

COMMUNICATION

Exploring the impact of social media

LEVEL

Intermediate (B1)

NUMBER

EN_B1_3101X

LANGUAGE

English



Learning outcomes

- I can read short texts about the life-changing effects of social media and summarise their content.
- I can express my opinions of social media and talk about how I use it.



Warm-up

How might social media and the weather be connected?



How can social media bring people together?



Unscramble the story: *Weather Alert!*

1. **Read** the sentences.
2. **Order them** correctly.

1

a.

They received alerts from the local weather station saying that there was a tornado in the area.

2

b.

Don Miller and his wife, Cheryl, were shopping when their phones started to ping.

3

c.

The tornado ripped through their small town, but thankfully because of the alerts no one was hurt.

4

d.

Don and Cheryl raced home to their daughter and grandchildren and made sure everyone was in a safe place.



Unscramble the story: *Reunion!*

1. **Read** the sentences.
2. **Order them** correctly.

1

a.

The boy ended up alone on a train that took him a thousand miles away to Kolkata.

2

b.

In Kolkata, he was taken to a shelter where an Australian family adopted him.

3

c.

In 1986, a five-year-old boy in central India got separated from his brother at a busy railway station.

4

d.

Twenty years later, he started looking for his family back in India and found his mother using Google Earth and a Facebook group!

Summarise *Weather Alert!* and *Reunion!*

1. **Review** the words and phrases.
2. **Summarise** the stories you've read using the words.

Don and Cheryl
Miller

ping

local weather
station

shopping

daughter and
grandchildren

tornado



twenty years

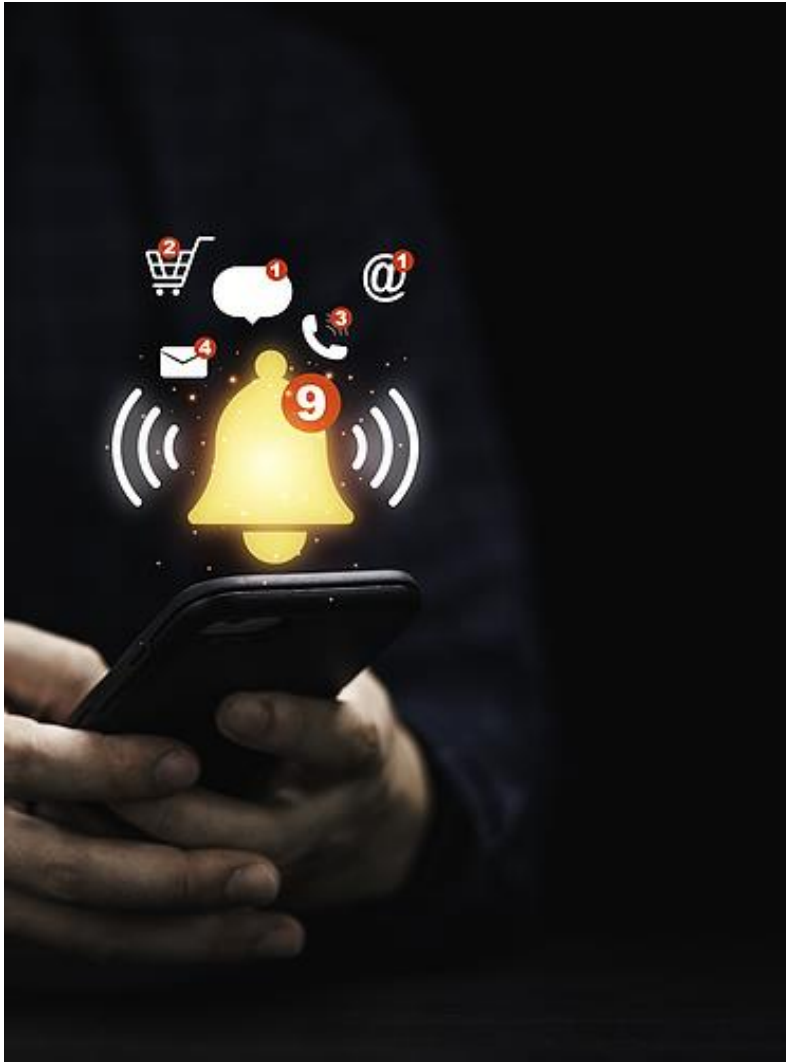
Google Earth
and Facebook

railway station

1986

Australia

adopted



Their phones started
to **ping**.

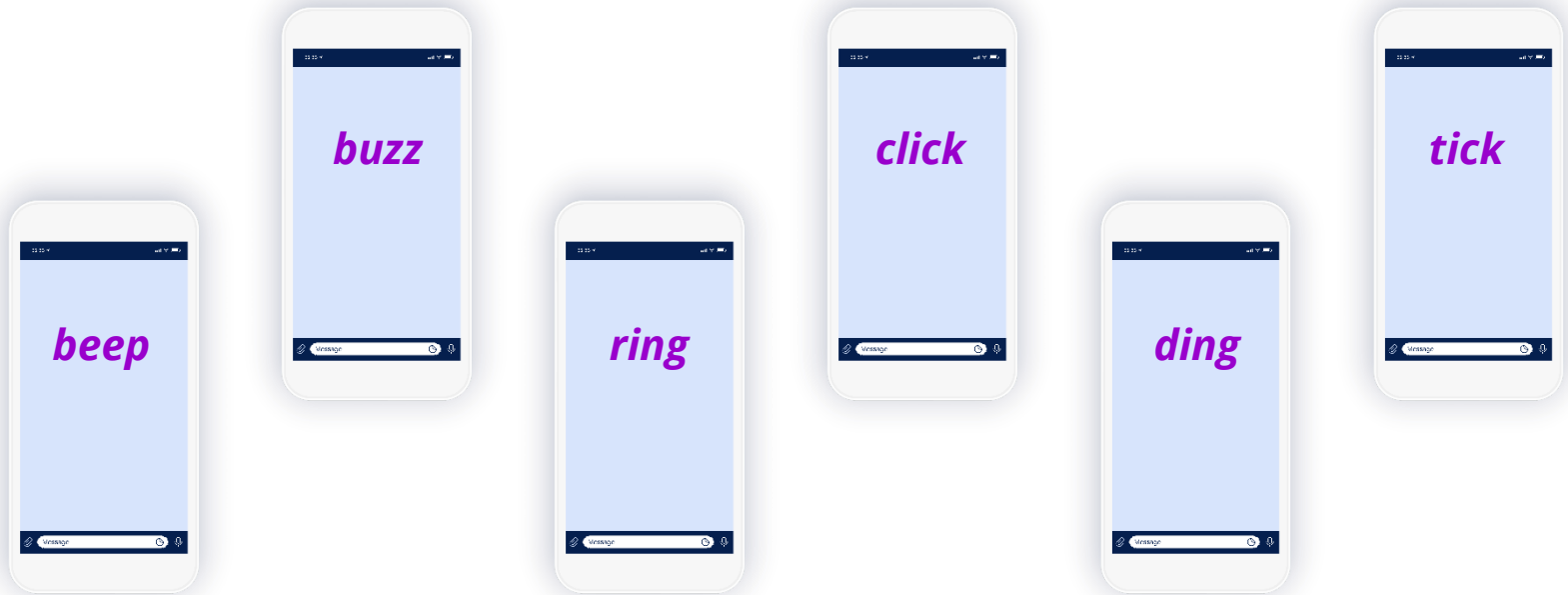
What do people usually do when their
phone **pings**?



Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is when a word imitates the sound that it describes.

1. **Read** the words below.
2. When might you hear them?



Compare these words with words from your own language. Are they similar?



Do you agree or disagree?

1. **Read** the statements below.
2. Do you **agree** or **disagree** with them?
3. **Explain** your answers.

1 Our attention spans are shorter because of social media.

2 Digital connections are more satisfying than real-life interactions.

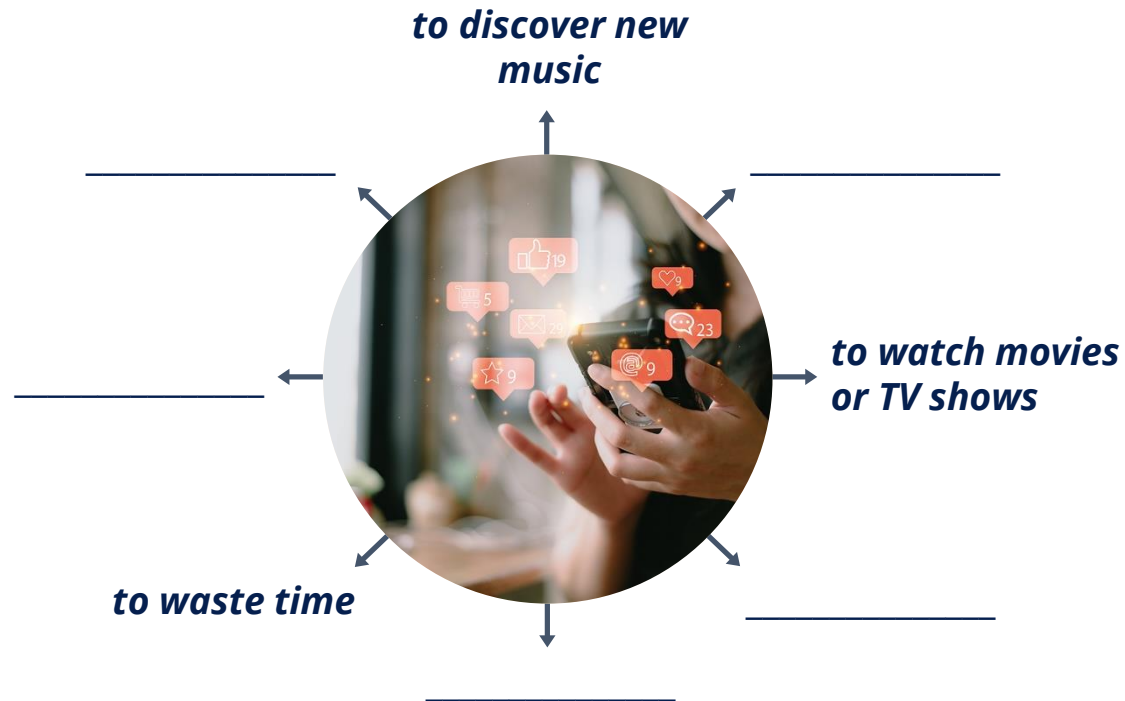
3 You can build a true connection with someone by only using social media.

4 Social media makes life easier.

5 Social media has a positive impact on equality in society.

Brainstorm: How do people use social media?

Take **5 minutes** to brainstorm how people use social media.



Find out about your classmates

1. **Read** the statements below. **Invent** questions to answer each one.
2. **Interview** your classmates using your questions.
3. **Present** the information to the rest of the class.

1 **Classmate's name** spends around ____ hours (or minutes) on social media per day.

How much time do you spend on ... ?

2 **Classmate's name** uses social media to...

What do you use social media for?

3 **Classmate's name** thinks the best thing about social media is ...

4 **Classmate's name** thinks the worst thing about social media is ...

5 **Classmate's name** likes / dislikes social media because...



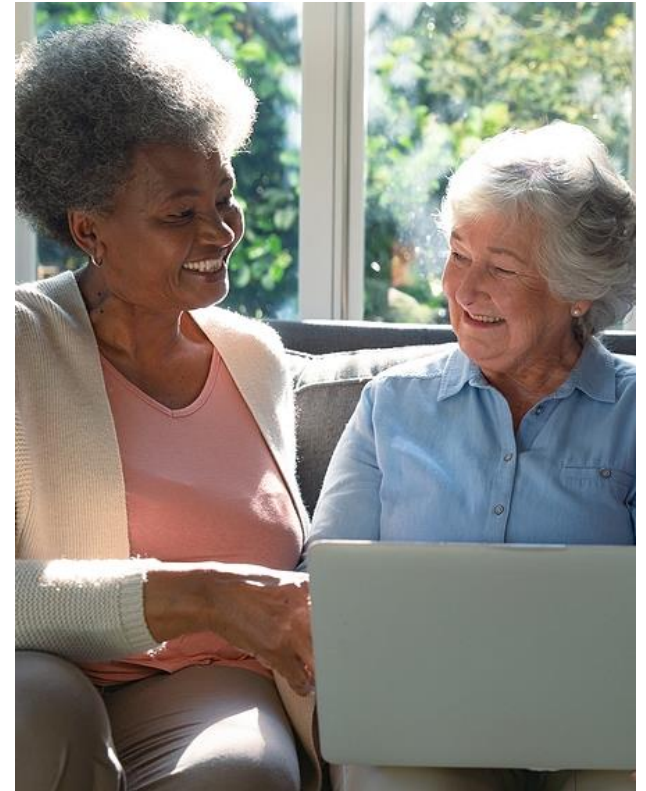


Discuss

Answer the question below in breakout rooms or together as a class.

How has social media positively impacted your life, or the life of someone you know?

Share your answer with the rest of the class!



Six degrees of separation

1. **Read** about the theory of six degrees of separation.
2. **Answer** the question.

All the people in the world are six or fewer social connections away from each other.

Do you believe this is possible?





End of the lesson

Idiom

to get your wires crossed

Meaning: to misunderstand somebody; to become confused

Example: I think we've got our wires crossed. I thought we were meeting today, not next week!



Additional practice



Fill in the gaps with the options

Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

- 1 Social media can have both _____ and _____ impacts on society.
- 2 Some people argue that our _____ spans are shorter because of social media.
- 3 Our phones _____ all day long. They are always _____ with distractions!
- 4 It is important to have real-life _____ away from social media.
- 5 However, social media can also _____ people together.

dinging
interactions
bring
attention
negative
buzz
positive



Categorise the words and discuss

1. **Read** the words in the boxes. They are all connected to social media. Are they **positive** or **negative**?

2. **Discuss.**



1

Fitness

2

Cooking

3

Dating

4

Entertainment

5

Education

6

Keeping in touch

7

24-hour news
cycle

8

Charity
fundraising

9

Cyberbullying

Positive

Negative



Discuss

1. Take turns to **answer** some of the questions below.
2. **Ask** follow-up questions.

Have you ever used social media to raise money for charity?

Have you ever made a real-life connection with someone you met online?

Could you ever give up your phone?

Has social media ever helped you avoid danger?

Have you ever taken a break from social media? Why?

Do you have sound notifications turned off on your phone (pings, dings, rings)?

I could not live without my phone because...

I deleted all my social media accounts for a month because...



Discuss



Faith

I don't let my teenagers use social media

I think that is wrong. There are lots of positives for young people



Leon

Do you agree with Faith or Leon?

Use the vocabulary from the lesson to explain your answers.

Consider the positives and the negatives of social media.

Why is this an important topic for young people?



Writing a blog post

1. **Summarise** your discussion from the previous slide into a **brief blog post** about the **positives** and **negatives** of social media for young people.
2. **Read** your answers.





Answer key

P.4: 1.) b 2.) a 3.) d. 4.) c

P.5: 1.) c 2.) a 3.) b 4.) d

P. 17: 1.) positive, negative; 2.) attention; 3.) buzz, dinging; 4.) interactions; 5.) bring



Summary

Exploring (the impact of) social media

Positives and negatives

- Social media has a positive and negative impact on people's lives
- For example, alerts can help save lives during dangerous weather
- But our phones ping, buzz, and beep all the time: is this good for us?

How do people use social media?

- To discover new music
- To waste time
- Can you think of anything else?

Onomatopoeia

- **Onomatopoeia** is when a word imitates the sound that it describes
- Examples include ring, ding, click, buzz, tick, and beep
- These words are often different in other languages

Six degrees of separation

- All the people in the world are six or fewer social connections away from each other
- This theory is called six degrees of separation
- Not everyone believes it to be true



Vocabulary

alert

reunion

to ding

to tick

to alert someone about something

to ping

to beep

to buzz

to click

