The Secret Is Not the Password

K-3 | Lesson | 30 minutes

Before class: Prepare the fictional password and account-protection materials listed below. Do not collect or display real passwords.

Time: 30 minutes Outcome: Learners will explain that passwords and recovery codes protect access and should be handled with trusted adult guidance.

Materials

- Paper treasure-box picture
- Example cards labeled “password,” “recovery code,” “favorite animal,” “drawing,” and “nickname”
- Fictional account cards

Safety and Privacy

Do not ask learners to create, write, or say a real password. All examples must be invented and should never resemble school or family credentials.

Launch

Show the paper treasure box. Explain that an account secret is more like a key than a personal secret about feelings or safety. Children should always tell a trusted adult about something that makes them uncomfortable, even if someone says it is a secret.

Guided Learning

Explain:

- Passwords and recovery codes control access.
- They are not shared with friends or strangers.
- A parent, guardian, or responsible school adult may help manage a child's account.
- A person who pressures a child to hide an online interaction from trusted adults is creating an unsafe situation.

Learner Activity

Learners sort cards into:

- Account key - protect with adult help
- Okay to share in the class activity
- Ask before sharing

Discuss why context matters. A pet's name may seem harmless but could be used as an account-recovery answer.

Evidence and Assessment

Learners complete the sentence: “An account key should be protected because...” and identify one trusted adult who can help after an account problem.

Debrief

- What is the difference between a password and a secret about being hurt or afraid?
- Why should a child tell an adult after a password is exposed?
- How can adults help without blaming the child?

Family Extension

Families review who manages the child's accounts and how the child should report an unexpected sign-in prompt. No credentials are recorded on the worksheet.

Source and use

The Complete Cybersecurity Educator, Dr. Jason Edwards. Editable companion - Lesson 1.2 - The Secret Is Not the Password.

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