

## LESSON PLAN 7: ADDING EMAIL SIGNATURES

**Objective:** Learning about personalised signatures and how to include them into an email message

**Age range:** 8-14

### YOU WILL NEED

- ▶ Computer and Internet access
- ▶ Email software
- ▶ Email account

### METHOD

1. Talk to your class about signatures. Explain that they are traditionally a hand-written depiction of someone's name and that the writer of a signature is a signatory. The word itself comes from the Latin *signare*, meaning to sign.

2. Discuss the purpose of signatures – generally as proof of identity or intent.

3. Ask them to identify where signatures can be found – legal documents, certificates, greetings cards, cheques, artwork, credit cards, and so on.

4. Introduce the idea of electronic signatures:

- What are they? These are the digital equivalent of written signatures.
- What form do they take? There are different types, ranging from a visual mark or message that can be included with an email, through to an encrypted file (sometimes called a digital signature) that's used for secure authentication on purchases or legal authorisations.

5. What are the reasons for adding an electronic signature to emails?

Outline to students how it is becoming increasingly popular to 'tag' an outgoing email message with a unique signature that identifies the sender. Explain how they can not only give more information about the sender but also provide an opportunity for the sender to express a bit about their personality.

6. What form can they take? Electronic signatures on emails can be words, phrases, quotations, hyperlinks, or even images.

7. Remind students that they should always be careful about what they include in an email – and they should not send personal or inappropriate information.

### ACTIVITY – CREATING A SIGNATURE

Signatures can be created in most email software packages – Eudora, Outlook, etc. – and be set to automatically attach to outgoing messages. Each will have detailed instructions.

To create a signature in Outlook:

1. From the main Outlook window, on the **Tools** menu, click **Options**, and then the **Mail Format** tab.
2. In the **Compose in this message format** list, select the message format that you want to use the signature with.

3. Under **Signature**, click **Signature**, and then **New**.

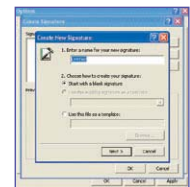
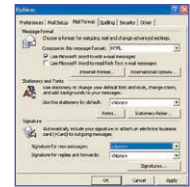
4. Enter a name and under **Choose how to create your signature**, select the option you want.

5. Click **Next**.

6. In the **Signature text box**, type the text you want to include in the signature. You can also paste text to this box from another document.

7. To change the paragraph or font format, select the text, click **Font** or **Paragraph**, and then select the options you want.

(Note: These options are not available if you use plain text as your message format.)



### ADDING AN IMAGE

- To include an image with your signature, in the **Edit Signature** screen click on **Advanced Edit**. This will take you to a Word file where you can insert images.
- Alternatively, if you want to embed an image in an email, from the main Outlook window choose **Insert, Picture, From File**, then browse and select the appropriate image.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

#### What are the limitations of signatures?

- Discuss the validity of signatures and how they can be compromised, through copying and forgery, and coercion, etc. Can electronic signatures be compromised?
- What things can't be shown by signatures? Time, date and place, for example.

#### How does a signature differ from an autograph?

- Describe how the signature of a famous person is sometimes known as an autograph and is typically written on its own or with a brief note to the recipient. Rather than providing authentication for a document, the autograph is given as a souvenir, which acknowledges the recipient's access to the autographer.

#### Is it only words that can act as a signature?

- A signature work can identify its creator – for example, a chef's signature dish or a signature hole on a golf course. Are there any others?

#### What are appropriate and inappropriate uses of email?



### DROP US A LINE

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