How the Internet and the Web works is a very straightforward process with its own rules. In this summary, how the internet and the Web got started will be explained. After doing so, describing how the importance of having standards for the web and for everyone to be able to access that would show the next step in the history of the Web. Then we will understand how a request goes from a computer to the web browser. With that understanding the basic differences between XHTML and HTML5 is a necessity.

So, with the how the Internet and the Web got started is straightforward. The Internet is the interconnected network of computer networks which started as a network that connected computers between a research facility, Stanford research Institute, with three universities, Universities of California Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, and the University of Utah. More facilities and Universities were added over time. The group behind the project was the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and the network was called ARPAnet.

At first, there was a ban on commercial use of the Internet, which was lifted in 1991. This allowed for businesses to utilize the Internet, but it was not easy to use. This led to the creation of the Web. A man thought of the basic concept while working at CERN in Switzerland. His name was Tim Berners-Lee and he wanted scientists to be able to immediately view research papers and articles. He designed the software called the World Wide Web and made the code free. At the start, the Web used Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) to create the documents.

With the Web up and running, it wouldn’t be too long till there would be standards for the websites that were and are being built. It is important to have these standards so that web developers that come in to fix any problems, or to update the website, are not thrown in a loop on how the website was built. That is why the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) produced recommendations for how websites are to be made. These recommendations do not need to be followed, however as they are guidelines on creating a good website. Following these recommendations allows for developers though to provide accessible websites. This means that the websites are understandable to people with disabilities or special needs. Using the recommendations lets developers fulfill the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, so they, and the businesses behind the websites, are following the law.

Now that there are websites being built, the next step in understanding them is in knowing how a request goes form the user’s computer to the web browser and back. This can be broken down to a client and server model. Using that as an example, a client would ask for a cup of coffee. The server would then provide the coffee. Simple enough to understand. So, the client is the computer where we put in our request for information. This can be given by either an IP address or a domain name. The IP address is a set of four groups of numbers. 216.58.194.46 will provide the website known as Google. However, unless a person can remember the numbers for every website they wish to go to, domain names were created. This allows for a client to state the website they wish to go to in a browser, such as facebook.com, and you will be given the website for Facebook. Much easier to remember that a set of numbers.

With the website obtained, let’s look at the languages that make the website unique. The base language is HTML and that has been updated over the years to provide more for developers to utilize in their websites. With those updates, the language of XHTML or eXtensible Hypertext Markup Language was created. This utilized the language of HTML4 with the syntax of XML, which extends the abilities of HTML. However, this language was used for a decade till HTML5 was introduced. The main reason is that HTML5 was backward compatible with HTML4.

We have now gone over the beginning of the Internet and the Web, the reasons for web standards and accessibility, and how requests are made between computers and servers. We ended on understanding the difference between XHTML and HTML5. This will supply a basic understanding of these topics.