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Be Internet Alert: Pillar 2

Check it's For Real

Be Internet Legends

Activity pack

Welcome to your Be Internet Legends Alert pack

In this pack, you will find a range of activities that will teach pupils to Check it's For Real when online.

The activities cover topics such as how to protect your online reputation and how to stay safer online by spotting the clues that something may be suspicious, misleading or a scam.

They also show children what phishing scams can look like and how to respond to messages from someone they may not know.

Four of the activities have a Media Literacy focus. These include developing analytical skills to evaluate different sources of information, identify disinformation and being able to carry out effective searches online.

Getting Started

On the next page, you will find an in-depth guide to teaching these activities – including objectives, outcomes, assessment opportunities and plenary.

You will also find a vocabulary sheet, containing definitions of the words and phrases used in the activities.

You can use this pack alongside the curriculum lesson plans, which you can download separately.

If you have any questions, email **legends@parentzone.org.uk**.

Be Internet Alert: Pillar 2

Check it's For Real

Detailed lesson plans

Ages 7-9: Lesson 1, Lesson 3
Ages 9-11: Lesson 7

Pillar summary

It's important for children to understand that online content isn't always honest or reliable, and is sometimes even deliberately designed to steal personal information. The activities in this lesson help give children the skills to stay safer online by spotting the clues that something may be suspicious, misleading or a scam.

Objectives

Pupils will learn to

- ✓ **Understand** that what people tell you online isn't necessarily true.
- ✓ **Learn** how scams work, why they're a threat, and how to avoid them.
- ✓ **Determine** the validity of information and messages online and be wary of manipulation, unsubstantiated claims, fake offers or prizes and other online scams.

Outcomes

Pupils can

- ✓ **Describe** ways to critically evaluate what we see on social media.
- ✓ **Explain** how social media can mislead or misrepresent reality.
- ✓ **Identify** different types of online scams people may experience, including 'phishing'.
- ✓ **Identify** sources of support for someone who is worried about anything online.

Activity Guide

Activity 1	**Don't bite that phishing hook**		Ages **7-11**
Activity 2	**Who are you really?**		Ages **7-11**
Activity 3	**Is that really true?**	**ML**	Ages **7-11**
Activity 4	**Spotting disinformation online**	**ML**	Ages **7-11**
Activity 5	**If we were a search engine**	**ML**	Ages **7-11**
Activity 6	**Practising how to search online**	**ML**	Ages **7-11**
Activity 7	**Interland: Reality River**		Ages **7-11**

Assessment Opportunities

- Assessing pupils' pre-existing knowledge in introductory activity.
- Think, pair and share with peers.
- Class discussion and teacher circulation during activities.
- Pupils acting out scenarios.
- Traffic light cards for measuring progress throughout the lesson and at start/finish.

Plenary

Pupils share advice based on what they've learnt.

Check it's For Real
Vocabulary

Activities 1 and 2

Catfishing: Creating a fake identity or account online to trick people into friending them or sharing their personal information.

Malicious: Words or actions intended to be cruel or hurtful. This word can also refer to harmful software intended to do damage to a person's device, account or personal information.

Phishing: An attempt to scam you or trick you into sharing your login or other personal information online. Phishing is done through email, social media, texts, ads or web pages that look similar to ones you're already used to but are fake.

Scam: A dishonest attempt to make money by tricking people into sharing their login, personal information, contacts, etc. or tricking people out of their money or digital property.

Authentic: Real, genuine, true or accurate; not fake or copied.

Spearphishing: A phishing scam where an attacker targets you more specifically by using pieces of your own personal information.

Trustworthy: Able to be relied on to do what is right or what is needed.

Activity 3

Credible: Believable; someone who is credible uses evidence, and you can be confident they are telling the truth.

Expertise: Special skill or knowledge about a particular thing; experts have expertise.

Motive: The reason that someone does something; intention.

Source: Someone or something that provides information.

Vlogger: A person who is known for regularly posting short videos on a blog or social media.

Activity 4

Deceptive: False; an action or message designed to fool, trick or lie to someone.

Deceptive news: News that intentionally lies or distorts the truth. The popular name for it these days is 'fake news'.

Disinformation: False information intended to trick or mislead you.

Evidence: Facts or examples that prove something is true or false.

Misinformation: False information.

Sceptical: Questioning whether something is truthful. Not easily convinced.

Activities 5 and 6

Clickbait: Content that attracts attention and could push you to click on a link to a certain site by using interesting formatting or catchy phrases.

Keyword: A word directly related to the topic of your internet search – one of the words you really need to do your search because no other word describes your topic better.

Query: A keyword, set of keywords or a question you type into a search window (or box) to find information online. Sometimes a search takes more than one query to find what you're looking for.

Search engine/Internet search: A software programme or 'tool' people use to find information – including locations, photos and videos – on the internet.

Search results: A collection of information you get in a search engine after you type your query and hit the 'Search' or 'Send' button.

Be Internet Alert: Activity 1

Don’t bite that phishing hook!

A game where pupils study various messages and texts and try to decide which are for real and which are phishing scams.

Activity

You’ll need:

- Pupil handout: ‘Phishing examples’

Possible modification for ages 7-9: *Divide the class into five groups and assign one example from the worksheet to each group. After each group has had a chance to analyse the example, discuss as a class.*

1. Group study the examples.

Divide into groups.

Each one studies examples of messages and websites.

2. Individuals indicate choices

Select ‘real’ or ‘fake’ for each example and list reasons why.

3. Groups discuss choices

Which examples seemed trustworthy and which seemed suspicious? Did any answers surprise you?

4. Further discussion

Here are some more questions to ask yourself when assessing messages and sites you find online:

- **Does this message look right?**
  What’s your first instinct? Do you notice any untrustworthy parts? Does it offer to fix something you didn’t know was a problem?
- **Is the email offering you something for free?**
  Free offers usually aren’t really free.
- **Is it asking for your personal information?**
  Some websites ask for personal information so they can send you more scams. For example, a ‘personality test’ could be gathering facts to make it easy to guess your password or other secret information. Most real businesses, on the other hand, won’t ask for personal information over email.
- **Is it a chain email or social post?**
  Emails and posts that ask you to forward this to everyone you know can put you and others at risk. Don’t do it unless you’re sure of the source and sure the message is safe to pass on.
- **Does this app look right?**
  Sometimes fake apps – apps that look a whole lot like real ones – get advertised in website pop-ups or show up in app stores. There are all kinds of nasty things they do if they’re downloaded to a phone, like steal your information or contacts or install bad software. Look out for spelling mistakes, a tiny number of user reviews or sloppy (not very professional) graphics.

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Answers to pupil handout: 'Phishing examples'

1. **Real.** The message asks the user to go to the company's website and sign into their account on their own, rather than providing a link in the message or asking you to email your password (links can send you to malicious websites).
2. **Fake.** Suspicious and insecure URL.
3. **Real.** Note the https:// in the URL.
4. **Fake.** Suspicious offer in exchange for bank details.
5. **Fake.** Insecure and suspicious URL.
6. **Fake.** Insecure and suspicious URL.
7. **Fake.** Insecure and suspicious URL and suspicious offer in exchange for bank details.

- **Does it have fine print?**
  At the bottom of most documents you'll find the 'fine print'. This text is tiny and often contains the stuff you're supposed to miss. For example, a headline at the top might say you've won a free phone, but in the fine print you'll read that you actually have to pay that company £120 per month. No fine print at all can be just as bad, so definitely pay attention to that too.

Note: For the purposes of this exercise, assume that Internaut mail is a real, trusted service.

Let's talk

What is this phishing thing anyway?

Phishing in the online world (not to be confused with 'fishing' with an 'f') is when someone tries to steal information like your login or account details in an email, text or other online communication by pretending to be someone you trust. Phishing emails – and the unsafe sites they try to send you to or the downloads and attachments they try to get you to open – can also put viruses on your computer that use your contacts list to target your friends and family with more phishing emails. Other scams might try to trick you into downloading bad or unwanted software by telling you that there's something wrong with your device.

Remember: A website or advert can't tell if there's anything wrong with your machine! Some phishing attacks are obviously fake. But others can be sophisticated and convincing. For instance, when a scammer sends you a message that includes some of your personal information, it's called 'spearphishing', and it can be very effective. It's important to know how to spot anything odd or unusual in emails and texts early, before you click on questionable links or enter your password on risky websites.

Here are some questions you could ask:

- Does it include the indicators of a trustworthy site, such as badges?
- Does the site's URL match the product's or company's name and information you're looking for?
- Are there any pop-ups? (They're often bad news.)

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Are there misspellings?

- Does the URL start with 'https://' preceded by a padlock? (That's good, it means the connection is secure.)
- What's in the fine print? (That's sometimes where they put sneaky stuff, if they bother to. It's also not good if there's **no** fine print.)
- Is the message offering something that sounds too good to be true, like a chance to make money, enhance your avatar or character, become famous, etc.? (It's almost **always** too good to be true.)
- Does the message sound just a little bit weird? Like they're saying they know you and you think it's possible, but you're not completely sure?

And what if you do fall for a scam?

- Start with this: Don't panic! Lots of people do.
- Tell your parent, teacher or another adult you trust right away. The longer you wait, the worse things could get.
- Change your passwords for online accounts.
- If you do get tricked by a scam, let your friends and people in your contacts know right away, because they could get that tricky message next.
- Report the message as spam, if possible.

Summary

When you're online, always be on the lookout for scams in games, webpages, apps and messages and know that if it sounds fabulous or a way to get something for free, it's probably fake. And if you do get fooled, make sure you tell an adult you trust right away.

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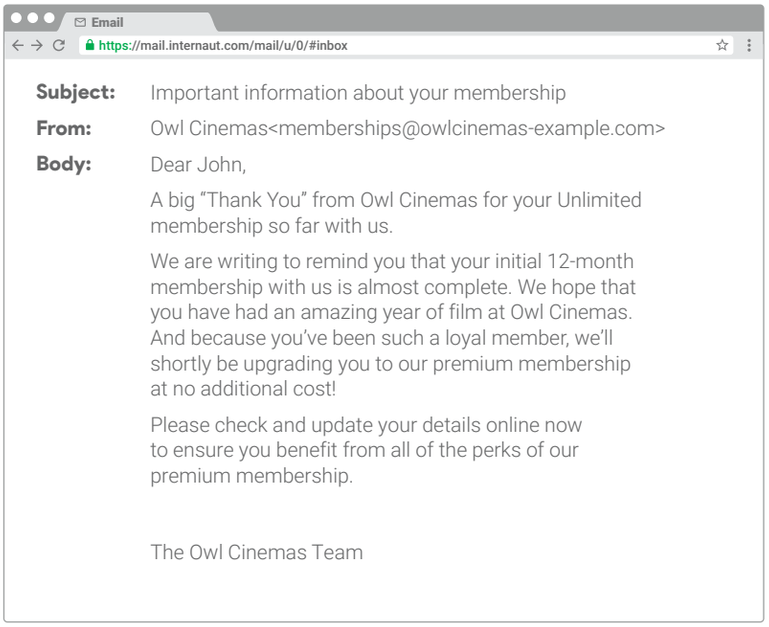
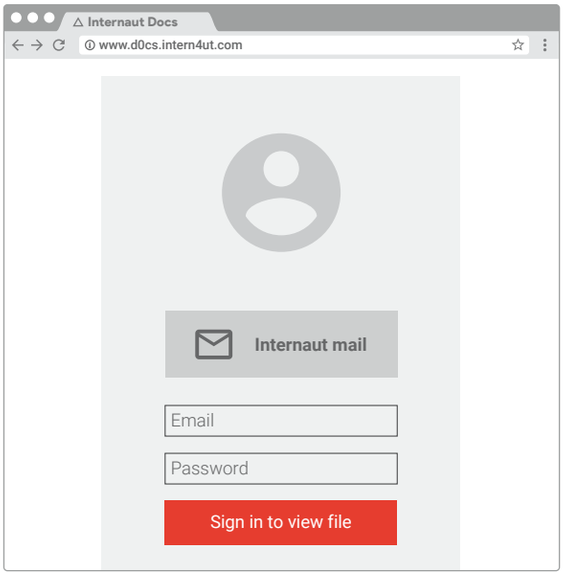
Worksheet: Activity 1

Phishing examples



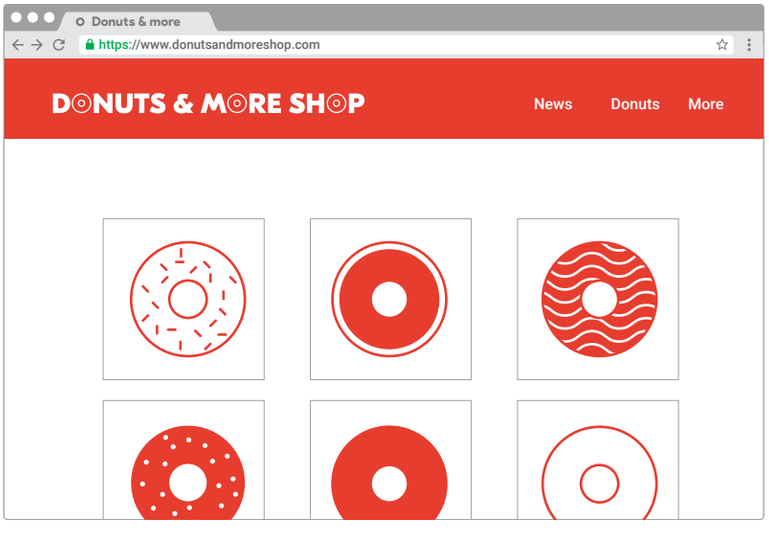
1. Is this real or fake?

Real _____ Fake _____



2. Is this real or fake?

Real _____ Fake _____



3. Is this real or fake?

Real _____ Fake _____

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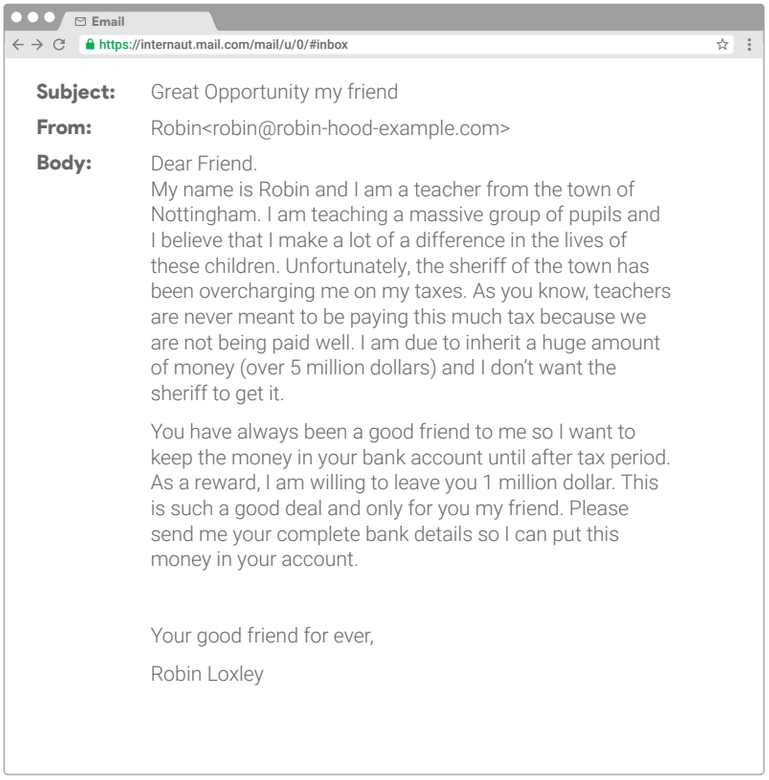
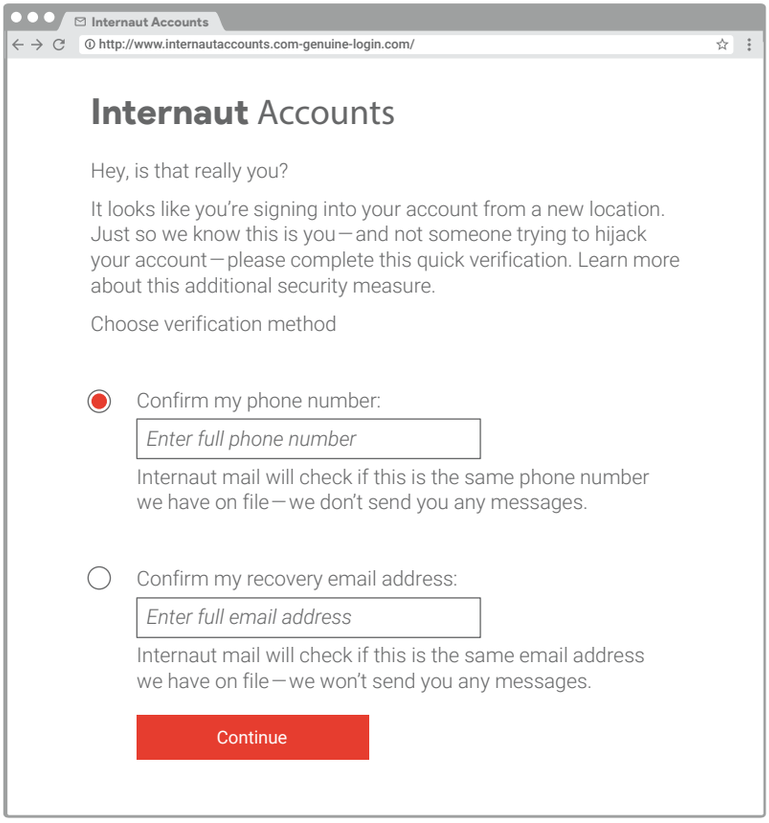


4. Is this real or fake?

Real Fake



5. Is this real or fake?

Real Fake

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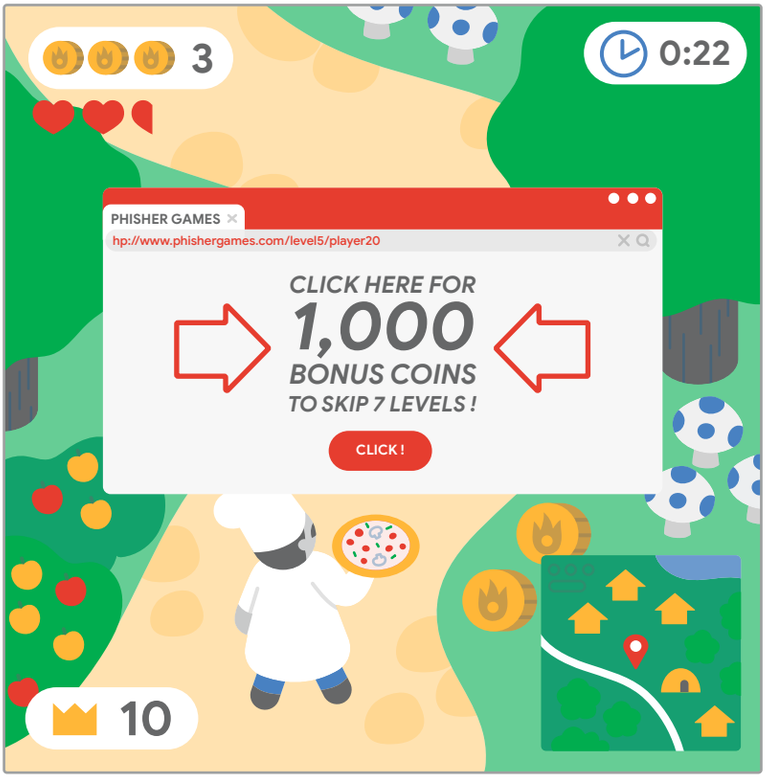
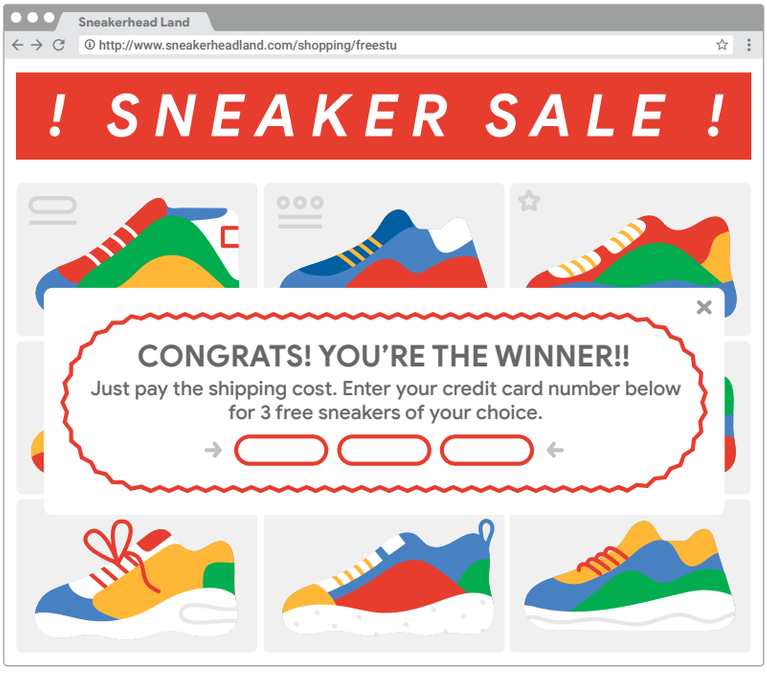


6. Is this real or fake?

Real _____ Fake _____



7. Is this real or fake?

Real _____ Fake _____

Be Internet Alert: Activity 2

Who are you, really?

Pupils practise their anti-phishing skills by discussing possible responses to suspicious online messages, posts, friend requests, apps, pictures and email.

About this activity: *Because it's about social interaction, this lesson would seem to be for pupils aged 9-11, but because more and more pupils aged 7-9 are playing online games, many of them with other players rather than solo, this lesson is good preparation even for the younger years. We hope teachers in these year groups will find out if their pupils are gaming and, if so, what they love about it and whether they've experienced anything suspicious. To maximise learning, just keep it light, open and judgement-free.*

Activity

You'll need:

- Worksheet: 'Who are you, really?' worksheet cut into strips, with one scenario on each strip
- A bowl or container to hold the strips when pupils pick one

1. Pick a scenario from the container.

2. In your group, discuss possible responses to the message (and decide on three to six different options).

3. Decide on which would be the best option and why.

4. See the cheat sheet.

5. Discuss whether you agree with it.

6. Class feedback – display each scenario on the whiteboard. Each group can explain what they decided was the best response and why. Please see the lesson plan for ages 9-11 for differentiation activity.

Let's talk

How do you know it's really them?

When you're messaging with a friend, how can you tell it's them, even though you can't see them? Sometimes people pretend to be other people online as a prank. Other times, they impersonate someone in order to steal personal information. When you're on the internet, strangers could ask to connect with you. It's up to you to decide whether you want to connect with that person, and what or how to reply. Fortunately, you can verify people's identity and spot scammers. Here are a few ideas to start thinking about:

- **Is their profile picture suspicious?**
  Is their profile picture blurry or hard to see? Or is there no photo at all, like a bitmoji or cartoon character's face? Bad photos, bitmojis, photos of pets, etc. make it easy for a person to hide their identity in social media.
  It's also common for scammers to steal photos from a real person in order to set up a fake profile and pretend to be them. If there's a photo, can you find more photos of the person with that name online?

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- **Does their displayed name match their username?**
  On social media, for instance, does their profile URL match their given name? (For example, Jane Doe, with an address that's something like SocialMedia.com/jane.doe.)

- **Do they have a personal biography?**
  If so, does it sound like it was written by a real person? Fake accounts might not have much 'About Me' information or might have grouped together some information to create a fake profile.

- **How long has the account been active?**
  Is the profile new or does it show a lot of activity? Fake accounts often lack a history of posts or social interactions.

Summary

You control who you talk to online. Make sure the people you connect with are who they say they are!

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Worksheet: Activity 2

Who are you, really?

Scenario 1

Sandeep gets an online message request from a stranger: 'Hi! Do you want to hang out? Can you add me to your friends list? – Jason'

Scenario 2

Layla gets a message on her mobile phone from someone she doesn't recognise. 'Hi, this is Jen! Remember me from the summer?'

Scenario 3

After a maths lesson with Mrs. Wood, Alex gets this message. 'I'm Mark from your maths lesson with Mrs. Wood. Did you understand the homework?'

Scenario 4

Dami gets a message from someone he doesn't follow. 'Hi! Love your posts, you're SO funny! Give me your phone number and we can talk more!'

Scenario 5

Charlotte gets a message from someone with whom she isn't familiar. 'I saw you in the playground today. YOU'RE CUTE! What is your address? I can come over to hang out.'

Scenario 6

Maryam receives a message online: 'Hi, I just met your friend Sam! She told me about you, would love to meet you. What is your address?'

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Phishing cheat sheet: Activity 2

Who are you, really?

Here are five scenarios of messages anyone could get online or on their phone. Each one has a list of ways you could respond, some great and others not so much. See which one (or two) makes the most sense to you – or if you can think of other responses. Talk about it, then we'll discuss it as a class.

Everybody please note: *If one of these scenarios really happens to you and you're not sure what to do, the easiest response is no response. You can always ignore them or block them. It also never hurts to talk with parent, teacher, or another adult you trust about it, especially if it bothers you.*

Scenario 1

Sandeep gets this message from someone he doesn't recognise:

'Hi! Do you want to hang out? Can you add me to your friends list? – Jason'

- Ignore Jason. If you don't know him, you can just decide not to talk to him.
- If you aren't sure, ask first. 'Hi, Jason. Do I know you?'.
- Block Jason. If you've checked who he is and decide to block him, you won't get any more messages from him.
- Add Jason to your friends list. Not recommended, unless you've verified who he is.
- Give him personal info. Should you respond with something like:
  'Great to know new people nearby! I'm new in town. We can meet after school sometime. (I go to Emerson Middle school.)'?
  No! It's never good to give away personal information to people you don't know, especially online.

Scenario 2

Layla gets a text message on her mobile phone from someone she doesn't recognise:

'Hi, this is Jen! Remember me from the summer?'

- Block Jen. This could be a rude thing to do if you actually know her. Use this option if you know her, but you don't want to get her messages any more or you're sure you didn't meet anyone named Jen last summer.
- Ignore Jen, as in scenario 1. If you don't know this person, you can just not talk to her.
- 'Hi, Jen. Do I know you?' This is a safe option if you aren't sure what to do.
- 'Hey! What's up? Nice to hear from you.' This is fine, as long as you do actually remember her from the summer!
- 'Are you the girl with the red hair?' If you aren't sure whether you know her, you can try to get more information to help you remember.
- 'I don't remember you, but we can still meet sometime.' Really not a good idea; you should never offer to meet with anyone you don't know.

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Scenario 3

After his maths lesson with Mrs. Wood, Alex gets this message on his mobile phone.

'I'm Mark from your maths lesson with Mrs. Wood. Did you understand the homework?'

- Ignore Mark. As always, if you don't know this person, you don't have to respond at all.
- Block Mark. A good choice if you're sure there's no Mark in Mrs. Wood's maths class.
- 'Hi, Mark. Are you the one sitting behind me?' If you aren't sure, you can ask.
- 'Sure. Can explain after school.' This is a good choice only if you're sure who this person is.
- 'I don't take maths with Mrs. Wood. – I have Mr. Snyder.' If you don't trust this person, you shouldn't be giving them personal information, like the name of your maths teacher.
- 'Call me on 07123 456 789.' Probably not; unless you're certain that you know this person, it's not a good idea to send your personal information.

Scenario 4

Dami gets a message from someone he doesn't follow with a username @footballgirl12.

'Hi! Love your posts, you're SO funny!' Give me your phone number and we can talk more!'

- Ignore @footballgirl12. You don't have to respond if you don't want to.
- Block @footballgirl12. If you find this person suspicious, you can block them and never hear from them again.
- 'Hi, do I know you?' If you aren't sure, ask questions before giving out personal information like your phone number.
- 'OK, my number is...' Nope! Even if you've verified who this person is, it isn't a good idea to give out personal information over social media.

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Scenario 5

Charlotte gets a message from someone with whom she isn't familiar.

'I saw you in the playground today. YOU'RE CUTE! What is your address? I can come over to hang out.'

- Ignore. Probably a good choice.
- Block this person. Don't hesitate if you get a bad feeling about someone.
- 'Who are you?' Probably not. If the message sounds suspicious, it might be better not to answer or block them.
- 'Is that you Lizi? YOU'RE CUTE too! I live at 24 Circle Court.' This isn't a good idea, even if you think you know who Lizi is. Before you give someone new your address or other personal information, check them out, even if you assume you know them.

Scenario 6

Maryam receives a message online:

'Hi, I just met your friend Sam! She told me about you, would love to meet you. What's your address?'

- Ignore. If you don't know this person, but you do have a friend named Sam, your safest choice is to check with Sam before responding to this message.
- Block Maryam. If you don't know this person and you don't have a friend named Sam, it's probably a good idea to use your settings to block this person from contacting you any further.
- 'Who are you?' Probably not a great idea; if you don't know the person, it's better not to answer, at least until you've heard back from Sam.

Be Internet Alert: Activity 3

Is that really true?

Media literacy background for teachers: *In addition to helping pupils use analytical questions to evaluate source credibility, we also want them to understand that information comes from lots of places (not just textbooks). So, they need to apply their skills to analyse all types of media. When they get to that point, they're ready to move on to analysing special categories of media, like news or scientific data.*

Note: This is a media literacy activity that is good for everybody to learn, but it may be a little difficult for pupils aged 7-9, so see a suggested modification below.

Activity

You'll need:

- Handout: 'Deciding what's credible'

Recommended modification for ages 7-9. *If you feel your pupils are ready to discuss whether a source is credible, complete steps 1 and 2 only.*

1. Evaluating sources

If you wanted a recommendation for a great new video game, would you ask an elderly relative (e.g. Grandma)? Or, to ask it another way, is this elderly person a **credible** source for information on video games? A **credible** source is one that we can trust to give us accurate **and** relevant information.

Make a pros/cons list to explain the benefits and drawbacks of asking this relative for video game advice.

Did your list look something like this?

PRO	CON
Grandma loves me and wants me to be happy.	Grandma doesn't play video games and doesn't know much about them.
Grandma is pretty good at finding information when she doesn't know the answer herself.	Grandma doesn't know which games I already have or what types of games I like.

If your list looked like that, you've just used two of the most common tools we have to decide if a source is credible: **motive** and **expertise**. 'Expertise' is a special skill or knowledge about a particular thing; experts have expertise. 'Motive' is someone's intention, the reason they say or do something.

Which of the pros and cons are expertise and motive?

We may also know that Dad is a great cook but is clueless about gardening, our coach knows basketball but not gymnastics, or that Grandad can fix almost any toy but doesn't know anything about video games. **Just because a person is an expert on one thing doesn't make them an expert on *everything*.**

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2. Make your own pros and cons list

If this is the first time you have thought about how you use **motive** and **expertise** as clues to decide which information sources are credible, you might want to practise some more.

Imagine that you want to know how to be a better football player (or other suitable example). Make pros/cons lists for these choices so you can decide if they're credible sources:

- your Grandma
- a blog by a winning school rugby coach
- the best player on your team
- a website that sells football boots and gives advice
- videos that teach football practice techniques

What do you notice about the strengths and weaknesses of each source?

- Is there one that knows how to teach but may not be familiar with football skills?
- Is there one that is a football expert but may not know how to teach?
- Is there one whose advice always seems to include buying something from them?
- Is there one that knows football but doesn't know you or which skills you need to work on?

Discuss: Who would be a good source to go to and why do you think so?

Credibility is rarely an all-or-nothing call. Most sources have strengths and weaknesses. That's why **the very best answers often come from asking many sources** and comparing their answers.

3. Steps to consider

Credibility isn't just about **who** we believe. It's also about **what** we believe. We get ideas about the world from all sorts of places, not just directly from people.

We can check out any source using the 3 steps on the **Deciding what's credible** handout. They're about what we already know about motive and expertise.

Step 1: Use common sense

Ask: Is it logical? Does it make sense?

If a) what you're seeing doesn't make sense, b) you know it isn't true from your own experience, or c) it just doesn't work with facts you already know, you don't have to take any additional steps. You are looking at a source that is not credible.

Step 2: Ask questions

Not just any questions but these four:

Expertise

a) Does this source know me or care about me?

b) Does this source know a lot about this topic? How did they learn what they know?

Continued on the next page →

Motive

c) What does this source want me to do or believe and why would they want me to do or believe that?

d) Who benefits and who might be hurt if people believe this source?

Step 3: Confirm

Ask: Do other **credible** sources back up what this source says?

4. Check your sources

If you need some ideas, here you go:

- You need ideas for a birthday present for your friend. An ad for a local shop claims their search tool, which has every item offered by them, can help you find a gift for anyone on your list. Does that work for you?
- You are reading online reviews of a new pizza place and notice that three of the six 5-star reviews are from people with the same last name as the restaurant. Two others say it is the best pizza on the planet and one says it was not bad for a cheap takeaway. There are also fourteen negative comments. Would the positive reviews convince you to try their pizza?
- A pop-up ad says that you are part of a very small group that has been selected to try a special 'mermaid pill' that will give you the power to breathe underwater without scuba gear. All you have to do is send £9.99 to cover postage and packaging. Would you do it?
- You like a lot of the videos by a popular vlogger because they're funny, but they also say nasty things that you don't like about minority groups. Do you buy what they say because they're funny and really popular? Do you think that influences people?

Let's talk

What makes something or someone credible or trustworthy?

Every day you make decisions about what to believe and what not to believe. Was that video you saw credible? Was it trying to persuade you of something? Is your older brother telling you the truth or teasing? Is that rumour you heard about a friend true?

What do you do when you're trying to decide if someone is telling the truth? Do you already use these clues...?

- **What you know about a person**
  For example, you know if a classmate is really good at something or has a history of being truthful or playing practical jokes or being mean, so you can usually tell when they are serious, joking or lying.

- **What a person knows about you**
  For example, your parents know what kinds of foods give you a stomach ache; the ads on TV do not, so you follow your parents' advice about what to eat. Your teacher knows your interests and what kinds of books you like, so you trust their book recommendations.

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- **Tone of voice and facial expression**
  For example, you know that your friend means the opposite of the words they say if they roll their eyes and act sarcastic while they tell you they had a **terrible** time at the new skate park.

- **The situation**
  For example, when friends are playing around and one teases you about your new haircut, you know it's just a joke. But if someone at school says the exact same words to embarrass you in front of the whole class, it's an insult.

When we hear things from a media source like a video, a person on TV or a website, we don't personally know the source and they don't know us. We may not be sure about whether to believe them.

Even when someone we know sends us a message, there are no clues from facial expressions or tone of voice, so we might not be sure what they mean. That's when we need to ask questions!

Summary

Questions are our friends. When you ask good questions about sources **and** the information they provide, you'll get much better information. The more sources you use, the better. And remember, a great source for one subject isn't necessarily great for everything.

Continued on the next page →

Handout: Activity 3

Deciding what's credible

Helpful steps to identify credible from non-credible sources.

Step 1

Use common sense

Is it logical?

Step 2

Ask questions

Not just any questions, but these four:

Expertise

- Does this source know me or care about me (and does that matter)?
- Does this source know a lot about this topic? How did they learn what they know?

Motive

- What does this source want me to do or believe and why would they want me to do or believe that?
- Who benefits and who might be hurt if people believe this source?

Step 3

Confirm

Do other **credible** sources back up what this source says? Use online search – or work with an adult at school – to find other sources of information about your subject (the sources could be books or news or magazine articles, online or offline). Go through Steps 1 and 2 with them too. Ask the same questions about these sources. If they're giving you the same information about your subject, it's pretty likely they're confirming that your source is credible.

Be Internet Alert: Activity 4

Spotting disinformation online

Media literacy background for teachers: *Media literacy questions and observation techniques give pupils tools to navigate their way through disinformation without getting stuck in arguments or hurting relationships with friends and family. But they need to ask questions and get used to applying critical enquiry to information that comes their way.*

Activity

You'll need:

- Image: 'What's Wrong with this picture?'
- Handout: 'Deciding what's credible' from Activity 3
- Worksheet: 'Spotting fake URLs'

Answers for worksheet: 'Spotting fake URLs'

Real:

itv.com/news

bbc.co.uk/news

theguardian.com/uk-news

independent.co.uk

economist.com

channel4.com/news

Fake:

itv.com.co/news

itv-uk-news.com/news

theguardian.com.co/uk-news

independent-official.com

bbc1.site/businessnews

ekonomist.com

economist.com.co

channel44.com/news

1. What's wrong with this picture?

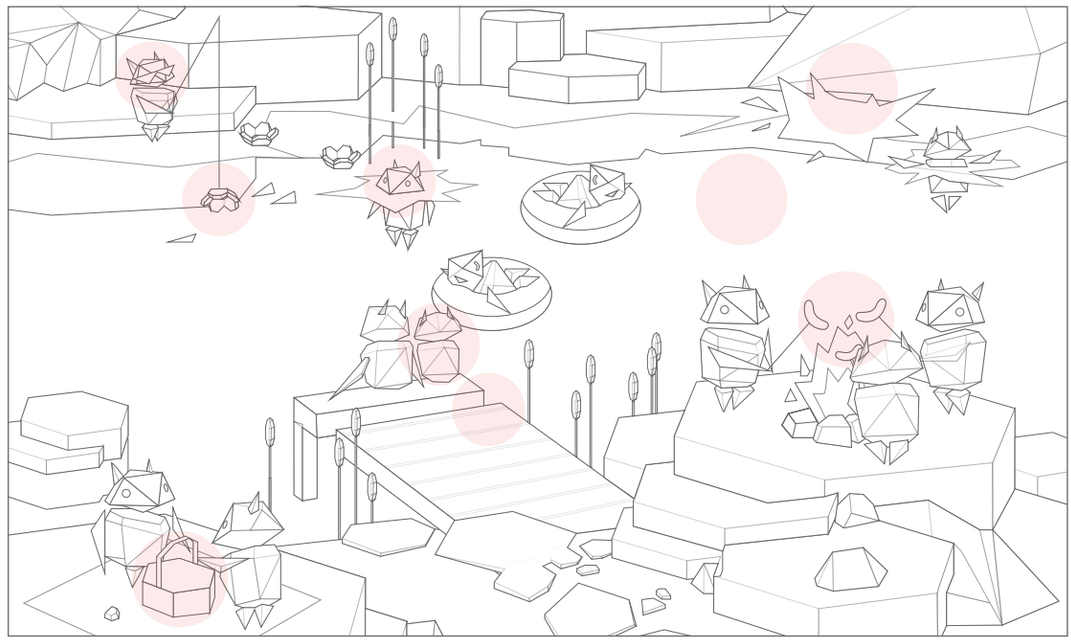
Provide colour photocopies or display the two images below on your interactive whiteboard. Look carefully at both images. Can you spot the differences between the two pictures?

What if someone told you where to look? Would that make it easier?

Continued on the next page →

Again, provide copies or display the image below on your interactive whiteboard.

There are nine differences. Did you spot them all?



Trying to tell if a news story is real or fake is sort of like this spot-the-difference game. By looking really carefully, you can find important information. And it's a lot easier if you know what to look for.

So, here are some clues to finding **disinformation.** If you spot these things, you are probably looking at a fake or deceptive story.

Spotting fake URLs handout

The first thing to look at is the URL (web address) for the site that published the story. Some fake sites try to fool you by choosing names that mimic a real site but with small differences. Most companies use short URLs because they are easier to remember and type, so URLs with added, unnecessary letters are often sites with false information.

Look at the handout:

- Circle all of the URLs that you think are real.
- When everyone is done, look at the answer key. Did you get them all right?

How could you check to see if a URL was a real news site? One way is to do a web search for the news organisation or the URL. If the organisation is credible, a box can appear to the right of the search results on many platforms with a description of the organisation, including their website address. If the URL isn't credible, you will often be able to scroll down and see headlines about the site being reported as a fake. Alternatively, you'll find out the site isn't available anymore.

Continued on the next page →

2. Inspecting headlines

Display or provide copies of the image and headline below.

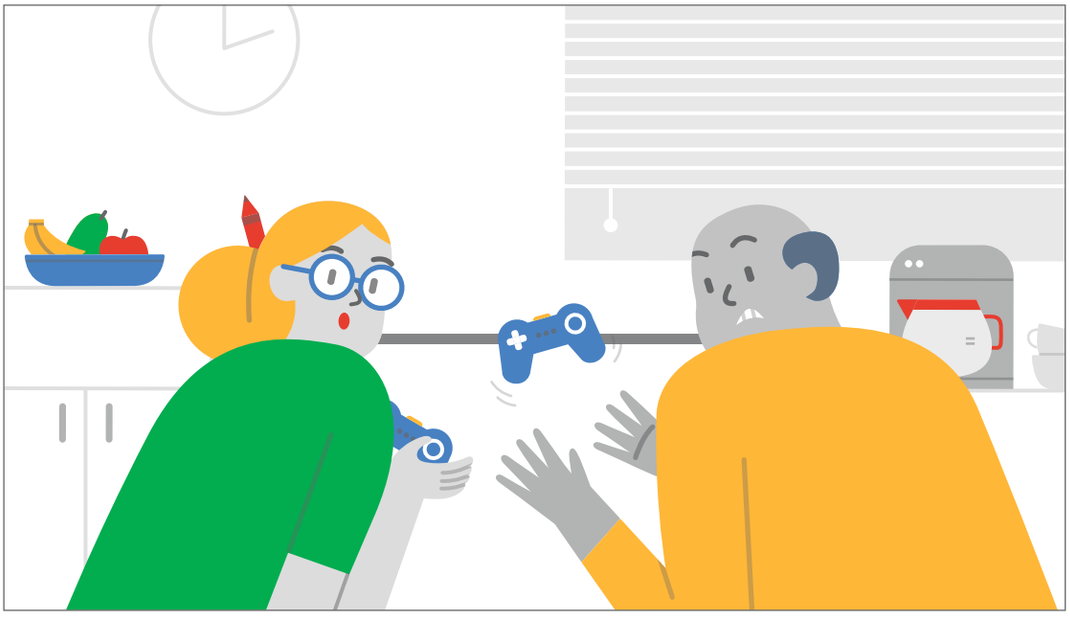
Sometimes someone shares a news story without a URL. In those cases, here are some clues to use:

a) A story starts with a picture of something that would interest us, like a cute dog, a celebrity, or an unusual stunt. But when we click, the story has little or nothing to do with the picture.

b) Instead of letting you decide for yourself, people who are trying to convince you to agree with them sometimes use things like **boldface**, ALL CAPS, underlining, or exclamation points to get you to think what you're seeing is important and click on them. This is called clickbait. Real journalists don't use those techniques.

c) To get you to read a story, some people include words in the headline like 'shocking' or 'outrageous' or 'surprising.' They know words like that make us curious. But **real** journalists let the news speak for itself. They tell the story and let us decide if it is shocking or surprising.

For example, look at this picture and headline:



The shocking truth about what teachers do after school

Without reading ahead, what do you imagine the story is going to say? Why do you think that? What's your evidence?

Continued on the next page →

Here's the story:
'A recent University survey found that 86% of teachers do what everyone does after work. They run errands, make dinner, spend time with friends or family, do household chores and get ready for the next day. But lately, many teachers have been doing something unexpected.

A decade ago, economic troubles led many councils to slash education budgets. That meant years without a pay raise for teachers. Unable to meet basic expenses on low salaries, many teachers now work second jobs. In some regions, teachers have even gone on strike for pay increases so they can quit second jobs and devote more time to their pupils.'

Was the story what you thought it would be? Do you think that the picture and headline were accurate or misleading? What's your evidence?

3. Inspecting sources

When we analyse news, clues can be helpful, but they aren't always enough. Sometimes trustworthy news stories use techniques to attract our attention and that can make them seem fake. And sometimes fake sources are so good at copying the real thing that it's hard to tell they're not. It's hard to tell them apart. For example…

Do these sound like trustworthy news organisations to you?:

- News Britain
- The Observer
- News Examiner
- World News Daily Report
- Weekly World News
- NewsWatch33

Actually, only *The Observer* is real. How could you find that out? You could start by doing an internet search of the organisation's name. See where the name appears besides the organisation's own website. If it appears in Wikipedia or an article on a newspaper or news magazine's site, it's probably a credible organisation. But see what those articles say about it! It's possible that they're all saying it's fake.

Find a story about your school, community or anything in the news that interests you. Use the 3 steps on the **Deciding what's credible** handout, along with the new clues you know, to decide if the story is real or deceptive.

Continued on the next page →

Step 1: Use common sense
Ask: Is it logical and does it make sense?

Sometimes it's obvious. If you see a headline like: **CELEBRITY HAS SECRET BABY WITH SPACE ALIEN**, logic probably tells you it isn't real.

Sometimes it isn't so obvious.

If:
a) what you're seeing doesn't make sense
b) you know it isn't true from your own experience, or
c) it just doesn't work with facts your already know
…you are looking at a source that is probably fake news.

Step 2: Ask the expertise and motive questions

Step 3: Confirm
Ask: Do other **credible** sources back up what this source says?

- Who else is reporting this story? (You can use internet search to see if this story is covered by other news source.)
- What other stories does the site include?
- Are they all from the same perspective or are there many views included?

If you can't find a variety of reliable sources that are covering the story, you should be sceptical of that source.

Let's talk

Have you ever done one of those spot-the-difference games? Sometimes dealing with news is like that. There are a lot of people and groups who are so passionate about what they believe that they twist the truth to get us to agree with them. When their twisting is disguised as a news story, that's disinformation.

Some people don't learn how to spot fake information, but they share it anyway. That's how it spreads. And when people make choices about the things they do or believe based on that disinformation, it can get really hard for people to listen to each other calmly, argue respectfully, understand each other better and solve problems.

So, if something looks or sounds like news, how can we tell the difference between what's real or credible and what's fake or misleading? There are clues we can learn to spot it – tricks used by people who are trying to mislead you. And there are questions we can ask that help us spot stories that aren't based on facts.

Summary

Now that you know how to use clues and questions to spot disinformation, you can ask smart questions and make careful observation part of your daily routine and with time, you'll be an expert in spotting fake stuff online. You now know how to analyse the information you get online. It's called critical thinking and it's a media user's superpower!

Continued on the next page →

Worksheet: Activty 4

Spotting fake URLs

Real or fake?

Circle the correct answer.

channel4.com/news	Real	Fake
itv.com.co/news	Real	Fake
ekonomist.com	Real	Fake
itv-uk-news.com/news	Real	Fake
bbc.co.uk/news	Real	Fake
itv.go.com/news	Real	Fake
independent-official.com	Real	Fake
theguardian.com.co/uk-news	Real	Fake
economist.com	Real	Fake
independent.co.uk	Real	Fake
economist.com.co	Real	Fake
bbc1.site/businessnews	Real	Fake
theguardian.com/uk-news	Real	Fake
channel44.com/news	Real	Fake

Be Internet Alert: Activity 5

If we were a search engine

Without using any technology (we'll do that in the next activity), pupils create 'search results' together to start learning how internet search works from the "inside out."

Activity

You'll need:

- Worksheet: 'If we were a search engine' (one per pupil)

1. Organise pupils into groups of two.

2. Distribute a copy of the worksheet to each pupil.

3. Share a search topic with the class. Here are some possibilities:

- pizza
- tornado
- aeroplane
- solar system
- farmer
- football
- volcanoes
- cooking
- sharks
- basketball
- dentist
- construction

4. Pupils work with their partners to create possible 'search results' in each category on the handout: website, image, map and video. Their results can be in the form of words or drawings, as appropriate. Encourage creativity with this challenge, reminding pupils that there are no right or wrong answers.

5. When pupils finish all four search result categories for the given topic, discuss several as a class.

6. Have one pupil from each pair share an example of one of the search results.

For example, let's say the topic is 'pizza'. *You can decide to have each group share their image results for pizza. Pupils can hold up their search results and explain what they created. This allows them to see all the different search results that can be generated from a single query.*

7. After hearing examples, ask the class the following discussion questions:

- How many different results did we have?
- How many results were similar?
- If I changed my topic to _____ , how do you think that would change your results? For example, if the search topic was 'pizza,' how would the results change if I changed my query to '**pepperoni** pizza'?

Suggestion: Complete four rounds in total…

- Choose a different topic from each round and repeat the same steps as listed above.
- Complete four rounds so you can have discussions about the four main types of search results.

Continued on the next page →

Let's talk

What is search?

The internet is a place that has billions and billions of pieces of information. Internet searches, sometimes called search engines, help us narrow down that crazy amount of information that comes from all over the world. They're a software tool that people use to find information on all kinds of topics.

You might already know that, to use this tool, you type a few keywords about a topic you want to know more about into the search bar (the empty box on a search engine page) or in your browser window (where you also type web addresses). Then, when you're ready, you hit the enter or search key, and – voila! – the search engine works its magic (in about half a second) and you get your search results.

Ok, so it's not **actually** magic. Internet searches use algorithms, which is a fancy way of saying people at the search company taught the software how to find and turn up information for you. Don't worry about how algorithms work for now. You just need to know that search does the 'searching' for you.

It's also good to know that search results aren't necessarily answers to a question. They're just collections of information you're interested in or looking for. If you do have a question that you're taking to a search engine, you can often find an answer in your search results, but sometimes it takes a few queries to get to the answer you're looking for. That's called 'refining' your search.

Summary

Internet search is a tool you can use to find information online. The information can be in the form of text on a website, videos, images, maps and more. The key words you type into a search engine determine what results you get.

Continued on the next page →

Worksheet: Activity 5

If we were a search engine

Search Topic

Website

Image | Video | Map

Be Internet Alert: Activity 6

Practising how to search online

Using an internet connection, pupils explore using a search engine and practise creating ever more effective search queries.

Activity

You'll need:

- Worksheet: 'Practising searching online' (one per pupil)
- Internet connected device

1. Create the first search query

Explain to pupils that they are going to explore using a search engine and practise creating search queries. On the handout, they'll find four different characters, each character thinking (in a thought bubble) about something they want to learn more about. Pupils then:

- Type the original search query (provided on the handout) into the search engine and explore the search results.
- Record 4–5 search results on their handout.

2. Create their own (second) search query

Look again at what the character wants to know (in the thought bubble). Ask, did the original search results give enough information relevant to this topic?

- Direct pupils to change the original query to include keywords from the first search results or in the thought bubble.
- Type this second search query into the search engine and explore the search results.
- Record 4–5 results on the handout.

3. Discuss

Share with other pairs how they changed the original search query and the types of results they got from the revised search. Ask them to share what they discovered in a brief class discussion.

4. Repeat steps 1–3 for the remaining characters

Let's talk

Search is a tool that helps you find information on the internet. To use search, you can go to a search engine and type a query – a question or keywords – into the search bar to get info on a topic you want to know more about. Sometimes using keywords works better than just asking a question. That's because, first, **the words you use** in your query and, second, **the order you put them** in are really important. If you just ask a question, it may not have the words and the order that help the search engine turn up the results you're looking for. But don't worry, it's perfectly fine to start with a question if you like.

The important thing is to just start because it often takes more than one query to get to the information you want. So, type your question into the search engine, look at the search results and if they're not good enough, you can use those results to guide you on how to create a better query and get even closer to what you're looking for.

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Demonstrate this by searching for something: For example, 'how do I start a garden?' Look at and discuss responses.

- Refine the search by changing the search criteria. Display your computer screen so pupils can see you searching.
- Take a look at these results. What do you notice? Allow pupils to share what they notice in the search results.
- Both sets of search results gave me information about starting a garden. But the first set was about all kinds of gardens. It showed us we had to add a couple of keywords to the original query to get the search results we needed to learn how to start a garden for cooking. The more you practise creating search queries, the easier search gets.
- You can always start with a question and if you don't get your answer, the search results will give you keywords you can try to get closer to what you need to know. If you want to start with keywords and aren't sure which ones to use, just know that there are no wrong keywords. Just try some! You can always try a different query if you're not seeing the results you were hoping for.

Summary

The more you practise creating search queries, the easier it will get to find the information you are looking for in a search engine.

Continued on the next page →

Worksheet: Activity 6

Practising searching online

I'm looking for a book to read.
I love mysteries! I also enjoy reading books that have imaginary characters that live in the future.
I think my teacher calls that sci-fi.

Original search query

Books about imaginary characters and mystery

Search results

Revised search query

Search results

I want to make a cake for my sister's birthday.
She doesn't like chocolate but loves fruit.
I wonder what kind of cake I can make.

Original search query

No chocolate cake with fruit

Search results

Revised search query

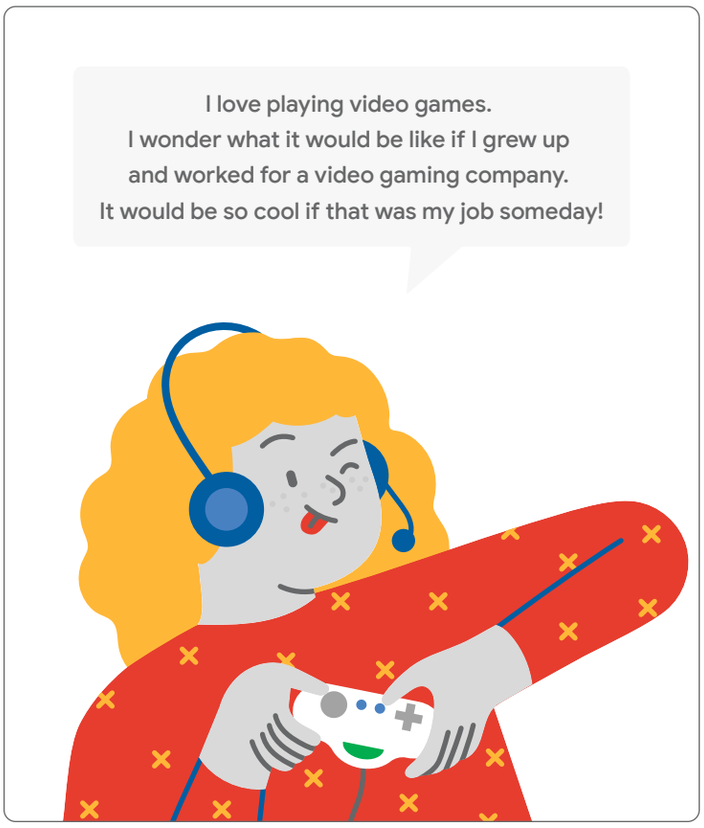
Search results

Continued on the next page →

Original search query
Video game jobs
Search results

Revised search query

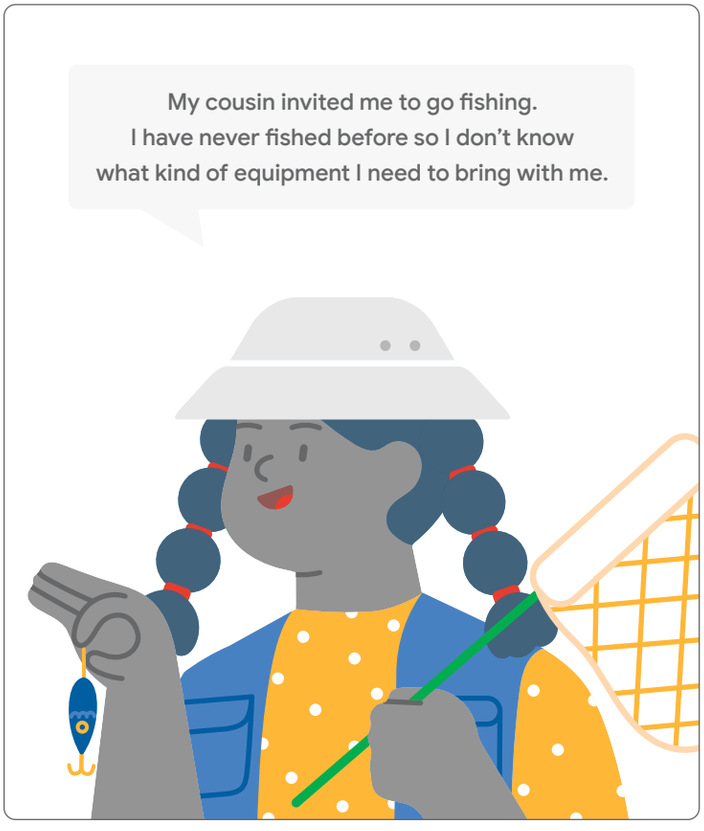
Search results



Original search query
What do I need to fish?
Search results

Revised search query

Search results



Be Internet Alert: Activity 7

Interland: Reality River

The river that runs through Interland flows with fact and fiction. But things are not always as they seem. To cross the rapids, use your best judgement and don't fall for the antics of the Phisher lurking in these waters.

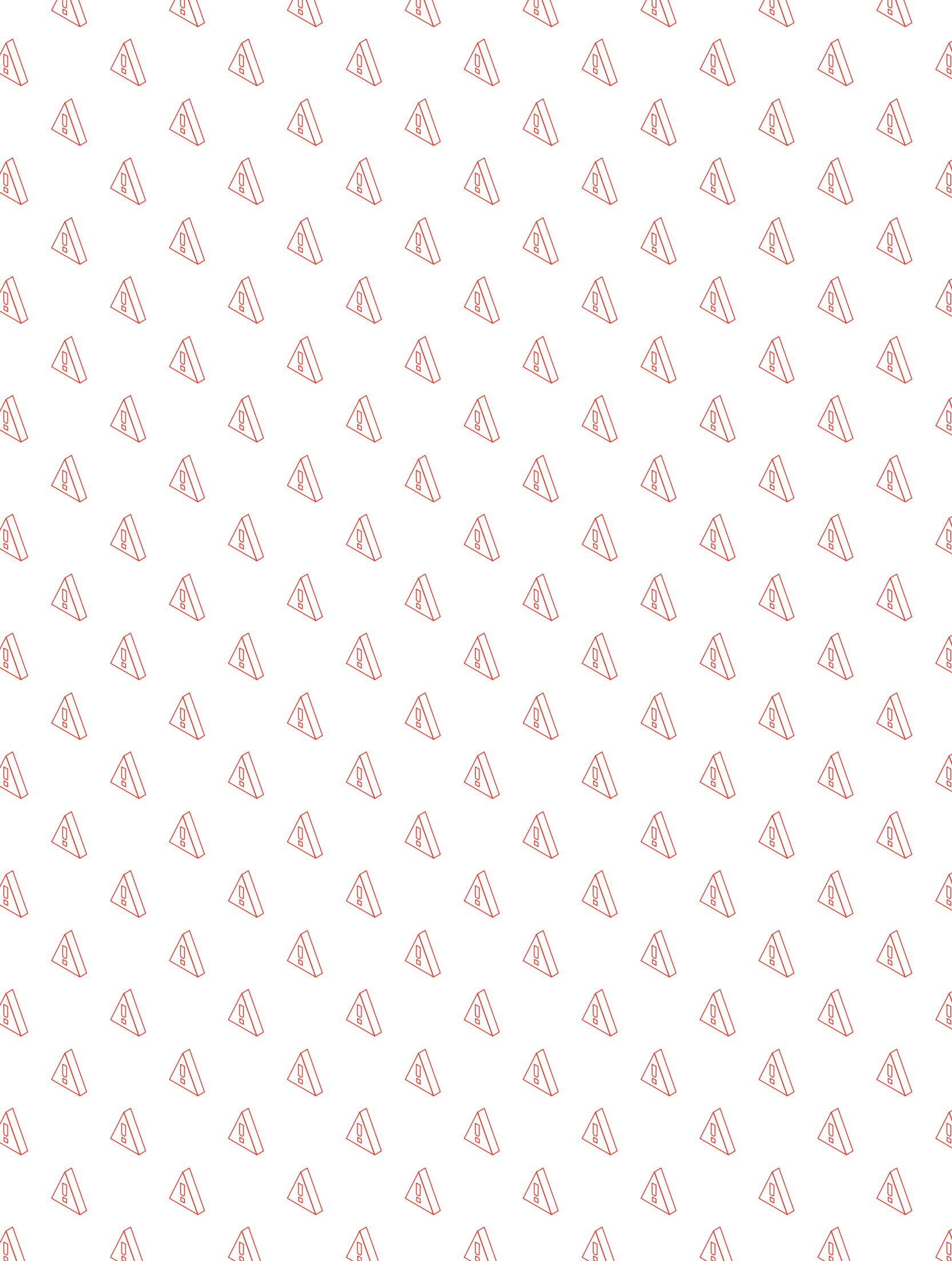
Open a web browser on your desktop or mobile device (e.g., tablet), visit **g.co/Interland** and navigate to the land called Reality River.

Let's talk

- How did you know if something in the game was real or fake? What were the signs?
- What is a Phisher? What does it do and how does it affect the game?
- Which clues in the game hinted that something was strange about certain situations?
- Do you think that playing this game will help you be safer online in the future?
- Now that you've played this game, what's one thing you might do differently when you're online in future?
- What should you do if you're unsure or worried about something you come across online?

Discussion questions for younger years

- How did you know if something in the game was real or fake? What were the signs?
- Do you think that playing this game will help you to be safer online in the future?
- Now that you've played this game, what will you always try to remember when you're online in future?
- What should you do if you're unsure or worried about something you come across online?



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