

Story time: Brick Needs a Break by Jayden Choi (Age 5) and Kim Maslin



This lesson can take up to 30 minutes. It can be broken down into smaller groups or shorter lessons. If appropriate, the “Exit pass” activity can be assigned as homework.

Ages 4-6

The lesson has been designed for learners aged 4-6. The “checkpoints” offer differentiation strategies to scale learning as required.

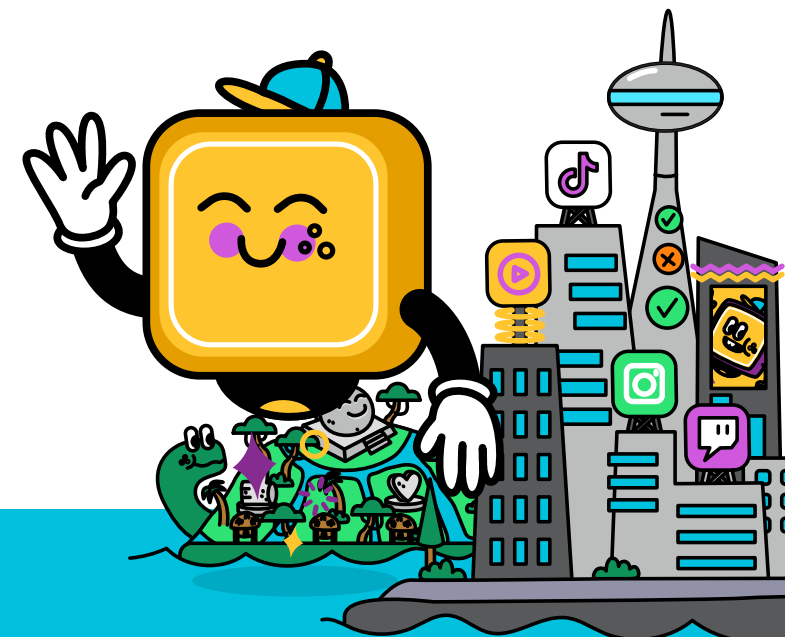


This lesson is part of the eSmart Digital Licence program.

By completing just four engaging lessons, including this one, your class can earn their eSmart Digital Licences—signalling their understanding of safe and responsible online behaviour. Start now and guide your learners toward becoming confident and positive digital citizens.



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



Overview

In this lesson, learners will explore the free eBook "Brick Needs a Break", a winning entry from the Series 1 Stories by Digital Children competition.

Stories by Digital Children: A storytelling competition for 5-12 year olds is a Digital Child competition, hosted by the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence (CoE) for the Digital Child. Children aged 5-12 across Australia were asked to submit story ideas for the 2023 theme 'Fun with digital media: Getting the balance right.'

This book was co-authored by the winner of the 5-6 age group category, Jayden Choi, and Kim Maslin.

Setup

- ☐ Project the book using a central screen. Download or flip through the book for free at:
<https://digitalchild.org.au/stories-by-digital-children/brick-needs-a-break/>
- ☐ Paper (or workbooks) and pencils for drawing.
- ☐ (Optional) Use the slides in this pack (from p. 5) as visual prompts. Click View > Full Screen in your PDF reader to use the slides as a presentation.

Learning intentions & success criteria

Learners will:

- Recognise physical and emotional signs of excessive device use.
- Understand what it means to use devices in a healthy way.

These intentions are evidenced when learners can:

- ☐ Identify at least one of the signs of excessive device use.
- ☐ Identify at least one healthy way to balance time on devices with other activities.

Educators will:

- Highlight signs of excessive device use through storytelling.
- Guide students in the application of healthy habits to device usage.

These intentions are evidenced when educators can:

- ☐ Lead discussions in identifying at least one physical or emotional sign of excessive device use.
- ☐ Support learners in practicing at least one strategy for healthy device use.

Healthy device habits

The lesson: Key messages

- Devices are useful and fun, but we don't want to forget about other activities that are good for us.
- Using devices in a healthy and balanced way is important.

Each family has their own perspective on what healthy device usage looks like. It's important to acknowledge that technology can positively impact children's lives, such as through educational games or connecting with family and friends. The goal is not to eliminate screens, but to establish a healthy mix of activities.

However, there are common signs that indicate a need to switch activities or take a break from devices. Helping to recognise these signs can foster healthier device habits. Some examples include:

- Tiredness: Appearing sleepy or yawning frequently.
- Frustration: Becoming easily annoyed or upset.
- Loss of interest: No longer enjoying the activity and appearing bored.
- Physical discomfort: Complaining of headaches or eye strain.
- Neglecting other activities: Ignoring other enjoyable activities.
- Poor nutrition: Missing during regular family meal times.
- Short attention span: Frequently switching apps or games.
- Social Withdrawal: Stopping interactions with nearby family or friends.

Child-friendly tips for healthy device use

Explain what being healthy means by saying:

Being healthy means taking care of your body and feelings so that you feel happy and full of energy.



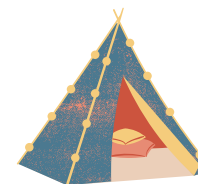
Take Little Breaks

After some screen time, take a break to stretch, or move around.



Play Outside Too

For every bit of screen time, have some fun playing outside.



Have a Screen-Free Spot

Make a cozy place with toys or books where you can relax without screens.



No Screens Before Bed

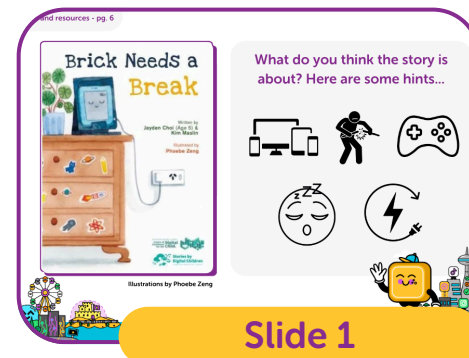
Turn off screens before bedtime and enjoy a story or quiet play to help you sleep better.

1

Introduce the lesson

Discussion: Predict what the story is about.

- What are devices? (eg. tablets, smart phones, computers, consoles, smart watches).
- What fun things can we do with devices?
- This story is about a device called Brick. What might happen to Brick in the story?
- Is taking a break a healthy thing to do? why or why not?
- Why might Brick need a break to stay healthy?



Checkpoint: Make it work for everyone

Differentiate the lesson by assessing the discussion.

Modify the lesson based on whether students can:

- Identify devices.
- Explain why taking a break is "healthy" vs. "unhealthy".
- Make accurate predictions about the story.

Option one: Make it easier

Refer to the "Healthy Habits" slide to further explain healthy vs. unhealthy behaviours.

Option two: Make it more challenging

Introduce the idea of "finding balance". This is conceptually more challenging because it asks learners to compare, contrast, and evaluate behaviours.

2

Main activity

Read the story and discuss.

- What were the signs that Brick needed to take a break?
- How do you feel when a grown up asks you to put devices away? Did Brick show some of those same feelings?
- What else might be healthy for Brick and Jayden to do when using devices? And what would be healthy for you?



Checkpoint: Check understanding

Assess discussion responses. Revise concepts if learners struggle to:

- Comprehend the story.
- Identify signs that Brick needed a break.
- Identify healthy activities for the characters, and for themselves.

Options:

- Talk through specific images or lines in the book.
- Use the "Healthy Habits" slide to help explain the concepts.
- Send the "Exit pass" activity, in the following section, home so that concepts can be discussed with a parent or trusted adult.

3

Exit pass

In-class discussion or set as homework

Drawing activity

- Learners draw a picture of what they will do to stay healthy while using devices.
- For learners who have difficulty expressing ideas, try small group discussion or roleplay instead.

As a class, discuss:

- How the activity pictured helps to stay healthy.
- One sign that they need to take a break from devices.

Checkpoint: Learning intentions & success criteria

Assess the "Exit pass" activity to ensure learners have met the following success criteria:

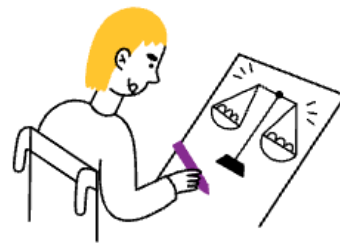
- They can identify at least one of the signs of excessive device use.
- They can identify at least one healthy way to balance time on devices with other activities.

Next steps:

If some learners didn't meet the criteria, conduct the brief "Top-up" activity in the following section.

Important Note:

If this lesson is being conducted as part of the eSmart Digital Licence, you'll need to ensure that all learners have met the success criteria before accessing and distributing the Digital Licences.



4

(Optional) Top-up or extend the lesson

Top-up the lesson:

For learners who need more help meeting the learning intentions & success criteria.

Review the "Healthy habits for using devices" slide with learners. Ask them to identify which strategy would work best in their lives and explain why.



Ask if learners have any additional tips for staying healthy - it doesn't have to be in relation to devices. Add these to the list of possible strategies they can use next time they need a break from devices.

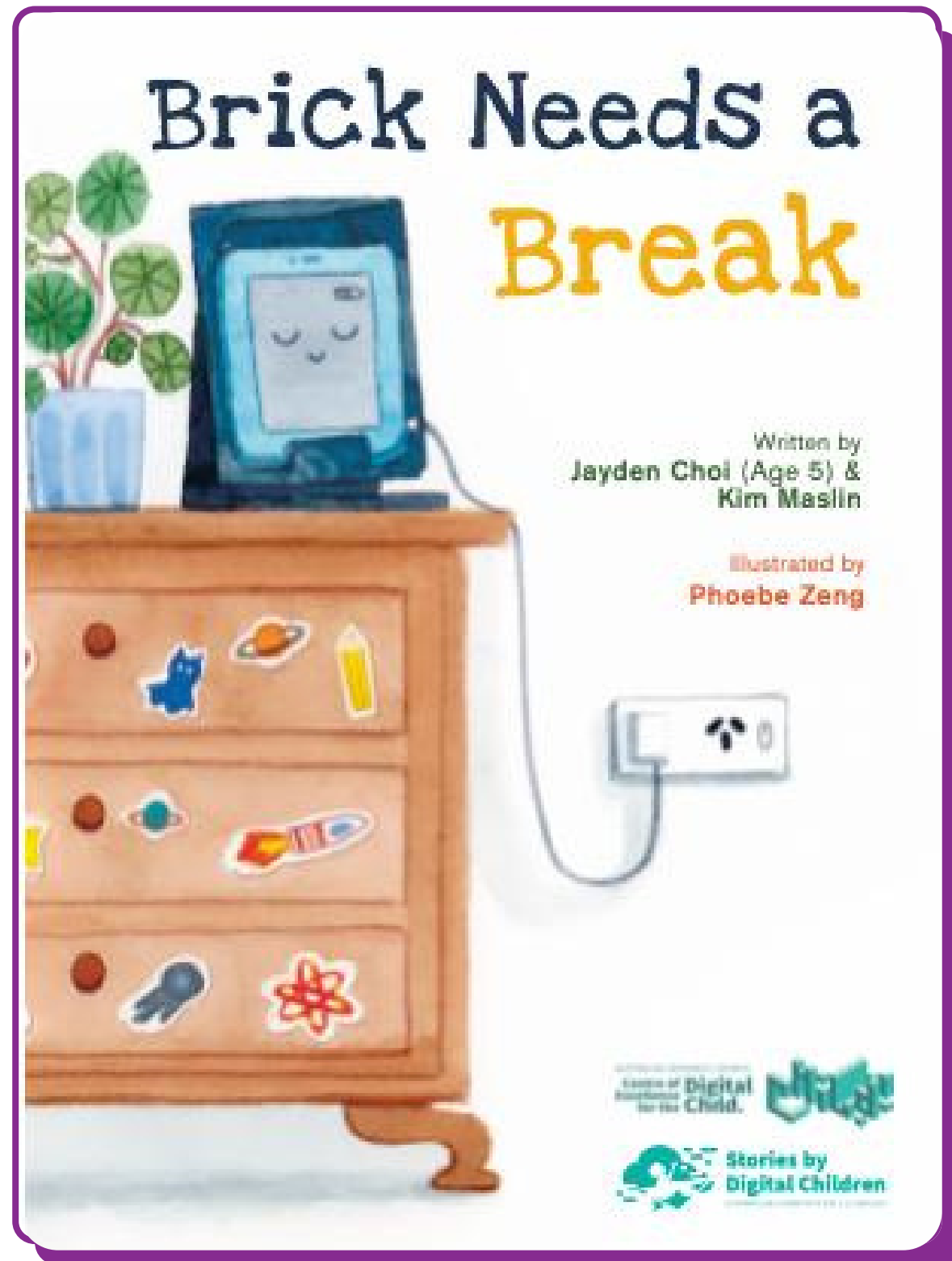
Extend the lesson:

For learners who have met the learning intentions & success criteria, and need a bit more of a challenge.

Project onto a central screen or hand out the Online/Offline Balance worksheet.

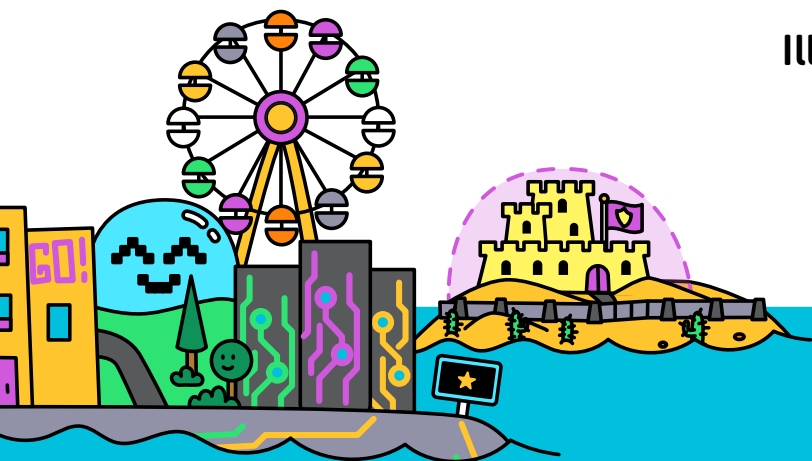
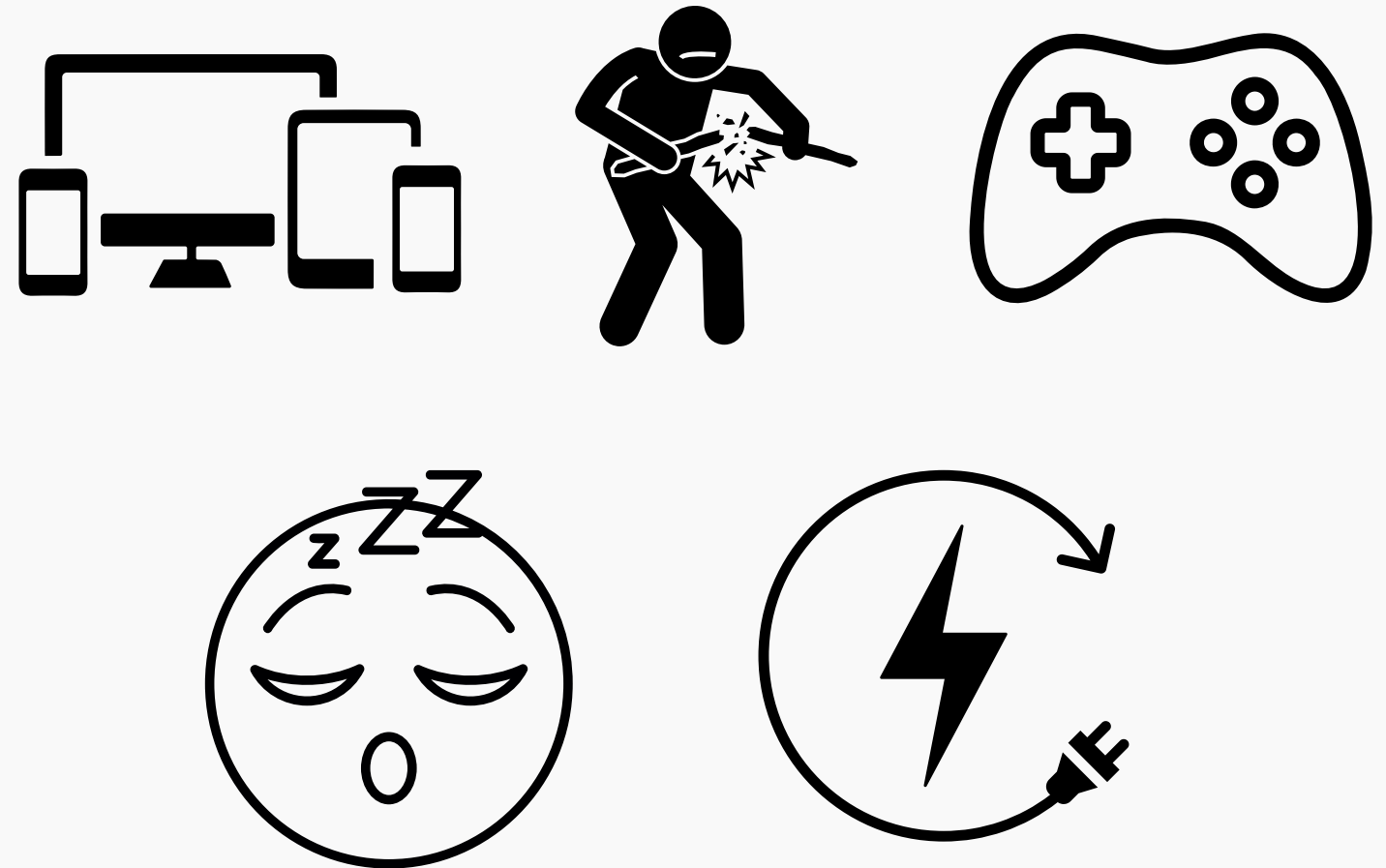
On one side of the scales, ask learners to draw or write the things they love to do online. On the other side, ask them to draw or write activities they love to do offline. The aim is to make sure that the scales balance so that there are equal activities on either side.



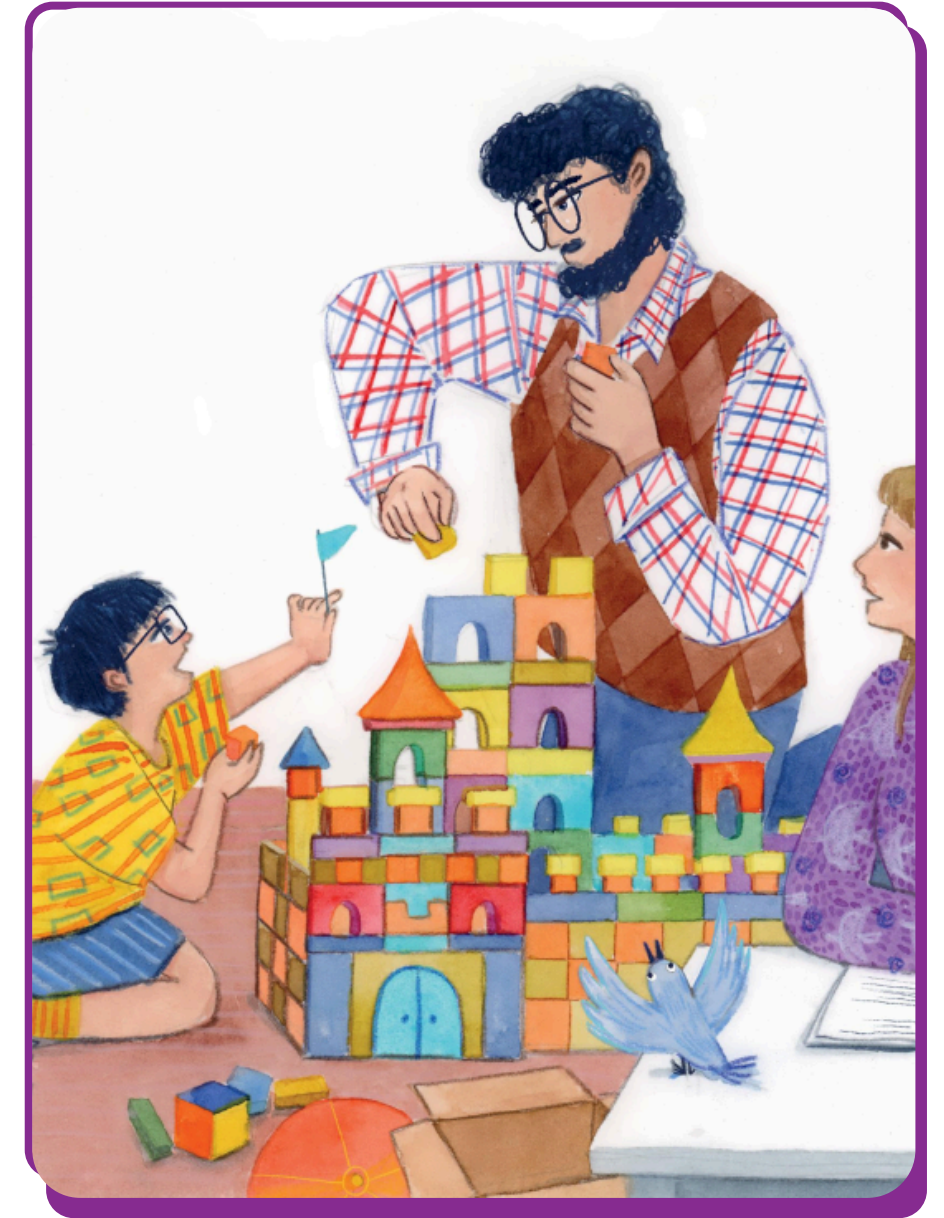


Illustrations by Phoebe Zeng

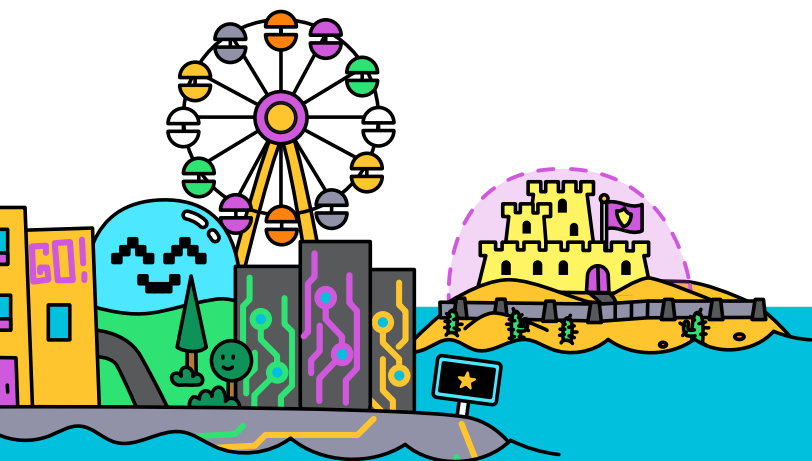
What do you think the story is about? Here are some hints...



What were some signs that Brick needed to take a break?



Illustrations by Phoebe Zeng





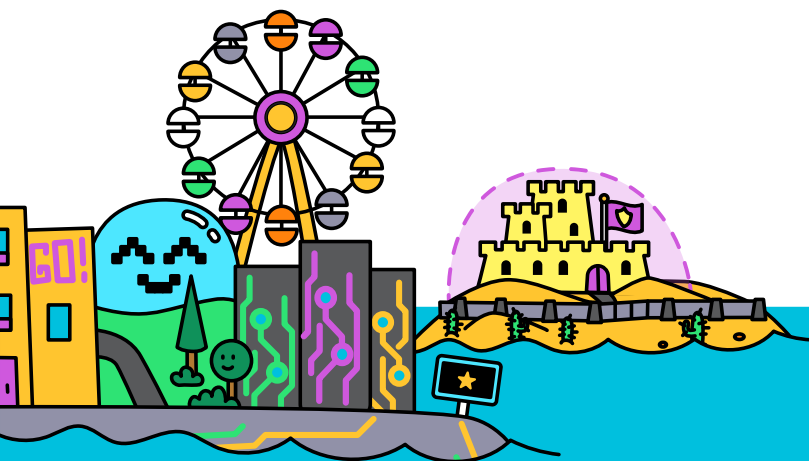
Illustrations by Phoebe Zeng

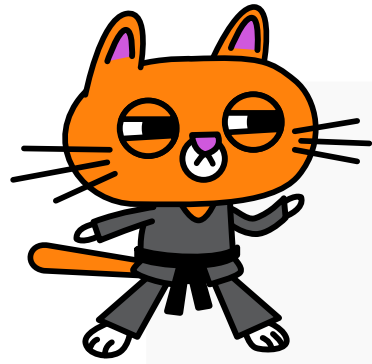
Unlike Brick, we can't go into outer space when we need a break!

Draw a picture of how you will stay healthy while using devices.

Share your picture, and discuss as a class:

How will you know when you need to take a break?
What will one of the signs be?



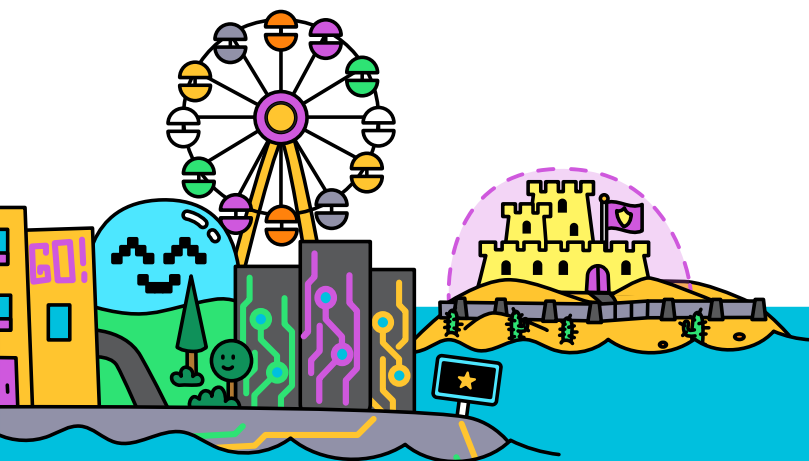
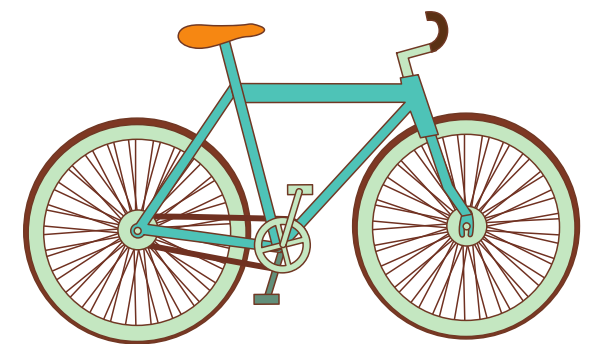


Ninja Whiskers says...

Being healthy means taking care of your body and feelings so you feel happy and full of energy.

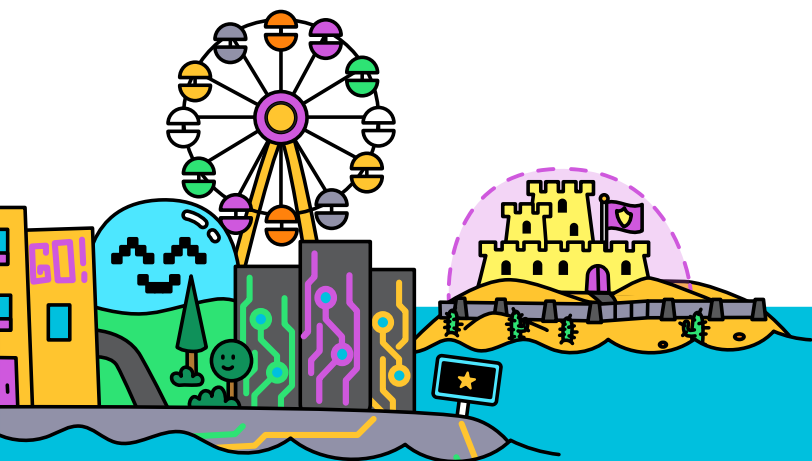
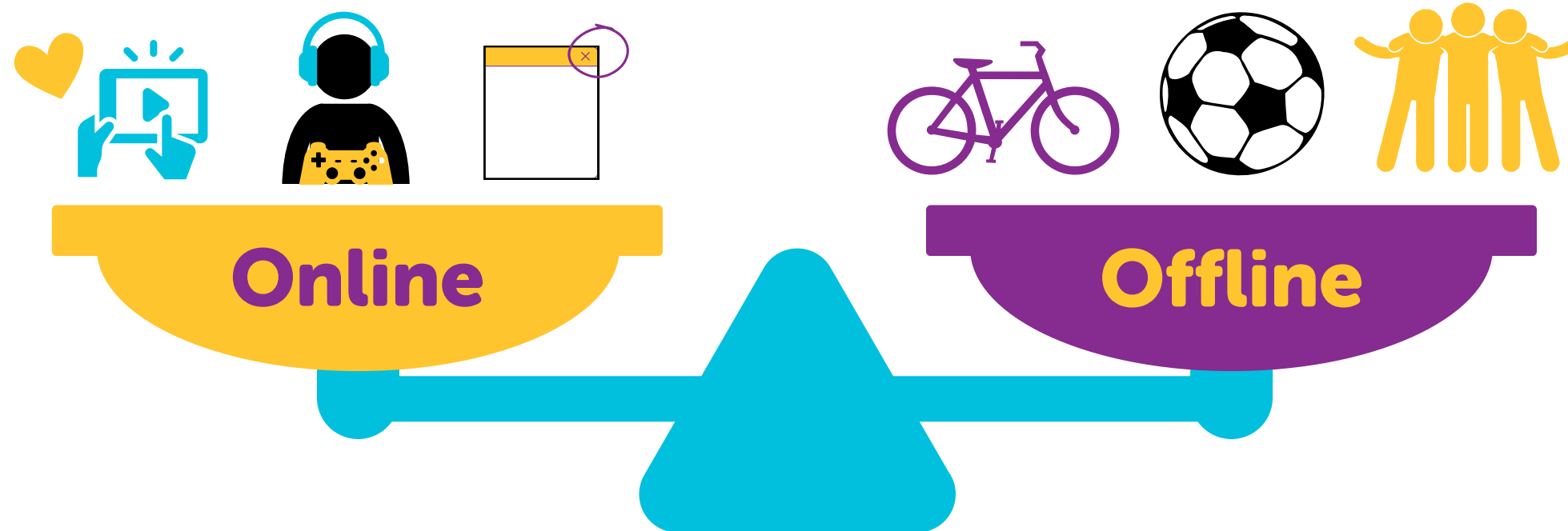
All of these pictures can be healthy things.
Can you guess what they are?

But, would it be good to do these things
all the time? Why or why not?



How will you find balance?

On one side of the scales, draw or write things you do online. On the other side, draw or write things you do offline. Make both sides of the scales balanced with your activities.



Australian Curriculum (Version 9.0)



Digital Literacy

English

Foundation: General Capabilities

Digital Literacy: Manage Digital Wellbeing:
Level 1: follow adult directions for the use of digital tools at school and home.

Foundation: English

AC9EFLE01: Share ideas about stories, poems and images in literature, reflecting on experiences that are similar or different to their own by engaging with texts by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors and illustrators.

AC9EFLE02: Respond to stories and share feelings and thoughts about their events and characters.

AC9EFLY05: Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, and questioning to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently.

Year One: General Capabilities

Digital Literacy: Manage Digital Wellbeing:
Level 2: Follow agreed rules for the healthy use of digital tools and apply them at school and home.

Year One: English

AC9E1LE02: Discuss literary texts and share responses by making connections with students' own experiences.

AC9E1LE03: Discuss plot, character and setting, which are features of stories.

AC9E1LY05: Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, and questioning when listening, viewing, and reading to build literal and inferred meaning by drawing on vocabulary and growing knowledge of context and text structures.

My Time, Our Place



Outcome 2: Children and young people are connected with and contribute to their world.

Children and young people develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary as active and informed citizens.

This is evident when children:

- Understand that while digital technology can connect us, it is also important to maintain our face-to-face and interpersonal connections too.

CASEL Framework



Self-management

The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.

Responsible decision-making

The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse situations.