Educator lesson notes

Year 5-6: Hooked by design

In this lesson, students investigate how technology is often designed to capture their attention and encourage them to keep using it. They reflect on their own digital habits and explore ways design features could better support healthy technology use.



This lesson focuses on Compulsion - helping students manage screen time, attention and digital balance to support wellbeing and learning.

Year levels

Years 5-6

10-12 years old

Duration

90 minutes

Resources

Device, pen and printed worksheet & exit pass

Student learning intention

We are learning how persuasive design features in apps, games and devices can influence our technology use, and how technology can be designed to support digital balance.

Student success criteria

- I can explain how persuasive design features are used to capture attention and encourage people to keep using technology.
- I can design features that help users stay in control of their technology use and support healthy digital habits.

Key vocabulary

Persuasive design features

Digital balance

Healthy digital habits

Nov 2026

Session outline

The session uses Gradual release of responsibility - I Do, We Do, You Do.

10 minutes

I Do:
Teach key concept by watching the Compulsion video.

Slide	Activity
1-3	Lesson introduction, child safeguarding, and 4Cs of online safety risk.
4	Read learning intention, success criteria and key vocabulary.
5	View eSmart's ***Compulsion Risk Area Introduction*** video.

20 minutes

We Do:
Unpack the key concepts through reflection on digital habits, a true false challenge, and discussion of key research findings.

Slide	Activity
6-11	Reflect on your digital habits: Read each scenario to the class and ask students to choose the Ninja Whiskers movement that matches what they would usually do.
12-24	True false challenge: Read each statement aloud and have students show a thumbs up for true or a thumbs down for false, then read the fun fact and use the discussion questions to explore their responses.

60 minutes

You Do:
Students complete the worksheet activities independently, share their answers and reflect on what they have learned.

Slide	Activity
25-26	Students complete the first activity on the Student worksheet by researching the persuasive design features and filling in the table.
27	Complete the reflect and share activity as a class.
28	Students complete the second activity on the Student worksheet.
29-30	Students complete the Student exit pass and optional colour-in worksheet.
31	Complete the child safeguarding reflection with students.

Differentiation

Simplify the lesson

Support students by having them work in pairs to research and discuss each design feature. Provide visual prompts, teacher modelling, sentence starters or partially completed examples as needed.

Extend the lesson

After completing the Student worksheet, have students write a letter to a technology company presenting their design and explaining how its features could help users build healthier digital habits.

Curriculum connections

Digital literacy opportunities

Provide students with the option to complete the Student worksheet activities digitally. For example, they could create their research table using a word processor and use presentation software to design and label their digital product.

Curriculum links

Click here to view the lesson on be.esmart

Family resources

Copy to Compass / SeeSaw Post / or a school newsletter article!

This week in class...

Our Year 5–6 students completed the eSmart Hooked by design lesson, exploring how design features in apps, games and devices can influence the way we use technology.

Students reflected on their own digital habits, researched common design features and explored ways to support healthy technology use.

To learn more about the key messages from this lesson, view the complimentary Family resource:

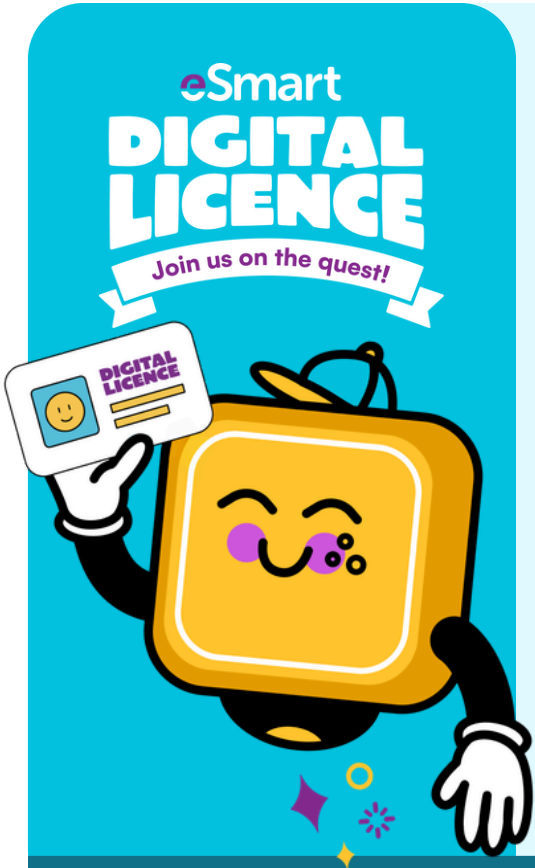
Family resource: https://bit.ly/HookedFR

Continue the learning at home (optional activity)

Spot the hook:

- Pick an app or game your family enjoys using.
- See how many features you can spot that grab your attention or keep you using it.
- Choose one feature and come up with a healthier redesign together.





This lesson is part of the FREE digital licence program

Complete only three more lessons to award your students a digital licence!

Compulsion - Balancing digital technology use by fostering healthy habits, managing screen time and developing self-regulation skills.
View lessons

Conduct - Making responsible choices by behaving and communicating respectfully and understanding the impact online behaviours have on others.
View lessons

Contact - Navigating online interactions safely by setting boundaries, adjusting privacy settings, and practising safe and respectful communication.
View lessons

Content - Understanding the media and information encountered online through media literacy, critical thinking, and ethical decision-making skills.
View lessons

Essential digital citizenship and online safety skills for primary school-aged learners.

- Fun and engaging supporting video content
- Curriculum aligned, educator-led lesson plans
- Reward progress with the printable Quest Map
- Supported by the Australian Government

Learn more about the program at be.esmart.org.au/dl