



Cybercitizen Challenge

Site digging

Guiding level: Brownies / Guides

Topic: Authenticating online information

This activity does not require a computer.

In this group activity girls learn about authenticating online information by visiting four stations in various parts of the room. At each station, there is a helper who holds up a picture of a website girls might come across while looking for information about the swift fox.

In addition to the helper holding a picture of the website, each station has three pieces of paper on the floor in front of the helper with "YES", "NO", or "MORE DIGGING IS NEEDED" printed on each of them.

At each station girls ask the helper a series of questions (see questions below in the "Guided Discussion" section; the answers are printed on a sheet that the helper reads from).

Once the helper has answered their questions, the girls must decide whether or not this is a good, not good, or potentially good ("more digging is needed") source of information. The girls will place the proper sticker on the answer they most agree with before moving on to the next station.

Preparation

- Each girl will need four stickers to mark her answers
- Photocopy:
 - The Swift Fox Website Examples for the group activity (four in total)
 - The response sheets that accompany each website example (four in total)
- Prepare the following by hand:
 - Four sheets of paper with "YES" on them
 - Four sheets of paper with "NO" on them



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- o Four sheets of paper with “MORE DIGGING IS NEEDED” on them

(Each of the four stations should have one set of “YES”, “NO” and “MORE DIGGING IS NEEDED”)

At your meeting

1. You will need four helpers to each hold up a different swift fox website example at the four separate stations the girls will be visiting. (The helpers can be Guiders, parents or girls.)
 - Each helper holds a sheet of paper in front of her that features one of the website examples.
 - Behind it, he/she will be holding the sheet of paper that has the responses to the girls’ questions when they come to that station.
 - On the floor at each station are the 3 sheets of paper with “YES”, “NO”, and “MORE DIGGING IS NEEDED” printed on them.
2. Divide the girls into four groups and give each girl four stickers.
3. **Guided discussion**

Tell the girls, “Imagine your teacher has given you a project about the swift fox in Canada. That night, at home, you go onto the Internet to search for information. In your search results, four websites pop up. (*At this point you could have the helpers “pop” up in various corners of the room.*)

When I say ‘go’, each group will go to one of these four websites. At each website, you get to ask some questions, which the website helper will answer. Then you have to decide whether or not this website would be a good place to get your information (YES), a bad place to get information (NO), or a possible place to get good information, but you’ll have to do more checking to be sure (MORE DIGGING IS NEEDED). You decide by putting one of your stickers onto the piece of paper that matches your answer. When everyone has done this, I’ll tell you to switch until each group has visited all the websites.

Before we begin, what are some of the questions you might ask to find out whether or not the information is good? (Give the girls time to talk about this.)

When you are looking for information online, there are some questions you should ask yourself to help you decide about the information you find.



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Who posted the information?

- Does anyone here know somebody who writes or posts photos on the Internet (older sister or brother, school, etc.)? Who knows somebody who has published a book (count them)?
- It is much easier to put something online than to write and publish a book. Anybody can put something online, so we need to find out more about the author before we can decide whether or not the information is good.
- What kind of a website is this? Is it a good place to find information? Where are some good places on the Internet to find information about the swift fox? (Online encyclopedias, government websites, school websites, universities, wildlife organizations.)

What kind of information is this?

- You're going to get hundreds of websites coming up when you search for "swift fox," so you need to make sure the websites you choose have the right type of information that you need.

Your teacher has asked you to find out everything you can about the swift fox in Canada. If a website pops up that has good information about the swift fox in the *United States*, does that give you the information you need? What about a website for the Swift Fox Art Studio? Is this the kind of information you need?

So when you visit each of the "websites" here in this room, you need to ask two questions: "Who posted the information?" and "What kind of information is this?" (*Prompt the girls a few times until they remember these questions.*)

4. Have the groups visit each website station. Once they have asked their questions and placed their stickers on the answer they think is correct, have them switch to the next website station until each group has visited all the stations.
5. Bring them back together as a group.

Ask the girls: Did any of you choose "more digging is needed" for any of the websites? What are some of the ways you can double check your information? (Let the girls offer suggestions. Answers may include asking a family member, asking your teacher or librarian, or comparing what you have found to information on other websites.)



Tally and review the votes for the responses at each station.

Key points

Website number one: Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

- Government websites are good sources of information because they hire experts to provide information. This is a website for the province of Alberta. Can anyone tell me how you can tell? (Point out the provincial logo on the page.)

Website number two: Ray Rasmussen's photography and Haiku Website

- The author of this website is not an expert; he is a parent who became interested in the swift fox when his daughter wrote an essay for school. Does this mean that the information is wrong? Not necessarily, if he got his information from good sources. But you are going to have to do some checking to be sure.

Website number three: Wildlife Preservation Canada

- There is not much on this page that tells you about this organization. Where would you click to find out more?
- There is one hint on this page that this would be a good website to get information from. Its partners include reputable organizations like Alberta Environmental Protection, the Calgary Zoo and the government of Saskatchewan's Environment and Resource Management Department.

Website number four: Essay by Sarah

- This is a report on the swift fox by a student at Ralph Brown School in Winnipeg Manitoba.
- Sarah is not an expert, but if you look at her bibliography, which links to the sites she used, you can see they are good places to find information: the Canadian Wildlife Service and the World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia.

And can anyone remind me who you can ask if you need help finding information? (A family member, teacher or librarian or Brownie Leader!)