

## GRADE 6

## Finding Balance in a Digital World

How do we balance digital media use in our lives?



## OVERVIEW

We use digital media every day, from texting, streaming TV shows, and gaming all the way to using voice assistants or ordering our food online. For today's kids, it's a lot more than just "screen time." So how can we help students balance their online and offline lives? It starts with recognizing just how much media we use.

## Students will be able to:

- Reflect on their common online and offline activities.
- Analyze and prioritize the activities that are most important to them.
- Identify ways to "unplug" to maintain balance between online and offline activities.

## Lesson Snapshot

Estimated time: 45 mins.

Warm Up:	It's a Digital World!	10 mins.
Reflect:	My Online and Offline Life	15 mins.
Apply:	Balance It Out	15 mins.
Wrap Up:	Finding Media Balance	5 mins.

## Key Standards Supported

## Common Core ELA

L.6.1, L.6.2, L.6.2.B, L.6.3, L.6.3.A, L.6.3.B, L.6.4, L.6.6, SL.6.1, SL.6.1a, SL.6.1b, SL.6.1c, SL.6.1d, SL.6.2, SL.6.3, SL.6.4, SL.6.6, W.6.4, W.6.8, W.6.9, W.6.10

## CASEL

1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5f

## AASL

IA.1, IA.2, IB.1, IB.3, IC.1, ID.1, ID.2, ID.3, ID.4, IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.1, IIB.2, IIB.3, IIC.1, IIC.2, IID.1, IID.2, IID.3, IIIA.1, IIIA.2, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.1, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2, IVB.2, VA.2, VA.

## ISTE

2a, 2b

## What You'll Need

Spanish-language student and family resources available soon!

- Blank paper
- **Lesson Slides**
- Video: Digital Life 101 **Watch**
- Student Handout: Online, Offline **Student Version**
- Student Handout: Balancing Act **Student Version**
- Lesson Quiz **Editable Google form Answer Key**

## Take-home resources

- **Family Tips**
- **Family Activity**
- **Family Engagement Resources**

## LESSON PLAN

## Key Vocabulary:

**digital media**

information that comes to us through the internet, often through a tablet, smartphone, or laptop

**media balance**

using media in a way that feels healthy and in balance with other life activities (family, friends, school, hobbies, etc.)

**red flag feeling**

when something happens on digital media that makes you feel uncomfortable, worried, sad, or anxious

**unplug**

to engage in activities that don't involve devices, apps, or the internet

Warm Up: **It's a Digital World!**

10 mins.

1. **Tell** students they are going to watch a video about how being connected is a "24/7" part of our culture. Remind students that 24 hours a day, seven days a week, people all over the world can access or use the internet. Ask students to think about the benefits of being connected as they watch the video.

2. **Show** the **Digital Life 101** video on **Slide 4** and ask: *According to the video, what are some of the benefits of being connected 24/7?*

Allow students one minute to pair-share and invite them to share out. Examples of benefits include:

- Real-time access to weather helps plan outdoor activities, clothing, etc.
- Social media and messenger apps allow immediate communication and updates with other people.
- Search engines help people find information and solutions for things.
- Music apps enable people to create, share, and listen to playlists of their favorite music.

3. **Point** out that all the activities in the video are examples of using **digital media**, which is *content (text, audio, images, video) or devices that allow people to share information, communicate, and collaborate over the internet or computer networks.* (**Slide 5**)

4. **Say:** *Not all the actions in the video involved using digital media. Did you catch any that didn't?* (Students should identify the real-life soccer match.)

Ask: *What are some of the benefits of doing things offline ... that don't involve digital media?*

Possible responses:

- Participating in sports is fun because you get to exercise and compete against others.
- Going into nature can teach you about the world and help you feel relaxed.
- Hanging out with people in person helps you build relationships and get to know people.
- When you're in nature or with people, you experience everything with five senses. When you're online, you usually only experience them with two (sight and sound).

5. **Say:** *So being disconnected from digital media has some benefits, but being connected has benefits, too. What is the best way to balance the two?*

**Media balance** is using media in a way that feels healthy and in balance with other life activities (family, friends, school, hobbies, etc.). In today's lesson, we're going to think about ways we can find our own sense of media balance. (**Slide 6**)

Reflect: **My Online and Offline Life**

15 mins.

1. **Distribute** the **Online, Offline Student Handout**. Read aloud the directions and have students complete Part 1. (**Slide 7**) Clarify that Part 1 refers not only to "being on the internet" but to all activities involving digital media: watching television, gaming, using apps, etc.

Call on students to share out. Sample responses may include *streaming videos, using social media, listening to music*, and different classroom uses.

2. **Direct** students' attention to Part 2 and ask: *When you are not online, what activities add something fun or important to your life? Share with your partner but without using any words. Mime only.*

Allow two minutes for students to role-play or mime some of their offline activities with a partner.

Then have them complete Part 2 of the handout. Allow a few minutes for students to complete the activity and then have them share out. Responses may include:

- Playing sports and board games
- Hiking, camping, and other outdoor activities
- Sharing meals and celebrations with my family
- Volunteering in my community
- Playing music or taking part in performance art
- Making arts and crafts by hand, or building things

3. **Say:** *As you can see, you have a lot of choices about the kinds of activities you do—about how you spend your time. One way to make sure you're getting the most out of those choices is to think about how they make you feel and how they affect other parts of your life. To do that, let's look back at our lists.*

4. **Project Slide 8** and read aloud the directions. Allow students time to circle the activities they do most.

Apply: **Balance It Out**

15 mins.

1. **Say:** *Let's look at how to balance the activities you say you do most.* Distribute the **Balancing Act Student Handout** and read aloud the directions for Part 1. Allow students three minutes to complete Part 1.

Have students pair-share their responses to Part 1. Then ask volunteers to share.

2. **Explain** that part of having balance means being aware of how different activities make you feel. If certain activities result in not-so-good feelings, that is a red flag. When you experience a **red flag feeling**, it is important that you think about what's causing it and what you can do about it. (**Slide 9**)

3. **Ask:** *One helpful thing might be to find ways to "unplug." What do you think it means to unplug from online activities?*

If students give a literal definition, confirm that that is one meaning. Then explain that another meaning of **unplug** is to *engage in activities that don't involve devices, apps, or the internet*. (**Slide 10**)

4. **Ask:** *What are some specific times that you might want to unplug? How would you know when to do it? Take turns sharing your ideas with your partner.* (**Slide 11**)

After students pair-share, call on volunteers to respond. Students may bring up specific times, like *during dinner* or *before bedtime*, or they may bring up specific feelings, like *when they're tired of looking at their screen* or *when they feel like they don't want to be connected to others (on social media, gaming, etc.)*. As students bring up examples, ask: *What could you do in that situation to unplug?*

As students provide examples of ways to unplug, capture them on **Slide 12**. Sample answers may include:

- Turn the TV off when you're not watching it.
- Only watch one show (don't click on autoplay).
- Turn your phone off.
- Limit the amount of time you game.
- Turn off certain settings (app notifications, location services, etc.).

Choose a day or time when you don't use your phone or go online (during dinner, weeknights, after school, etc.).

5. **Project Slide 12** and say: *Let's look at our list. These are all good ideas for strategies, but different strategies work for different people. Which ones are right for you? Take a moment to choose the strategies you'd be most willing to try. Take turns sharing your ideas with your partner.*

Call on students to share out. As students share, ask: *What challenges might come up that would make it hard to successfully carry out that strategy?*

6. **Direct** students to complete Part 2 of the **Balancing Act Student Handout**.

#### Wrap Up: Finding Media Balance

5 mins.

1. **Pass** out half sheets of paper to each student and project **Slide 13**. Read aloud the scenario. Invite students to write two suggestions for Alex to bring balance into her life. Allow students one minute to write their responses, and collect them to assess learning.
2. **Have** students complete the **Lesson Quiz**. Send home the **Family Activity** and **Family Tips**.

#### Extension Activity:

Have students respond to the following questions using **Padlet** or another online collaboration tool: *What would you miss if you did not go online for a week? What would you not miss? Why?*



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