors at each level introduce the assessment section that they will share with their class. They let students know that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions and that they will use the results to determine the best way to make computers a more relevant part of class in the upcoming session. Instructors at this program have regularly scheduled check-ins with students, so they let them know that they will discuss results during those meetings.

Delivering the Assessment

While planning for the assessment, instructors determined that students should be permitted to use translation tools if needed, so they decided to deliver all assessments online to best facilitate the use of online translation apps. Because not all students will be familiar with an online assessment, the instructors recruit volunteer tutors from their program to serve as classroom aids who can help students if they come across questions about either the assessment content or the online format. Where possible, the instructors have also printed photos that can serve as visual supports for difficult vocabulary words. As the students take the assessment, the instructors and volunteer tutors cycle through the classroom, helping any students who request assistance or look stuck.

Reviewing the Results

At the end of the assessment day, instructors from each level meet to review results, looking for overall themes that will help to guide their instruction. Because they used the Google Form version of the assessment, they can easily gather data of class-wide trends, including the specific competencies where students may need additional support. This information is invaluable to the instructors, as it

lets them know before class even begins which parts of their curricula may require additional attention.

During individual meetings with students, instructors also review results, sharing both strengths and weaknesses with students. Instructors use these meetings as an opportunity to share more about the ways digital literacy will be integrated into class throughout the session and to talk with students about their personal goals regarding digital literacy.

APPENDIX: Digital Literacy Skills Assessment Leveled Example Skills

Portions of this section were prepared with assistance from ChatGPT's "Teacher Bot."

Instructions

Use the Example Skills below to help determine a student's digital literacy level for each area. These examples are intended as guidance and are not a complete or exhaustive list of the skills students may demonstrate at each level. They were developed to illustrate the progression and differences between skill levels and to support consistent decision-making when administering the assessment.

Everyone will have a unique skill profile. Use the examples to help identify the level that best reflects the student's current abilities and to determine where they may most benefit from instruction and support.

1. Basic Computer and Smartphones

This section explains the components of computers and mobile devices for learning, work, and daily life.

1.1: Operating Systems

What is an operating system?

An operating system is the main program that runs your computer or smartphone (e.g., Windows or iOS).

Why is it important?

It helps you manage and use your computer or smartphone. Knowing how it works makes your device easier to use.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I know which operating system my device uses and its parts. I know about common dangers and privacy settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name the operating system a device uses (e.g., Windows, Mac, Android, iOS).• Find files, apps, and other tools on a device.• Find the settings or control panel for a device.• Turn on basic security (e.g., password, PIN, fingerprint).
Level 2: I can use an operating system and get help to fix basic problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Switch between programs/apps and windows.• Move, delete, and rename files and folders.• Open, close, and install programs or apps.• Adjust device settings (e.g., battery settings, font size).
Level 3: I can use what I already know about operating systems to set up and use new devices. I can fix basic problems by myself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uninstall programs or apps.• Close an unresponsive app or program.• Restart a device that isn't working correctly.• Figure out how to use a device with a different operating system.

1.2: Hardware

What is hardware?

Hardware is the physical parts of your computer or smartphone (e.g., the screen, keyboard, or printer).

Why is it important?

Knowing how to handle hardware helps you work better with your computer or smartphone.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I know the basic parts of my device's hardware and can follow directions to use them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Point out parts of a device, like the screen, keyboard, or mouse.• Determine if something needs to be plugged in or works wirelessly.• Use basic functions of a device (e.g., turn the monitor on or off, print a document, use a webcam).• Understand where files can be saved (e.g., computer, flash drive, cloud).• Check if a device is connected to the internet.
Level 2: I can use the different parts of my device's hardware and get help when needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjust hardware settings (e.g., screen brightness, volume).• Use ports to connect to a monitor or projector.• Choose where files are saved.• Connect to a new modem.
Level 3: I can use the hardware on my device by myself, can fix most problems, and can use my skills to learn new hardware.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make changes to hardware (e.g., change a mouse to work left-handed, connect a different keyboard).• Fix a problem with a printer.• Manage storage space by deleting or moving files.

1.3: Software

What is software?

Software is the programs that make your computer or smartphone do things (e.g., Word or apps on your phone).

Why is it important?

Learning software will help you to complete tasks or work on your computer or smartphone.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I know what software is and can follow directions to use the software on my device.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand common words in apps and programs, like “menu,” “settings,” or “toolbar.”• Recognize that apps can be updated or have different versions.• Follow directions to use software for simple tasks (e.g., open an app, use scrollbar, drop-down menus)
Level 2: I can use the software on my device and get help when needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use common features of software (e.g., edit text, copy/paste, spell check).• Install, update, and uninstall programs and apps.• Save a file made in a software program (e.g., Word, Excel, Docs)
Level 3: I can use the software on my device on my own, fix problems, and use my skills to learn new software.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change settings to make apps work better (e.g., change an app to dark mode).• Figure out how to use a new program or app on my own.• Know how to tell when an app isn’t working and how to get help or report the problem.• Customize how programs or apps work (e.g., layout, notifications).

1.4: Mobile Devices

What are mobile devices?

Mobile devices are devices like smartphones and tablets that you can carry with you.

Why is it important?

Using mobile devices helps you with work, learning, and staying connected to others.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I know what mobile devices are and can follow directions to use them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify a mobile device (e.g., smartphone, tablet).• Use basic features of a mobile device (e.g., turn it on and off, adjust volume).• Check if a phone or tablet is connected to Wi-Fi.• Find and open apps on a device or in the app store.• Tell the difference between using a website and using an app.• Use security settings like fingerprints or passcodes to keep my device and apps private.
Level 2: I can use my mobile device's basic functions (e.g., texting, emailing, or taking photos) and get help when needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Download an app and use it for class.• Install, update, and uninstall apps on a mobile device.• Join a class or meeting online using a mobile device.• Turn location services on or off.
Level 3: I can use my mobile device on my own and can use my skills to learn new mobile devices as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Switch between Wi-Fi and cell service or between different Wi-Fi networks.• Choose an app that works offline to complete a task.• Manage storage by deleting unused apps or files.• Change settings to make a device work better (e.g., changing font size or turning vibration on or off).

2. Internet

This section explains what the internet is and how to use it.

2.1: Internet Safety

What is the internet?

The internet is a global connection of millions of computers that allows people to find information and communicate.

Why is it important?

Knowing how to use the internet helps you find what you need safely.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I know what the web browser is on my device (e.g., Chrome or Safari) and can follow directions to get online. I am aware of basic safety issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and open a web browser to go online.• Know that devices can get online using Wi-Fi, data, or a cable.• Know not to share personal information (e.g., address, passwords).
Level 2: I can use the web browser on my device to get online on my own. I can use a new web browser, fix basic problems, and prevent safety issues with help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a web browser to search, click on links, and go back or forward to find information.• Open, switch between, and close tabs or windows when using the internet.• Try to fix the internet if it's not working by reconnecting to Wi-Fi or checking the cords.• Do private things like logging into a bank account on my home network—not on public Wi-Fi.
Level 3: I can use any web browser to get online, connect devices to the internet, and fix problems. I know how to prevent safety issues from happening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turn pop-ups and ads on or off in browser settings.• Try several ways to fix the internet if it's not working (e.g., restart router, forget/reconnect to network, etc.).• Select which cookies to allow websites to use.• Be safe while online (e.g., use strong passwords, update software, recognize scams, protect personal information).

2.2: Websites

What are websites?

Websites are collections of pages on the internet that give you information.

Why is it important?

Knowing the type and purpose of websites helps you to choose the right ones for your goals.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can name the type and purpose of some websites. I can follow directions to find websites that will help me reach my goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know some different types of website addresses (e.g., .edu, .com, .org) and what they mean.• Find the home page of a website.• Follow directions to open a website link from an email, message, or document.
Level 2: I know and can name the type and purpose of many websites and can choose, with help, which ones will help me reach my goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fill out online forms.• Decide whether a site is free, paid, or requires an account.• Think about the type of website I'm on when deciding if what I'm seeing is true.
Level 3: I know and can name the type and purpose of almost any website and can choose which ones will help me to reach my goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the difference between an official website and a third-party one (e.g., the official GED® website versus a website that sells an unofficial study program).• Avoid unsafe websites by reviewing clues like ads, spelling errors, or missing contact information.• Use a website after checking who created it and what it is for.

2.3: Usernames and Passwords

What are usernames and passwords?

A username and password are needed to log into some websites and help you keep your information secure.

Why is it important?

Knowing how to create and organize strong passwords protects your information online.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can follow directions to use a username and password.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize when a site asks for a username and password.• Know that usernames and passwords keep accounts and personal information safe.• Follow directions to enter a username and password into a website or app.• Use a code to join a class or website.
Level 2: I can create my username and password.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter a username and password into a website or app.• Create a password that meets basic security rules (i.e., letters, numbers, symbols).• Create a new account when needed.• Answer security questions.
Level 3: I can create, organize, and reset usernames and passwords.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reset a password.• Organize usernames and passwords to access accounts and keep them safe.• Update passwords to make them stronger or more secure over time.

2.4: Files

What are files?

Files are documents, pictures, or videos saved on a device. Managing files means organizing, saving, and sharing them between devices.

Why is it important?

Knowing how to manage files helps you keep your work organized and share it safely with others.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can follow directions to organize files on my device and move them to another device.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow directions to upload files from a device to a website.• Follow directions to download files from a website to a device.
Level 2: I can organize files on my device. I can move files to a different device and understand when it is safe to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate a saved file by using folders or recent files.• Organize files into folders.• Move or copy files between a device, a flash drive, or cloud storage.
Level 3: I can organize files on devices I don't use often or know well. I know how to easily move files and spot a file that is not safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Save files to the cloud and know how to share them or limit access.• Determine which file formats (e.g., PDF, DOCX) are best for sharing or saving work.• Change how files are saved so others can or cannot open or edit them.• Decide if a file is safe to download.

2.5: Screen Time

What is screen time?

Screen time is the amount of time you spend using devices like phones, computers, or tablets.

Why is it important?

Practicing healthy screen time habits is good for your mind and body and helps you maintain balance in your daily life.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can describe healthy screen time habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Estimate roughly how much time is spent on apps every day.• Know the signs of too much screen time, like tired eyes or trouble focusing.• Describe examples of healthy screen time habits like taking breaks or moving around.
Level 2: I can set goals about healthy screen time habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set goals for how much time to spend on apps or devices each day.• Schedule breaks from screens during the day.• Use device settings or apps to set screen time limits or reminders.
Level 3: I can track my goals about healthy screen time habits and adjust them when needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track and review daily or weekly screen time reports.• Change screen time goals or settings based on my habits.• Evaluate how screen time affects focus, sleep, etc.

3. Communication

This section describes how communication skills are used online to help you share information with others.

3.1: Email

What is email?

Email is a tool that lets you send and receive messages.

Why is it important?

Email helps you stay in touch, share information, and work with others.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can follow directions to create an email account and to write, send, and reply to emails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain what email is and how it is used to send messages online.• Define words related to email like “inbox,” “sent,” “draft,” and “trash.”• Follow instructions to log in and out of email, send and reply to messages, use the subject line, add recipients, and delete emails.• Identify the parts of a formal email.
Level 2: I can write and send emails on my own and can organize my emails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make an email account with a strong password and a professional email name.• Organize emails by using folders, labels, or tags to find messages later.• Attach files and images to emails.• Use Cc, Bcc, Reply, Reply All, and Forward appropriately.• Compose formal emails.
Level 3: I can adjust the settings in my email account and know the potential dangers and impact of emails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change settings (e.g., how often trash is emptied, how messages are filtered, or where certain emails go).• Create and use an email signature.• Schedule emails to send later or send an auto-reply.• Evaluate when a link or file in an email is not safe, and choose not to open it.• Determine if an email sounds professional, friendly, or rude and make adjustments as needed.

3.2: Social Media

What is social media?

Social media platforms (e.g., Instagram and LinkedIn) are online spaces where people share ideas, pictures and videos, and connect with others.

Why is it important?

Using social media responsibly helps you stay connected, share information, and build relationships.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can describe how to create a social media account and how to find what other people have shared on social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name different social media apps (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, or LinkedIn) and explain how people use them for fun, school, and/or work.• Explain what information is needed to make an account and follow directions to log into a social media platform.• Follow people or pages, like posts, comment, and accept or decline friend requests.• Explain why sharing too much or posting inappropriate things on social media can be risky.
Level 2: I can share information on social media and understand how other people might view what I share.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post or share text, photos, videos, and links, and edit or delete posts.• Snooze, unfollow, or delete people and/or pages.• Explain what is safe and legal to post, and report posts that do not follow the rules of the social media company.• Compare public and private social media groups and choose where to share information.• Determine when social media is being used for personal reasons or for work and school.
Level 3: I can adjust the settings on my social media account(s). I understand the potential dangers and impact of social media and can plan to handle them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change privacy settings and control who sees what I share.• Review what people can see about me and make changes to protect my online reputation.• Recognize pages or accounts that are run by bots or by someone pretending to be someone else.• Follow any rules about social media that my job might have.

3.3: Communication Tools

What are communication tools?

Communication tools (e.g., WhatsApp, Zoom) are the resources people use online to connect with others via text, audio, or video.

Why is it important?

Knowing which communication tools will help you reach your goals will improve your ability to share information and connect with others online.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can name and explore different online communication tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name some online communication tools (e.g., WhatsApp, Zoom, Teams, Remind) and describe what they are used for.• Follow directions to join a video meeting.• Determine which text app is most appropriate for communicating with a teacher.• Recognize basic features of online communication tools (e.g., chat box, webcam).
Level 2: I can use online communication tools for personal, school, and work reasons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send text messages to a teacher or employer.• Join an online class using a link provided by a teacher.• Use the microphone, webcam, and chat in an online class.• Create an account to use a communication tool, and determine if the account is free or costs money.• Evaluate why tools used with friends and family might not be appropriate for school or work and adjust use accordingly.
Level 3: I can adjust the settings of online communication tools to meet my goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set up and host an online meeting.• Compare different communication tools and decide on the best one for a task.• Adjust settings to make tools work better (e.g., notifications, display, accessibility).

4. Information Literacy

This section describes how to search for information online and how to use and share it.

4.1: Finding Information

What is finding information?

The process of searching for and retrieving specific details or knowledge on a particular topic.

Why is it important?

Finding information that you can trust helps you to solve problems and reach goals.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can describe a problem and solve it using online information that has been shared with me.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watch a YouTube video that a teacher shares and use the information to complete a group project in class.• Use a website provided by a teacher to find the open hours of the local library.• Follow a link from a teacher to get a homework assignment.
Level 2: I can describe a problem that I want to solve, find online information that will help, and explain the next steps that I need to follow to reach my goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find a video that explains a topic in a way that makes sense and use what was learned from the video to do an assignment.• Find a website that gives locations and hours for a store and pick one that is open and convenient for me.• Select information from a page or document and use it to complete a task or solve a problem.• Look up sample business emails online and use one to write an email to an employer.
Level 3: I can describe a problem and find information to solve it from different online sources. I can explain the steps I will follow to reach my goal, think about how the process went, and make changes if needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read information from two websites and choose which one is most useful.• Find multiple types of sources (e.g., videos, articles, PDFs, or official websites) to get a complete understanding of a topic.• Organize information into notes, lists, or a plan to help solve problems efficiently.• Reflect on which search strategies worked best and adjust them for future searches.

4.2: Search Strategies

What are search strategies?

Search strategies are smart ways to find information online.

Why is it important?

Having smart search strategies will help you find better ways to locate the information you need.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can follow directions to find information online that helps me to reach my goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use step-by-step directions to search for bus routes.• Find videos on a topic using teacher-provided terms.• Search a website that a teacher shares to find out more about a job or school.
Level 2: I can work by myself to find information online that helps me to reach my goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decide when to use a search engine, a website, or AI to find an answer.• Search for a store or service that is open late.• Do an image search to find a shirt to buy.
Level 3: I can explain the steps I will follow to find information, think about how the process went, and get better results (or search again if needed).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid search results from paid ads.• Compare results from multiple searches and select the most effective one.• Change the terms used to do another search.• Help another student learn to search for something they need.

4.3: Checking Information

What is checking information?

Checking information is the ability to determine if online information is safe and true.

Why is it important?

Finding safe and true information will help you to make good decisions and avoid scams or fake news.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can describe what makes online information true. With help, I can decide if online information that has been shared with me or that I found is true.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a checklist provided by the teacher to determine if something online is true.• Identify statements that appear to be true with support from a teacher.• Recognize false information with help.
Level 2: I can describe what makes online information true or untrue and can choose between sources on my own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine which websites are more likely to share true information.• Compare what different authors say about a topic.• Decide if information on a website is true or not.
Level 3: I can check many different sources to decide if the information is true, giving many reasons to support my claims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check a fact by comparing information on more than one website.• Give reasons why something online is true, partly true, or false.

4.4: Gaining Knowledge

What is gaining knowledge?

Gaining knowledge is the ability to use online information to learn more or solve a problem.

Why is it important?

When you can gain information online, you are better able to learn, find evidence for a claim, or create something new.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can describe how at least one piece of online information helps me to learn more, support a claim, or create something new.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow the steps in a video to make or fix something.• Explain what was learned from an article or video.• Use an online article or video to find information on a topic.
Level 2: I can describe how two to three pieces of online information help me to learn more, support a claim, or create something new.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watch two different videos and use the information from both videos to create something new.• Use information from both a video and an article to learn something new.• Read two or three articles on a topic to inform my thoughts on it.
Level 3: I can describe how many pieces of online information help me to learn more, support a claim, or create something new.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a research paper that uses many online sources to support the thesis statement.• Make a presentation that uses information from many websites and videos.• Compare the information in many videos and articles on a topic to help make a decision.

4.5: Intellectual Property

What is intellectual property?

When someone has created a new idea or something new online, it is their intellectual property.

Why is it important?

Understanding intellectual property helps you avoid copying and give others credit for their work.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can figure out who owns a piece of information that I found online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find the creator or author of an article, video, or image.• Locate the date and publisher of online content.• Know why it's important to share who made something.
Level 2: I can figure out who owns a piece of information that I found online and give them credit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify usage rights (e.g., Creative Commons licenses) before including an image in a class presentation and provide proper credit.• Share the author, date, and publisher of an online article.• Repost a video or online article only when the creator allows it and include their name.
Level 3: I can figure out who owns a piece of information that I found online, give them credit, and change it to match my goals when allowed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find the creator of a picture when it is hard to find.• Find a website with a Creative Commons license and follow rules for use.• Link back to a source when writing about something read online.• Change a picture with permission from the creator to complete an assignment in class.

4.6: Information Sharing

What is information sharing?

Sharing information is the ability to let others see what you have found or created online.

Why is it important?

Strong information sharing skills help you to think about what you're sharing and why and what impact it might have.

Skill Levels	Example Skills
Level 1: I can explain how a piece of information that has been given to me might impact others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe how sharing something online might hurt a real person.• Know that an employer might see things shared online.• Understand it can be hard to totally remove something once it's shared online.
Level 2: I can share information or something I have created with others, considering how it might impact them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share an article with another student to help them learn something new.• Post a group photo only after checking that everyone in it is comfortable being included.• Know that once something is shared with one person, they can share it with someone else.
Level 3: I know how to limit or expand with whom I will share something I have created.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limit who can see an image shared online.• Choose whether to share information on a private or public account.• Post a resume on a job site so many employers can see it.