

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

BUILDING BLOCKS STUDENT WORKSHEET

Protecting yourself from identity theft

Millions of Americans are affected by identity theft each year. Learning about the risks of identity theft can help you protect yourself against these crimes.

Instructions

- 1 Watch a video about identity theft.
- 2 Describe the problems identity theft can cause.
- 3 Read the “How can you protect your identity?” section below.
- 4 Review the “Avoiding identity theft” scenarios and choose the options that will best protect your personal information.
- 5 Answer the reflection question.

Why do I care about identity theft?

Watch a video from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at consumer.gov/articles/1015-avoiding-identity-theft to learn about the trouble that can result when someone steals your identity. Then, in your own words, describe the problems that identity theft can cause.



How can you protect your identity?

On the next page are some things you can do to reduce your risk of identity theft. Most of these tips come from the FTC.

Protecting yourself online

- Use passwords that can't be easily guessed by people who have information about you.
- Shop on secure websites only (the web address for secure websites starts with https://).
- Do not put personal information on public computers (like in libraries and schools).
- Install or activate security software on your computer to protect yourself.

Protecting yourself in life

- Keep medical records, bills, paychecks, and other personal documents in a safe place.
- Shred documents that have your personal information.
- Keep your Social Security card and any other documents that show your Social Security number in a safe place. Don't carry your card or other documents that display your number.
- Don't share your Social Security number unless you have to, like when you get a job or open a bank or credit union account.
- Don't share your personal information in emails or on social media.
- Do not respond with personal information to someone who emails or calls you claiming to need it. Verify the source before sharing the information.

Avoiding identity theft

Review the four scenarios below and select the action that will best help you to protect your identity. Explain your choice for each.

Scenario 1.

You're creating a new social media password.

- Option A: You choose your birthday.
- Option B: You choose a random sequence of letters, numbers, and symbols.

Why?

Scenario 2.

You use social media to invite friends to a party.

- Option A: You send a private invitation to a select guest list.
- Option B: On your public wall, you post your address, phone number, email, and your birthday so friends have what they need.

Why?

Scenario 3.

You want to do some online shopping to buy back-to-school items you really need, but your computer at home is not working well.

- Option A: You go to the library and use a public computer to connect to the online store and buy what you need.
- Option B: After dinner, you use your mom's smartphone when you're both sitting on the couch in your living room.

Why?

Scenario 4.

You're cleaning your room. You want to get rid of old documents you have in your desk. These documents include the results of your yearly physical from your doctor, your school report cards, and statements from your savings account.

Option A: You go to the office supply store to shred the information.

Option B: You throw out the information in your trash.

Why?

Reflection question

What behaviors can you change to better protect yourself from identity theft?

