

## 5 words to remember

**blog:** short for 'weblog', refers to a published website, usually has a specific focus and is made up of posts that are displayed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent post at the top

**fake news:** a fictional, or partly fictional, story presented as news

**neutral viewpoint:** a balanced perspective where all sides of an argument are presented fairly

**source:** the origin of a piece of information

**social media:** websites and apps that allow users to create and share content or to participate in conversations with one or more other users

## Knowledge check: Online searches

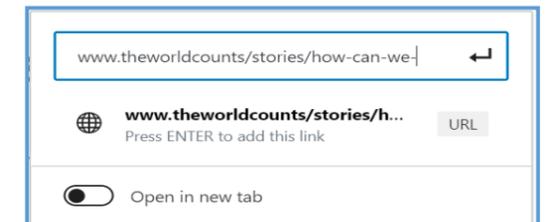
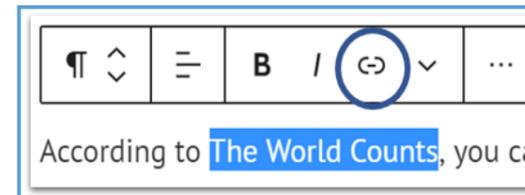
Search engines, such as Google, select and rank results based on the words entered into the search. The result list also considers relevance, the quality and the number of links from other sites. Not all sites listed in search results will necessarily be reliable, so it's important to be critical.



**Test yourself:** Wikipedia often appears high up in search results as lots of people link to it in articles, but why should Wikipedia be critically questioned as a source?

## Key takeaways

- ❑ Most **social-media** platforms state that children below the age of 13 should not hold accounts due to personal-data laws. Such platforms may also not be suitable for children due to their content or other risks.
- ❑ Debating different topics is important, but viewpoints must be supported by reliable **sources**, for example in a **blog** post this can be done by hyperlinking to evidence to show where information and statistics have come from.



- ❑ So-called fake news is a common issue online; therefore, all online content should be questioned and checked for reliability.
- ❑ Blogging allows users to create and share content, as well as participate in discussion with readers. When blogging, it is important to consider online safety, for example:
  - Thinking carefully before posting anything online
  - Thinking carefully about what you write
  - Not posting personal details, such as surnames or photographs, if it can be seen beyond your class / school
  - Not writing anything that might seem critical of others (teacher, friends or your school, for example)
- ❑ Online discussions can often get heated, especially when particular topics are being discussed and people have different points of view. Therefore, it is important to present a balanced, **neutral viewpoint**.
- ❑ When online communication is not respectful or ground rules are not being followed, this may lead to online bullying. Online bullying, sometimes known as 'cyberbullying', is deliberate, typically repeated or extreme harassment carried out via the internet or other network technologies.
- ❑ Comments and arguments can occur on social media, especially when respect and tolerance rules are not followed. When experiencing negative online experiences, you can speak to trusted adults for help, and there are also lots of charities that offer support, such as those listed below:

## Knowledge check: Fake news and being sceptical

When researching online, it is good to be sceptical; in other words, not to be easily convinced by the information you read. There is no guarantee that online information is reliable or unbiased. Here are some different questions you can ask to check the trustworthiness of a website:

- Does the information come from a well-known, trusted website?
- Is the website address secure – does it start with https://?
- Does the content appear to be biased, for example not presenting different viewpoints?
- Is the information out of date?
- Is the site well designed and the content well written?

When online content is biased, there is a danger that information presented as fact may actually be **fake news**. There are two main types of fake news:

'Disinformation' is the deliberate creation and sharing of stories that are fake or misleading. The person writing or publishing this information will know it is false. Disinformation is deliberate and intended to cause harm.

'Misinformation' is also about shared information that is fake or misleading, but the writer or publisher has not deliberately tried to mislead people. Poor fact-checking and exaggeration may be the reasons for misinformation.



**Test yourself:** The weather presenter in this picture has accidentally shown the wrong image when sharing news about flooding. Is this disinformation or misinformation? Why?

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