

Code Breakers Activity

In this activity, the children will use a simple alphabet code to read and write messages. They will think about the need to keep information secret and have an idea of different ways we can make that happen.

What do I need?

- Code sheets
- Whiteboards/paper to write their codes on

Teacher Background Information - Why are we doing this?

From the KS2 National Curriculum:

- understand computer networks, including the internet
- use technology safely

Children are used to using technology pretty regularly, but they often don't think what happens to the information they give to it. This is an introduction to thinking about encryption and what is sent as a secret, but also what is sent not as a secret. It will also lead into safe use of information online and what personal details you should and shouldn't share.

What do I do?

5 minutes - introduce the task and explain they will be 'Net Ninjas' and send secret messages to their friends. Why might someone want to use a computer to send a secret message? Talk about passwords and why we should keep them a secret. Then talk about a code - we're going to move the alphabet by 3 spaces. Have a look at the part of the alphabet on the slides and ask them if they can work out what word the letters spell? Can they also do it the other way and write a word in code?

5 minutes - Children write their names in the code and a friend can check it.

10 minutes - Together, write a secret message to Miss Donoghue about this afternoon. Write the words first and then get the children to have a go at writing the numbers underneath. Maybe split into groups and give different tables different words to work out?