Cyber Escape Room

An immersive 45-60 minute team-building adventure that transforms cybersecurity education into an exciting, hands-on classroom experience where students work together to save their school's network.

Mission-Critical Learning

This escape room activity combines puzzle-solving excitement with essential cybersecurity concepts. Students collaborate to crack codes, identify threats, and secure systems—all while building critical digital literacy skills that will protect them throughout their lives.

Perfect for: Middle and high school classes, computer labs, library sessions, and after-school programs. Fully adaptable for different skill levels and time constraints.

45-60
Minutes

Activity duration

3-5
Teams

Recommended groups

5
Challenges

Unique puzzles

Easy Setup in Three Steps

01

Print & Prepare Materials

Download and print all puzzle sheets, clue cards, hint cards, and lock code envelopes. Organize materials into station folders for each challenge area.

02

Arrange Your Classroom

Set up five challenge stations around the room. Each station should have its puzzle materials, a hint card envelope, and clear instructions. Create a central "Network Command" area for briefing.
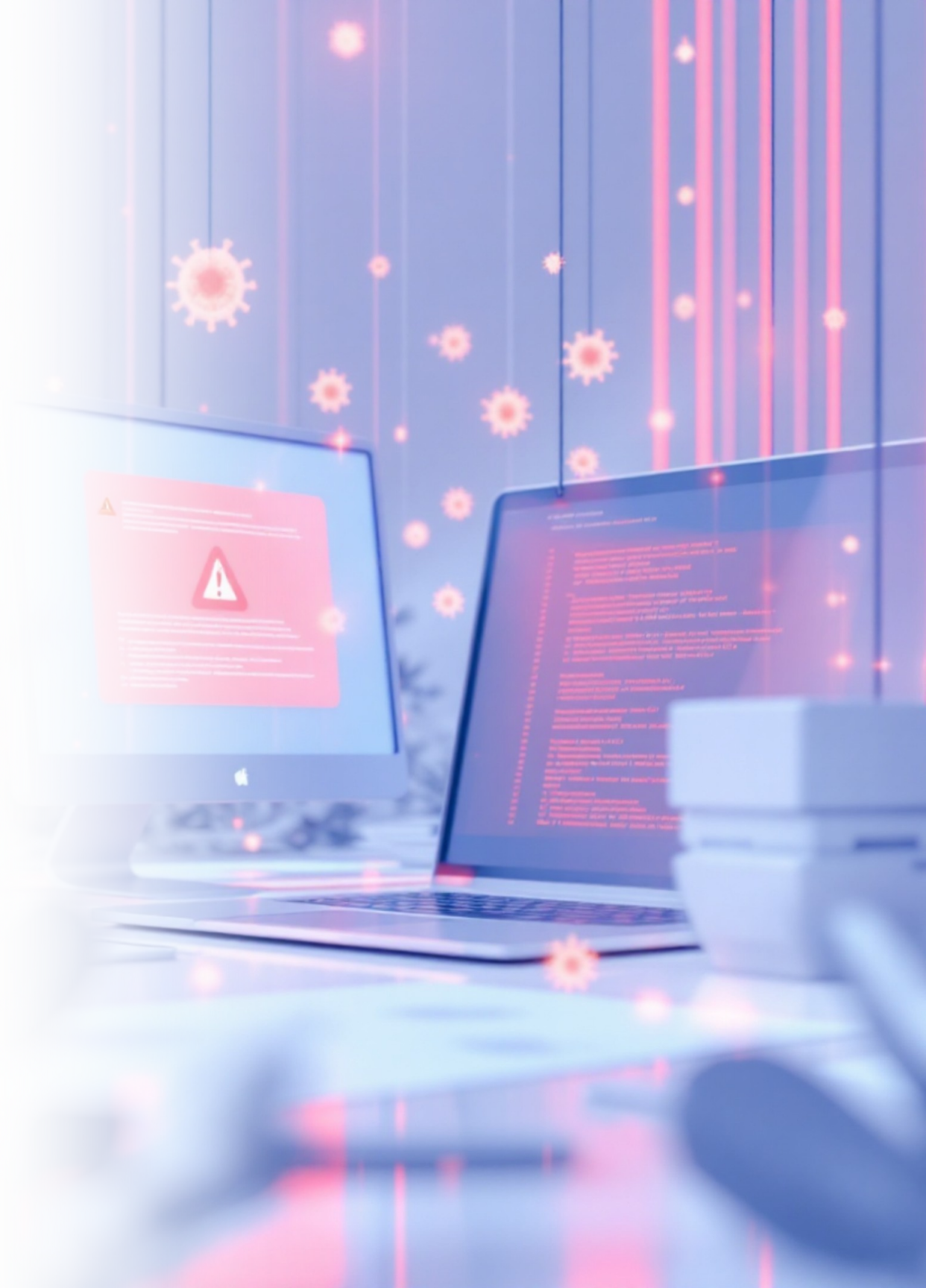
03

Brief Your Teams

Divide students into teams of 4-6. Introduce the storyline and rules. Explain that they must complete all five challenges to unlock the final code and save the network.

Pro Tip: Test run the puzzles beforehand and prepare a timer display visible to all teams to build excitement and urgency throughout the activity.

The Storyline: Race Against Time

> *"WARNING: Unknown malware detected on school network. All systems will be locked in 60 minutes unless security protocols are restored. Only YOU can stop the breach!"*

Students discover their school's network has been compromised by a sophisticated cyber attack. As the school's emergency cybersecurity response team, they must work through five critical security challenges to identify the threat, restore protections, and save valuable school data before time runs out. The fate of digital classrooms, student records, and online resources hangs in the balance.

Five Exciting Cybersecurity Puzzles

Password Decoder Challenge

Crack encrypted passwords using cipher wheels and pattern recognition. Students learn about password strength, common vulnerabilities, and encryption basics.

Phishing Email Sort

Identify dangerous phishing attempts among legitimate messages. Teams analyze sender addresses, suspicious links, urgent language, and social engineering tactics.

Privacy Settings Maze

Navigate through privacy decisions to find the secure path. Students practice configuring settings, understanding permissions, and protecting personal information.

Final Boss Challenges

Secure Connection Challenge

Distinguish between safe and unsafe networks. Students identify encryption protocols, recognize public Wi-Fi risks, and understand VPN protection. They must match connection scenarios with correct security levels.

Social Engineering Boss

The ultimate test! Face realistic social engineering scenarios including pretexting, baiting, and tailgating attempts. Teams must identify manipulation tactics and respond appropriately to win the final code.

Successfully completing both challenges unlocks the master code that saves the network. Teams experience the satisfaction of applying everything they've learned to defeat the cyber threat!

Complete Printable Resource Kit

For Teachers

- Detailed setup instructions with timing guide
- Answer keys for all puzzles
- Difficulty adjustment options
- Classroom management tips
- Debrief discussion questions
- Learning objectives alignment

For Students

- Five full-color puzzle sheets
- Progressive clue cards for each challenge
- Hint cards (3 per puzzle)
- Lock code envelopes
- Team tracking sheets
- Completion certificates

Adaptable Difficulty Levels

Customize the experience to match your students' skills and available time. Each challenge includes built-in flexibility to ensure every classroom succeeds.

Beginner Mode

Simplified puzzles with more obvious clues. Recommended for grades 6-7 or first-time cybersecurity learners. Use all hint cards from the start.

Standard Mode

Balanced challenge level suitable for grades 8-10. Hints available upon request. Perfect for typical classroom implementation with mixed abilities.

Expert Mode

Advanced puzzles with minimal guidance for grades 11-12 or tech-savvy students. Limited hints, bonus challenges, and strict time pressure.

What Students Will Learn

Password Security

Understanding strong password creation, multi-factor authentication, and the dangers of password reuse across accounts.

Threat Recognition

Identifying phishing attempts, suspicious links, social engineering tactics, and other common cyber threats they'll encounter online.

Privacy Protection

Managing digital footprints, configuring privacy settings, and understanding data collection practices on apps and websites.

Network Safety

Distinguishing secure from unsecure connections, recognizing encryption indicators, and practicing safe browsing habits.

Critical Thinking

Developing skepticism toward unsolicited requests, analyzing digital communication authenticity, and making informed security decisions.

Team Collaboration

Working together to solve problems, communicating technical concepts clearly, and supporting peers in learning new skills.

Debrief & Celebrate Success

The learning doesn't stop when the timer ends! Use our guided debrief questions to help students reflect on their experience and connect puzzle scenarios to real-world cybersecurity challenges they face daily.

Reflect Together

Discuss which challenge was hardest, what strategies worked, and how puzzles relate to actual online threats students encounter.

Award Certificates

Recognize all participants with customizable completion certificates that celebrate their new cybersecurity knowledge and teamwork.

Extend Learning

Provide take-home resources and encourage students to share cybersecurity tips with family members to spread digital safety awareness.

Ready to Launch Your Cyber Escape Room?

1 **Download the complete kit**

All materials are free at csnp.org/resources

2 **Print and organize**

Set up your stations in 15-20 minutes

3 **Brief your students**

Share the mission and watch them dive in

4 **Facilitate and debrief**

Guide teams and celebrate their success

Need support? Visit csnp.org for video tutorials, teacher community forums, and additional cybersecurity classroom resources —all completely free.

About Cybersecurity Non-Profit

Making cybersecurity knowledge accessible to everyone through education, community, and practical resources.

Business & Non-Profit Security

Family Cybersecurity

Kids Safety

Senior Digital Safety

Women's Security

Parents & Educators

Everything we offer is completely free. Access hundreds of resources, training materials, and community support at **csnp.org** and **csnp.org/resources**