

READING

# Exploring social media

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_1101R

**LANGUAGE**

English



## Learning outcomes

- I can read a text about the impact of social media and identify its key points.
- I can talk about how I use social media and explore the role it plays in our lives.



## Warm-up

**Are you  
on social media?**



**Which platforms  
do you use most often?**

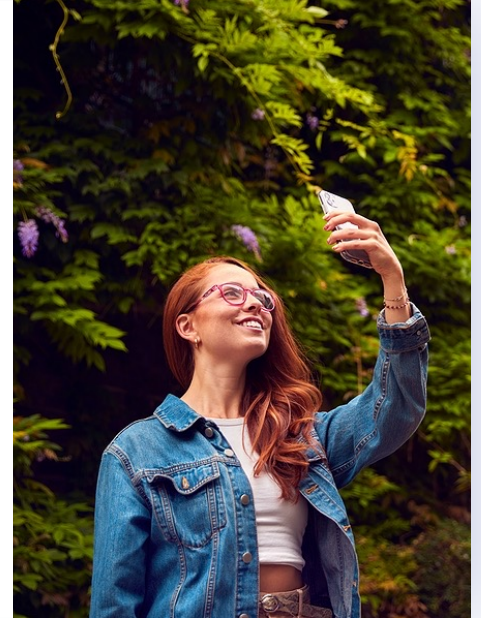


# Exploring social media

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

“The youth of today are all about themselves: it’s all me, myself, and my social media!”

How many times have those of us in our twenties heard this from older folks? But do their words hold any weight or do they simply represent two **generations** having lived two very different realities? One who grew up entirely without the internet versus another, whose youth came to be defined by it.



1. What do older generations criticise young people for?
2. For the author, what explains the differences between older and younger generations?



# Exploring social media

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

Older generations have also **witnessed** real societal change at the hands of social media. Newspapers, for instance, now relay what is happening on social media, rather than simply reporting world events. World leaders now announce policies and **instantly** respond to world events via social media. You can now become famous **overnight**, and gain thousands of followers from one **viral** video. Even the average person can **curate** their own life by only sharing photos from their best moments on social media.



3. How has social media changed the worlds of media and entertainment?
4. What do political leaders use social media for?



## Discuss

**Do you use social media to keep up to date with world events?**



**Do you follow any celebrities online?**



# Interview a partner

In **breakout rooms** or **together as a class**.

“

**Even the average person can curate their own life by only sharing photos from their best moments on social media.**

Do you post photos online?

If you do, what photos do you post?

If you don't, why do you choose not to?

Are you guilty of curating your own life on social media or not?



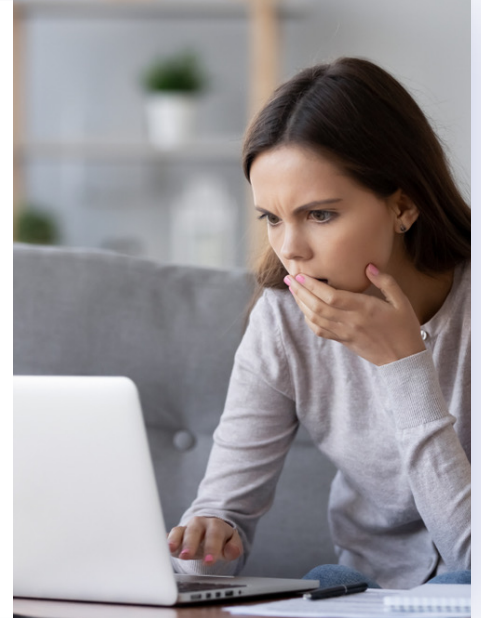


# Exploring social media

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

With so much of our life now taking place online, it's becoming increasingly difficult **to spot** what's real and what's not. How do we cut through the noise and sort the 'fake' news from the 'real' news? Or even someone's 'real life' from their life on social media?

This culture of "information here and now" goes hand in hand with a culture of "**no limits**". It's no surprise we've even created a new word to describe the habit of **endlessly** scrolling our newsfeeds: doom-scrolling.



1. What problem has increased social media use created?
2. What is 'doom-scrolling'?



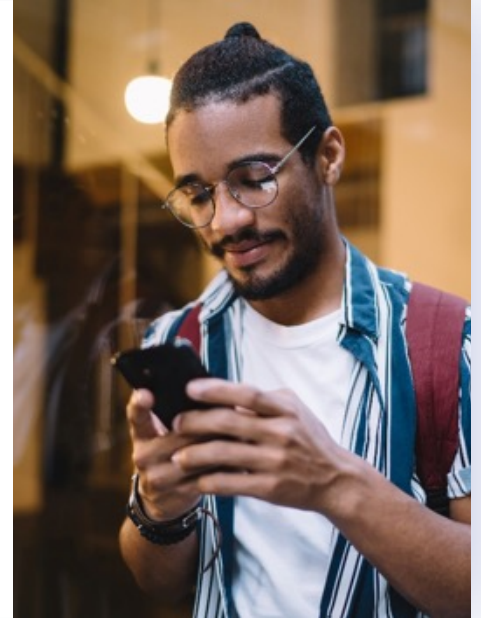


# Exploring social media

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

Critics of social media even argue that the platforms themselves actively **encourage** such addictive behaviour by designing endless newsfeeds. Even if our feed runs out of content, the platform will 'suggest' new posts for us to look at!

Similarly, sociologists claim that social media has **discouraged** genuine social **interaction**. If we can chat to hundreds of people online, why would we bother sitting down to talk to someone in real life?



3. What do critics of social media say the platforms are responsible for?
4. What effect has social media had on how we socialise according to sociologists?

This culture of “information here and now” **goes hand in hand with** a culture of “no limits”.



What's another way of saying ***goes hand in hand with*** something?



## Discuss

**How easy is it to spot fake news stories online?**

**Do you have any tips to share?**



## Read this quote



**If we can chat to hundreds of people online, why would we bother sitting down to talk to someone in real life?**

Do you agree with this claim or not?

How do you use social media to talk to others?

Will social media ever replace sitting down to talk to someone?







# Exploring social media

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

Others see a more beneficial side to prolific social media use: greater opportunities for romance.

Social scientists have argued, for instance, that online dating has not only increased the chances of finding a successful match, but also had an **empowering** effect on women and LGBTQ+ people. Both groups often **lose out** when trying to date using more traditional means.



1. Has social media had a positive or negative effect on dating?
2. Who has particularly benefited from online dating?



# Exploring social media

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

So, has social media made us more or less **connected** to each other? That's still up for debate!

What scientists do seem to agree on, however, is that finding a balance between online and offline activities is key to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

The future is in our hands. Or should we say: the future is in the *phone* in our hands?

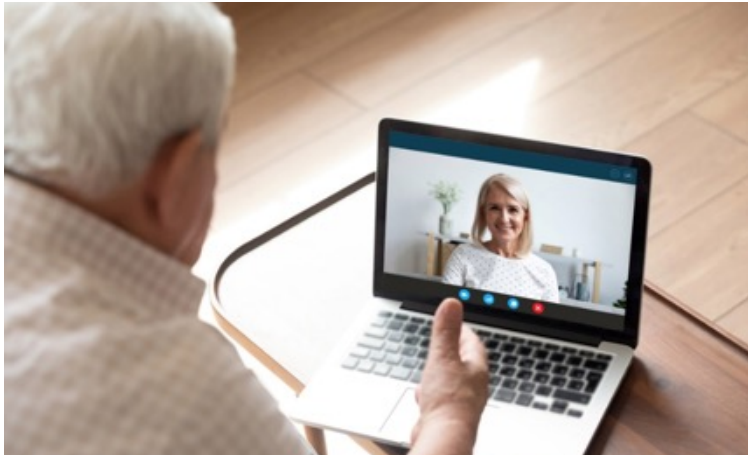


3. What do scientists recommend when it comes to our relationship with social media?



## Discuss

**What do you think about online dating?**



**What other positive sides to social media can you think of?**



## Final thoughts

**Has social media  
made us more or less  
connected to each  
other?**

**What reasons can you give for  
your opinion?**







# End of the lesson

Idiom

***to pull the wool over somebody's eyes***

**Meaning:** to hide your real actions or intentions from somebody by making them believe something that is not true.

**Example:** When I compare his real life to his life online, I can see he was really **pulling the wool over our eyes**.



# Additional practice

# FOMO

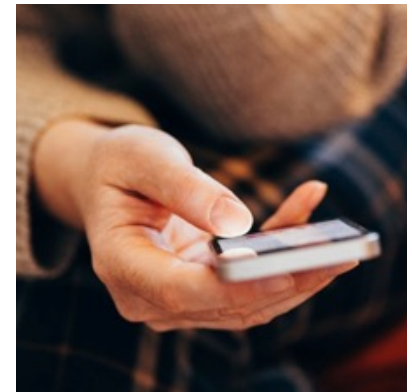


**“FOMO stands for fear of missing out. It’s one of the most widespread negative effects of social media.**

Have you ever experienced FOMO before?

What were you missing out on?

How did it make you feel?







## Discuss

**How can we find a balance between online and offline activities?**



**Do you ever monitor your 'screen time' each week?**



# Write a list of rules

**Imagine** you have a teenager at home.

**Write** a list of 5 rules for them to follow while using social media.

**Share** your list with the class.

A large, white rectangular area with a blue shadow on the left side, resembling a sheet of paper. It contains ten horizontal grey lines for writing.



# Answer key

- P. 4-5:**
1. For being all about themselves (and their social media).
  2. One generation grew up with the internet, the other without it.
  3. Newspapers now report on what is happening on social media. Additionally, anyone can now become famous - from a viral video - for instance.
  4. Announce policies and respond to world events.
- P. 8-9:**
1. Difficulties differentiating between what is real and what is fake.
  2. The habit of endlessly scrolling on social media.
  3. They blame the platforms for encouraging addictive behaviours.
  4. It has made us socialise less genuinely according to sociologists.
- P. 13-14:**
1. Positive effect
  2. Women and LGBTQ+ people.
  3. Scientists recommend finding a balance between online and offline activities.



# Summary

## Vocabulary related to social media

- *generations; to witness; instantly; overnight; viral; to curate; to spot; no limits; endlessly*
- *The average person can **curate** their own life by only sharing their best moments on social media.*
- *People can now become famous **overnight** if a video of theirs goes **viral**.*

## Describing the impact of social media

- *to encourage; to discourage; interaction; empowering; to lose out; connected*
- *Sociologists argue that social media has **discouraged** genuine social **interaction**.*
- *Has social media made us more or less **connected** to each other? That's still up for debate!*





# Vocabulary

generations

witness

instantly

overnight

viral

to curate

to spot

no limits

endlessly

to encourage

to discourage

interaction

empowering

to lose out

connected



## Notes

