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Major Project Prospectus

My major project for MEDL will attempt to address the question, "*How can intermediate teachers effectively reach their students and inform them about online safety, privacy and citizenship in a fun and engaging way?* The resulting product will be a website designed as an educational resource for teachers to use with intermediate students (grades 3-5). The visuals and content of the site will hopefully appeal to this younger audience, providing online safety and privacy training in an empathetic and lighthearted way. The website will include quests using a gamified learning environment, hands-on activities, blended learning opportunities, a final quiz and a game app.

The topic of online safety and digital citizenship grows more relevant every year. As I researched more into this topic, a pattern started to emerge: while there were many excellent resources for teachers regarding privacy and safety, there seems to be a lack of resources that appealed to a child. It is clear that we must teach young people how to navigate the online world in a way that is safe and creates a positive digital footprint. However, the subject matter often comes across as dry and scary, and it is difficult for children to relate to it. My goal is to provide an immersive, fun resource that embraces a storytelling aspect in every section, addressing several issues, such as digital footprints, cyber-bullying, sexting and meeting strangers, while using the tools I have researched and learned about during OLTD.

In order to create this resource, I will draw from articles and books that can be grouped into three sections; the sections are as follows, and include the main resources for each section: the **privacy and safety content**, addressed by FIPPA (2013) and Hengstler (2012), covering issues currently relevant with online behaviour and privacy; the **method of delivery**, addressed by Willard (2012), who advocates for a more realistic approach when teaching children regarding online behaviour, and Barr & Masters (2001), who suggests a training grown is the most effective way for children to acquire their own online filters; and finally, **the student engagement aspect**, addressed by Hamari et al.(2016), who looked at the feeling of immersion and engagement when playing games as a tool for learning, and Ozdogru and McMorris (2013) who considered cartoons and positive humour as a way to engage students.

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