DIGITAL LITERACY FOR MOBILE PHONES

TEACHER NOTES

MODULE 3 OF 5

SMS AND ADDRESS BOOK
Digital Literacy for Mobile Phones
Pathways to digital literacy for CALD learners through mobile phones

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DIGITAL LITERACY / PHONE FUNCTIONS / KEY MESSAGES COVERED IN THIS MODULE

- Appropriate use of SMS
- Using SMS abbreviations appropriately (who can you use them with?)
- Predictive text/spellcheck/autocorrect (use of and pitfalls)
- responding to SMS: appointment reminders, scams
- ICE In Case of Emergency (contact numbers)

WARMER 1 | TEXTING

Get learners to divide into groups: those with phones:

- Group 1 (those with mobile phones)
- Group 2 (without mobiles but with landline phones)
- Group 3 (those without phones)

Group 1 lines up in order from most recent to least recent, answering the questions:

How long ago did you send your last SMS? (Today, this week, etc).

Group 2 & Group 3 How long ago did you send your last email / other form of note? (Today, this week, etc). Discuss how you leave messages for people?

WARMER 2 | CONTACT LIST

How many contacts/ phone numbers do you have in your phone? Who has the most contacts? Least contacts?

Elect a learner who doesn’t have a mobile phone to be the scribe. Learners call out their total to the scribe who writes up names and numbers on the board in order from most to least.

Those without mobile phones: How do you record contact details? (diary, address book, note pad, in computer, other). Do you always have those contacts on you?
**ACTIVITY 1 | LANGUAGE**

*Pre activity:* SMS – short messaging service (capped number of characters, and using the earliest mobile technology which was akin to tapping Morse code!) meant people needed to use abbreviations to fit as much in as possible and to speed up the texting. Some people on simple prepaids are still using key pad, not keyboard.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** some people use LOL to mean “Lots of love.” Younger people understand it as “Laughing out loud.”

**Answers:**

1. THNX or THX – thanks
2. C U – See you.
3. RSVP – Please reply.
4. OMG – Oh my God!
5. LOL – laughing out loud
6. GR8 – Great!
7. ASAP – as soon as possible
8. @ – at
9. HAND – Have a nice day!
10. B4 – before
11. BTW – By the way...

**Post activity:** share any other abbreviations they come up with.

Discuss Smiley Faces or emoticons. This vocabulary will come up in Activity 2, as will character, alpha, numeric, space.

(for more information: [http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/textmessageabbreviations_02.asp](http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/textmessageabbreviations_02.asp) “A smiley face (also called a smiley or emoticon) is used in text-based communications to convey an emotion, much in the same way we use body language. Text smiley faces are used in the same way that a person’s voice or facial expression changes when having a face-to-face conversation with someone.”)

**ACTIVITY 2 | READING AND RESPONDING TO AN SMS**

*Pre activity:* straw poll of class. Who receives text messages? From whom? (friends/family; community service providers; trade and commerce, etc)

Students answer the questions for each of the 4 phone messages.

Phone message 1: Check students are familiar with the vocabulary. Get learners to underline the verbs and circle the abbreviations. Check answers.
TEACHER NOTES

Look at Message 2. Check learners understand the word message. Are there any other words? Check answers.

Look at Message 3. Get learners to underline the verbs and circle the abbreviations. If you haven’t already done so, discuss smiley faces and emoticons.

Look at Message 4. Ask students what they need to do. (Answer: Delete the message!)

To demonstrate the importance of replying to text messages: Write a message on a piece of paper, and scrunch it up. Turn your back to the class and throw the piece of paper over your shoulder. Then turn around and ask the class how you could know who if anyone had got the note? You could find out that they did, if they threw it back to you (ie if they replied).^1

Extension: Lottery and sweepstake scams

Scamwatch website http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/tag/Scamwatch/ has a section on Mobile phone scams and lottery and competition scams http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/694281

Scams text messages can be related to scam emails and which can lead to people sending money to the scammers or even getting viruses on computers.

ACTIVITY 3 | SENDING A TEXT MESSAGE Part 1 When to Send an SMS

Learners might come up with other situations.

Being polite: If students answered yes to any of the questions above, now talk about these questions.

Would you use abbreviations in the SMS? Do you need to write Hi/Hello? Do you need to sign your name?

ACTIVITY 3 | SENDING A TEXT MESSAGE Part 2 SMS to an Employer

Teacher notes: learners need to be aware that texts, like other messages, emails, etc can be formal or informal, and some protocols. (for more information: http://www.ehow.com/how_8262930_use-formal-language-text-messages.html, “Consider how you want to be perceived by the person to whom you are sending a text message.”)

Discuss: Language, register, time of call, identifying sender, what information is required, audience

With work shifts and work teams, the earlier the notification the better. Note time of sending. Does Lil need to top and tail the message? Is the language appropriate? Is the emoticon appropriate? Is the text message the best way to communicate in this situation? Would a phone call be better? When should you send a message to your manager/employer? There is no hard and fast rule here. It should be detailed/negotiated as part of Induction. Managers who are on the road between multiple sites might require SMS notification, so they can respond when ready. Other managers will want a phone call so they can deal with the rostering etc immediately. Others may want email notification.
TEACHER NOTES

NB if you haven’t given your number to your employer or are ringing from a phone other than your own, the receiver of the SMS cannot identify you.

ACTIVITY 3 | SENDING A TEXT MESSAGE Part 3 Family/Friends

No real right/wrong answer. Discussion can be around, what’s open to misinterpretation (eg Lol), how much information people would give and why, how formal they think such a message should be, etc.

ACTIVITY 3 | SENDING A TEXT MESSAGE | Part 4 Writing Practice

Students practise brevity, register, appropriate content and structure.

ACTIVITY 4 | WRITING AN SMS TO A FRIEND

Further practice. Looking at register, mitigating language, sign offs etc. If students compose a long text, get them to see if they can reduce it to under 60 characters.

ACTIVITY 5 CORRECTING SPELLING Part 1

*Pre activity:* Ask the students the following questions:

- Does your phone check your spelling when you send text messages? Does it suggest how to spell words?
- What is this function called? (Answers: ? Eg: predictive text/auto correct; spell correction; word completion. Students may not know the English words. The definitions are in the glossary).

**Message 1**  
A spelling mistake was identified. The writer clicked on the word and three possible words are being offered. The writer can select the word they want, by touching it.

**Message 3**  
A spelling error was identified. Possible suggested spellings are offered. The writer selects the word by tapping/tapping on it.

**Message 2**  
Predictive text/Suggested text. As the text is type possible words are suggested based on the letters already typed. To accept the suggested spelling press space. To reject suggestion press the X

**Message 4**  
Predictive text/Suggested text. As the text is type possible words are suggested based on the letters already typed. The writer selects the word by tapping/tapping on it.

ACTIVITY 5 CORRECTING SPELLING Part 2

**Answers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helps with spelling of difficult words.</td>
<td>You need to know the difference between similarly spelled words so you can select it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eg ridiculous</td>
<td>I’m not sure he is their at the moment. (there)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps with similarly spelled words eg where, were</td>
<td>If typing very fast it can suggest and change words to something other than what you typed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TEACHER NOTES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>correct word based on the position of the word in the sentence</th>
<th>eg My <strong>dead</strong> friend Helen is coming to the cinema with <strong>us</strong>(dear)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know were you live. (where)</td>
<td>eg You are too <strong>fat</strong> for me to visit you in my lunch hour. (far).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Saves time – predictive text eg type Thur and it offers you Thursday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Over reliance. Sometimes it does not pick mistakes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure he is <strong>their</strong> at the moment. (there)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Do you know how to turn the spelling/predictive text function on or off?

Get the students to demonstrate to someone without a mobile, or with a different brand of phone, where/how to turn the function on or off.

As an extension, have the students find a video on the internet to show you how to turn on/off predictive text/spell check. Eg: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=piroFYpKnKo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=piroFYpKnKo)

What are the advantages/disadvantages to using a spell checker?

**ACTIVITY 6 | CONTACTS Part 1 Storing Contact Details On Your Phone**

What is this function called? Contacts, Address Book, People, etc.

**Do you also store emails and addresses? How much information do you need to complete with your contacts?**

**Use the different phones, eg Nokia and iPhone to compare and contrast**

Students form groups around a table. Each group writes up a comparative list on butcher’s paper of all the information they can store in the different brands of phone they have at their table.

**ACTIVITY 6 | CONTACTS Part 2 Add A New Contact**

General discussion: What numbers is it important to have in your phone? (family, friends, doctor/health centre, school, etc). Why might you share any/some of these numbers with your immediate family?

Find out how many learners have the Education Centre’s number in their contacts list. If none of them do, you give the dictation. If some learners already have the number, they give the dictation, each to a small group of students. Dictation to include any spelling of name, address elements. Those without a phone can write the details into their diary etc. Include as much information as the students phones can take: address, ames.net.au website, centre number/s, [counsellors’ mobile?]

Extension: dictate other local numbers of importance, eg local police, community health centre, hospital, local library...

**ACTIVITY 6 | Part 3 Saving A New Contact**

Action: Saving a number from a text, a missed call or a phone call.
If the project phone is available, or your centre encourages students to contact their counsellor directly on their mobile, use these numbers to send learners a text, and then teach them how to save the number to their address book.

Learners could describe how to save to their brand of phone OR could look up the manual for their phone online, and search for the function.

**Action:** save new number when someone sends you it – send number of Project phone.

**ACTIVITY 7 | ICE (In Case Of Emergencies)**

(Also in the glossary)

ICE (In Case of Emergencies) is the acronym entered in the contacts list on a mobile which contains the name and phone number of a family member or friend. Emergencies service workers can use it to get in touch with the named person who would be able to help with vital information.


Instruct students to create a contact called ICE.

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1 Activity suggested by Tanja Rykovska. Tanja added: “The analogy turned out to be helpful when we were discussing appropriateness of texting. The students became aware of the need to be explicit and appropriate when they text as they realised that they couldn’t change the impression their messages would make and wouldn’t even know what impression it would make.” See Activity 3 Part 2 for more on this.