

Digital Literacy: Becoming a Tech Explorer

Upper Elementary Digital Literacy — Grades 3–5

Tech for Everyone

CHAPTER 1

Meet Your Devices

Get to Know Your Tech Tools

You use technology all the time — but do you know how it really works? Being a smart tech user means understanding your tools, not just tapping until something happens. Let's start with the devices themselves.

1.1 — Kinds of Devices

A device is a tech tool you use to do things and go online. Here are the main kinds:

- **Tablet or iPad** — a flat device with a touchscreen you tap with your fingers.
- **Laptop** — a computer with a keyboard that folds shut so you can carry it.
- **Desktop** — a bigger computer that stays on a desk.
- **Smartphone** — a small computer that fits in your pocket and makes calls.

The big difference is how you control them. Tablets and phones use a touchscreen. Laptops and desktops use a **mouse** or **touchpad** to move a pointer, plus a keyboard.

Try It

Find Four Things Fast

Being good with technology means you can figure out any device, not just one. Try a game: on a device you use, find four things as fast as you can — the power button, how to open an app, the search, and the settings. You can't break anything by looking around! The more you explore, the more confident you become.

1.2 — The Parts of a Device

The parts you can touch are called hardware:

- **Screen** — shows you pictures and words.
- **Keyboard** — keys you press to type.

- **Mouse or touchpad** — moves the pointer.
- **Camera and microphone** — for photos and video calls.
- **Ports** — little slots to plug things in, like the charger.

Your work is kept in **storage**. It can be on the device, or in the cloud — a place on the internet where your files are saved and backed up.

Try It

Look at a device you use. Can you find the screen, a button, the camera, and a port? Point to each one!

Helper Tip

You Can't Break It by Looking

Lots of kids (and grown-ups!) are scared to press the wrong thing. Here's a secret: tapping around a menu won't break a device. If you end up somewhere you didn't mean to, just look for a "back" arrow or a "home" button. Exploring is how you learn — brave explorers try things and find their way back.

1.3 — Turning On and Logging In

To turn a computer *off*, use the menu to **shut it down** — don't just pull the plug — so it can save your work. If something acts weird, **restarting** (turning off and on again) fixes many problems!

Most devices ask you to log in so only you can get in. You might use a **password**, a **PIN** (a number code), or your **fingerprint or face**.

Watch Out!

If a message says "click here RIGHT NOW or your account is locked!", it's probably a trick.

Real companies don't rush you like that. Tell a grown-up if a message tries to scare you.

In the News

Tablets Are Everywhere Now

Did you know many schools give students iPads or Chromebooks instead of heavy textbooks? Tablets are also used by doctors, store workers, and artists. A tablet with a keyboard and a special pen can do almost everything a laptop can. That's why learning to use both tablets *and* computers is a great idea.

Think: Do you use a tablet or a computer more? What is each one good for?

1.4 — Tablets, iPads, and Helping Everyone

Tablets like the **iPad** work by tapping **apps** on a **home screen** and using finger moves — swipe up to go home, pinch to zoom. You get new apps from an **app store**, which helps keep out bad software.

Every device can also change to fit *you*. These accessibility settings can make **text bigger**, **read the screen out loud**, or add **captions** to videos. They help everyone!

How You Feel

Sometimes technology can feel confusing, and that's totally okay! Everyone feels unsure sometimes — even grown-ups. Feeling confused doesn't mean you're bad at it; it just means you're learning something new. Take a breath, try again, and ask for help when you need it. Every expert was once a beginner, just like you.

Key Concepts Checklist

- ☐ I can name the main kinds of devices
- ☐ I can tell the difference between a touchscreen and a mouse
- ☐ I can point to hardware parts like the screen, camera, and ports
- ☐ I know files can be saved on a device or in the cloud
- ☐ I can turn a device on, log in, and shut it down the right way
- ☐ I know what a password, PIN, and fingerprint login are
- ☐ I can spot a scary "click now!" trick message
- ☐ I know how tablets use apps and how to make text bigger

CHAPTER 1 · ACTIVITY

Activity: Be a Device Detective

Meet Your Devices

Part 1: Label It

Draw a device you use. Label at least **four parts** (screen, keyboard, camera, port) and what each one does.

Part 2: On and Off

Write the steps to turn the device on, log in, and turn it off the right way.

Part 3: Make It Yours

With a grown-up, change one setting — make the text bigger or the screen brighter. What happened? Who would that help?

What We Learned

- **Devices** are tech tools: tablets and iPads, laptops, desktops, and smartphones.
- We control tablets and phones with a **touchscreen**, and laptops and desktops with a **mouse or touchpad** and keyboard.
- **Hardware** means the parts you can touch: screen, keyboard, mouse, camera, and ports.
- Files can be saved on the device or in the **cloud**, where they're safe and reachable anywhere.
- Turn a computer off by **shutting it down** the right way, and **restart** it to fix problems.
- We **log in** with a password, a PIN, or a fingerprint or face scan.
- Tablets like the iPad use **apps** and finger **gestures**, and **accessibility** settings help everyone.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter Review

Meet Your Devices

Show What You Know

1. Name two kinds of devices and tell how you control each one.
2. What is the difference between saving on a device and saving in the cloud?
3. What are two ways to log in to a device?
4. A message says "click here right now or your account is locked!" What should you do, and why?
5. Name one accessibility setting and tell who it could help.

Words to Know

Word	What It Means
Device	A tech tool like a tablet, laptop, or computer
Touchscreen	A screen you control by touching it with your fingers
Hardware	The parts of a device you can see and touch
Cloud	A place on the internet where files are saved and kept safe
Log in	To prove it's really you, with a password, PIN, or fingerprint
Accessibility	Settings that change a device to fit you, like bigger text