Bad Netiquette Stinks

Overview
Students will learn the definitions of etiquette and netiquette, and discuss the importance of having good manners online. Together, they will create a list of netiquette rules that coincide with common classroom etiquette rules.

Materials / Preparation
- Computer lab or computer connected to an LCD projector
- Video - “Bad Netiquette Stinks”
- Attachment 1 - Sample Etiquette/Netiquette Rules
- Chalkboard/whiteboard
- Poster board (2) or butcher paper
- Markers

25 minutes

Introduction
Write the word “etiquette” on the board and read the following definition aloud: Etiquette is a set of rules for practicing good manners. Now write the word “netiquette” on the board and ask students what they think it means (Netiquette is a set of rules for practicing good manners on the Internet). Explain to students that one of the most common examples of bad netiquette is being mean or rude to others online. This is also known as cyberbullying. Show the video “Bad Netiquette Stinks” to introduce students to the NetSmartz cyberbullying villain, Potty-Mouth Pete.

Ask students to describe what happened when Potty-Mouth Pete’s De-Neticator spread the green smoke: Kids started being mean to each other online by calling each other names, typing in all caps, and ruining games for other players. Explain to students that these are all examples of bad netiquette. Other examples include using bad words, sending spam, and stealing others’ stuff, like passwords and files. Using bad netiquette can make others feel sad and ruin their time online.

Activity
Take two pieces of poster board or two sheets of butcher paper and write the following titles on each: “Our Classroom Etiquette Rules” and “Our Netiquette Rules.” Ask students to make a list of common classroom rules. You may already have some classroom rules displayed that you can use. For each rule you write on the “Classroom Etiquette” poster, ask students if they can think of an equivalent netiquette rule for the second poster.

Students may not be familiar with all netiquette rules, so use the sample etiquette/netiquette rules (attachment 1) as a guide. The sample netiquette rules have additional explanations for your convenience.

When the lists are complete, review them together and display them in the classroom. Be sure to hang the “Netiquette Rules” near the classroom computer(s) as a reminder to practice good manners online.

Follow-Up
For printable netiquette activities, go to www.NetSmartzKids.org/freestuff. Have students complete these in class or send them home so they can continue learning about netiquette.
Sample Etiquette/Netiquette Rules

**Our Classroom Etiquette Rules**

1. Don’t be mean or rude to your classmates.
2. Tell the teacher if another student is mean or rude to you.
3. Use an indoor voice; don’t yell.
4. Use appropriate language.
5. Don’t pass notes.
6. Respect your classmates’ privacy.
7. Don’t steal your classmates’ belongings.
8. Be kind to new students and help them adjust.

**Our Netiquette Rules**

1. Don’t be mean or rude to others online. Use emoticons or smiley faces to show when you are joking.
2. Tell a trusted adult if someone is mean or rude to you online. Never respond to mean messages; you might start an online fight, also called a “flame war.”
3. Don’t type in ALL CAPS. That means you’re yelling.
4. Use appropriate language online. You could be kicked off a website for using bad words.
5. Don’t send or forward spam. No one likes to get junk mail and it could contain a virus that could hurt your computer.
6. Don’t share secrets online, including passwords and personal information.
7. Don’t steal files, music, or movies. It’s illegal!
8. Help “newbies” learn about the Internet. “Newbies” are people new to the Internet or a particular website who may not know all the rules yet. Remember, you were once a “newbie” too.