

Twitter

Twitter can be ¹ _____ as part social networking site, part 'micro-blogging' site. It allows users to say what they are doing, or what they are seeing or hearing, by posting messages on the Twitter website that their friends or 'followers' can see. The messages, called 'tweets', cannot exceed 140 characters ² _____, which is the defining characteristic of the service. Tweets are displayed on the user's profile page and on the home page of each of his or her followers. At first most people used Twitter to stay ³ _____ touch with their friends and family; like other social networking sites, it was just ⁴ _____ broadcasting where you are, what you are doing, what you are feeling and thinking. But it has ⁵ _____ developed into a place where people share information, opinions and advice, and ⁶ _____ it resembles a blog. ⁷ _____ purpose it serves, it is incredibly popular and used by a huge number of influential people such as politicians, journalists and celebrities.



1 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. What do you know about Twitter?

2 **USE OF ENGLISH** Read the text. Choose the correct options a-d.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 a expressed | b reported | c described | d explained |
| 2 a long | b in length | c longer | d in long |
| 3 a on | b to | c at | d in |
| 4 a a way to | b a means of | c in order to | d a process of |
| 5 a since | b formerly | c still | d soon |
| 6 a in respect of | b as regards | c in that | d for that |
| 7 a However | b What | c Whatever | d Which |

3 2.29 Listen and check your ideas from exercise 1.

4 2.30 Listen to an interview with a journalist who uses Twitter. Does she think that the advantages of Twitter outweigh the disadvantages?

5 2.30 Listen again and choose the correct answers.

- First thing in the morning, Maggie
 - adds breaking news stories to Twitter.
 - looks for new stories on Twitter.
 - contacts about 1,000 other journalists via Twitter.
- Maggie uses Twitter
 - to spread news and to ask about news.
 - just to find interesting news stories.
 - just to request information from other journalists.
- Twitter has helped Maggie
 - to use lots of very short words.
 - to include lots of important information in every tweet.
 - to write more economically and accurately.

- In order to gauge the truth of a story on Twitter, Maggie
 - tweets the same message to lots of other people.
 - checks the writer's background.
 - asks the writer if he or she is a journalist.
- One disadvantage of Twitter is that
 - it can't be used by serious journalists.
 - important events can't be described in few words.
 - anybody can use it so there are too many different opinions.

6 **VOCABULARY** Complete the collocations from the interview.
context events impact misinformation news picture

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 build up a _____ (of) | 4 democratise the _____ |
| 2 have an _____ (on) | 5 spread _____ |
| 3 give the _____ | 6 analyse _____ |

7 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs.

Student A: summarise two advantages of Twitter.
Student B: summarise two disadvantages.

8 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Ask and answer the questions.

- Do you have a Twitter account? If so, what do you use it for?
- If not, would you like one? Why, and what would you use it for?/Why not?
- Do you or does anyone you know have (a) a blog? (b) a Facebook (or other social networking) account? What do you/they use it for?

9 **PROJECT** Visit an English-language news website (e.g. BBC News, CNN, Yahoo News). Choose an interesting news story and write a summary of it in no more than 150 words.

1 **SPEAKING** In pairs, ask and answer these questions.

- 1 Have you got an account on Facebook or any other social networking site? If so, how often do you use it and what do you use it for?
- 2 Which family members, if any, are Facebook friends of yours? Do you like the idea of a parent being your Facebook friend? Why?/Why not?

2 **3.15** Read the text. In your own words, say why Dr Wright thinks parents should be Facebook friends with their teenage children. Do you agree? Why?/Why not?

Parents of boys at a Sydney private school have been urged to monitor their sons' use of Facebook, with a warning that any mistakes made in teenage years could be permanently recorded on the Internet and catch up with them later in life.

The headmaster, Timothy Wright, wrote to parents on Thursday, explaining that younger boys were too **immature** to fully gauge the possible consequences of disclosing private information on social networking sites. 'We now know that those parts of the brain that deal with decision-making are still developing in a man in his 20s,' he said. 'But mistakes made at fifteen may be still **retrievable** by an employer ten years later.'

'Modern technology means that a **careless** word, a slanderous comment or an **inappropriate** photograph, are on permanent record and freely available to anyone who has access. Stupidities that were once forgotten now last, spread and damage in ways **unknown** before this decade.'

Dr Wright said that harsh words spoken in the playground could be more easily forgotten, but those captured on the Internet or on mobile phone text messages could have far more **lasting** and more **hurtful** consequences. He said there was widespread use of Facebook by students, including those of primary school age, which was against the site's guidelines for use.

He urged parents to set ground rules for use of mobile phones and the Internet and in particular to set boundaries on taking and sending images that may be used to bully others. 'Parents who are paying for the Internet service have an **unquestionable** right to insist they are a friend on Facebook. I would certainly insist on this until at least the end of year 10* if not later,' he wrote.

* Students are usually sixteen at the end of year 10.

3 Answer the questions about the text.

- 1 Why does it matter if a fifteen-year-old makes a mistake on Facebook?
- 2 Why might it be difficult for fifteen-year-olds to think about the consequences of their online activity?
- 3 Why can online arguments often be more damaging than playground arguments?
- 4 What kinds of rules does Dr Wright want parents to make?

4 **VOCABULARY** Work in pairs. Explain the meaning of the highlighted adjectives in the text. Then list the words with a prefix and those with a suffix in the chart below. Which adjective has a suffix and a prefix?

prefixes	suffixes

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5 **3.16** Listen to a radio journalist talking about Rebecca Black. Does he think it was a mistake for Rebecca to post the song on YouTube? Why?/Why not? Do you agree?6 **3.16** Listen again. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Ark Music Factory charge \$4,000 for recording a song and video, and extra for writing it.
- 2 Rebecca Black's mother paid for Rebecca to record a song with Ark Music Factory.
- 3 Only 167 people watched Rebecca's video the first month it was on YouTube.
- 4 Most of the people who watched the video on YouTube clicked 'dislike'.
- 5 Rebecca was not particularly surprised by the reaction.
- 6 The song, *Friday*, was removed from YouTube but posted again later.
- 7 Rebecca travelled to Australia to publicise her new music video.



7 Look at the online activities below. Do you think they might turn out to be mistakes? Why?/Why not?

You're fifteen years old and you:

- post a love poem to a girl/boy you like on his/her Facebook page.
- post a funny clip of your friend falling over on YouTube.
- put an invitation to your birthday party on your public Facebook page.
- leave a negative comment about a photo on your friend's Facebook page, for a joke.

8 **SPEAKING** In pairs, discuss your ideas from exercise 7. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons.