



An internet we trust

Exploring reliability in the online world

Assembly for ages 11-18

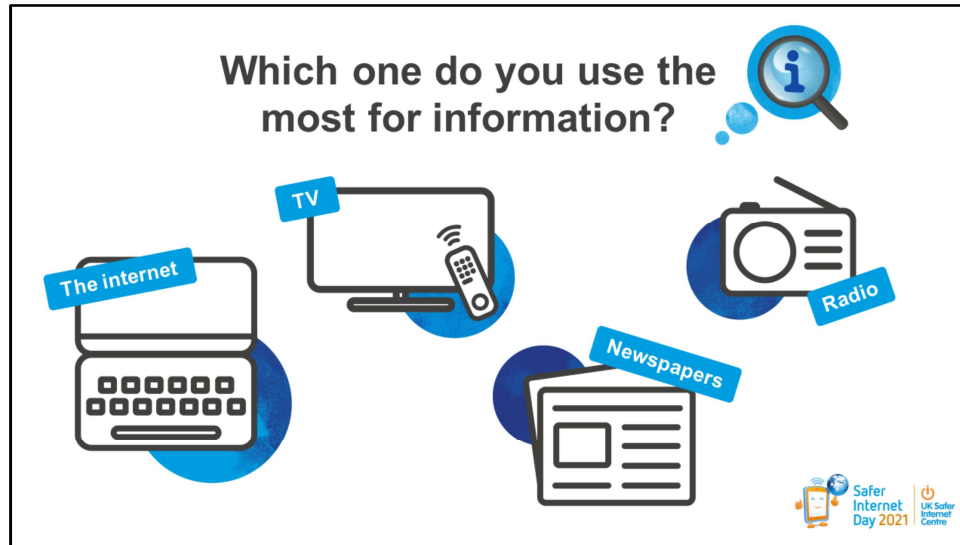


Today is Safer Internet Day, a day celebrated across the globe in over 170 countries, with thousands of young people joining in across the UK.

This year, we are focusing on the information we can find online. It is incredible just how much information is out there online and how much we rely on it. People also say that there are lots of things online that are unbelievable.

We have to make it *clear that 'unbelievable' has a positive meaning (amazing) but also a negative meaning (not to be trusted).*

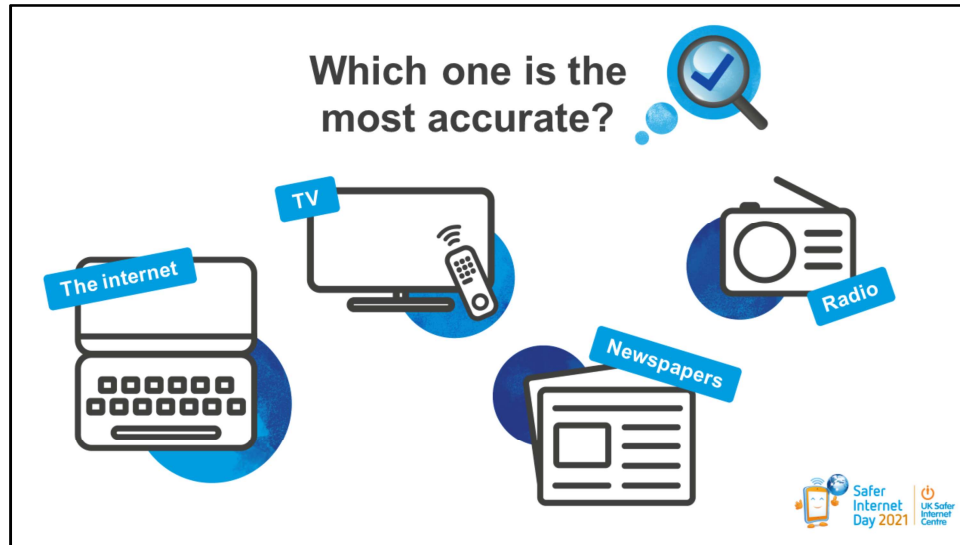
- What does the word unbelievable mean to you?
- Is it right to call the internet unbelievable?



Here are four ways that we can receive information:

- TV
- Radio
- The internet
- Newspapers

Firstly, think about which one you use the most for finding out information.



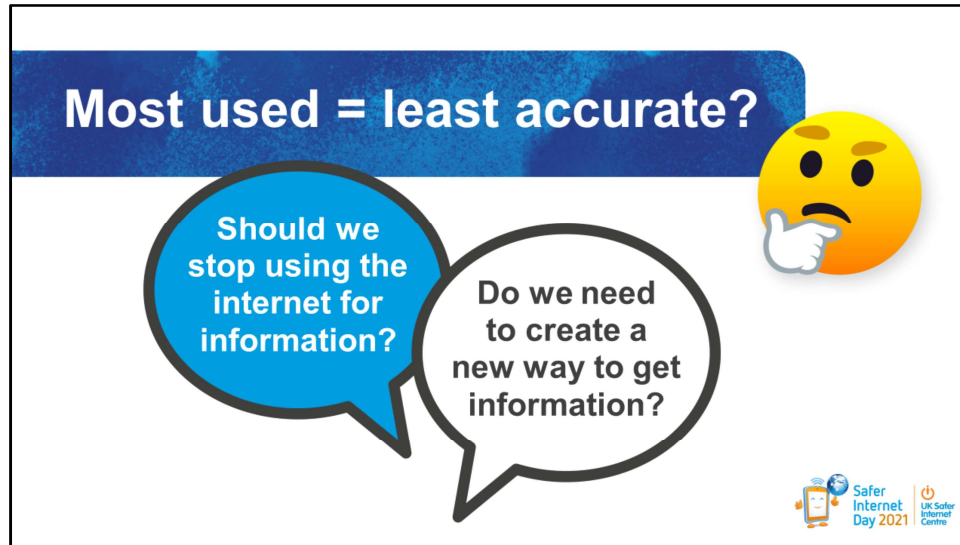
Now, you have the same options but this time, which one of these four do you think is the most reliable and accurate?

*If you think the internet scores **low** for accuracy and reliability, ask:*

- What sort of things do you see on the internet that are not reliable or accurate?
- What do you do if you do see information that you think might not be accurate or reliable?

*If you think the internet scores **high** for accuracy and reliability, ask:*

- What did you choose as the most reliable of these four choices and why?
- Some people feel that the internet is the least reliable. Do you think that is fair?



When we look at these two aspects of information we might find that the source we use the most is actually the one that we trust the least. So...

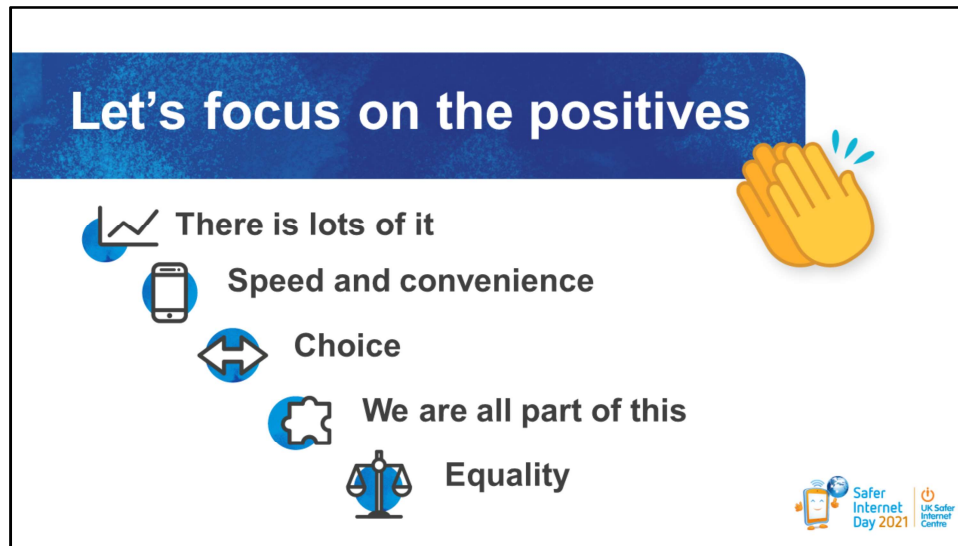
- Should we stop using the internet for information?
- Do we need to create a new way to get information?



Another important question is, why do we go online for information if we know that it is not always reliable?

Can you defend getting your information online?

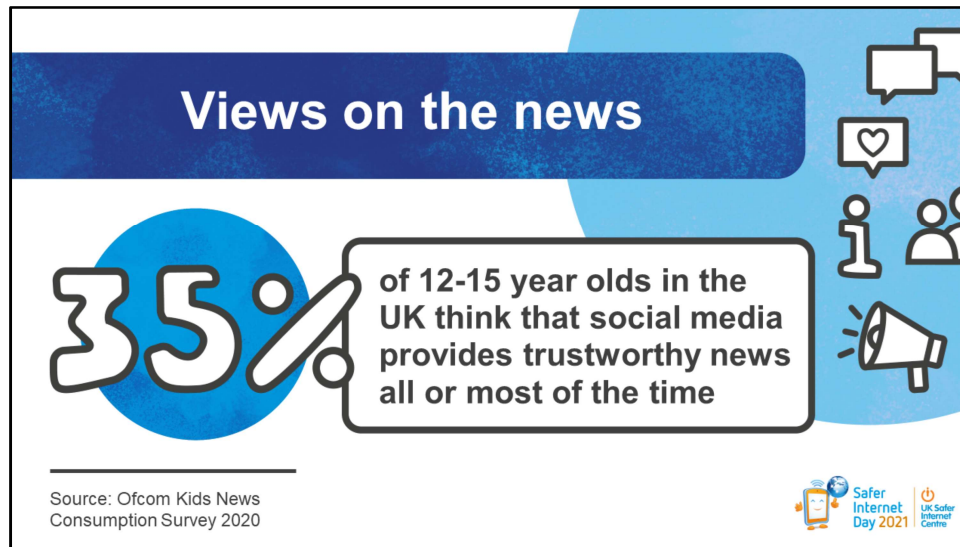
What are the benefits of getting your information online?



The positives of getting our information far outweigh the negatives but we tend to hear a lot about the downsides. Here are some positives:

- **There is lots of it** – You can find out almost anything online, from the latest news to the cost of the jacket you want to the latest football scores. It is all out there for us.
- **Speed and convenience** – All this information is available to us in seconds. No walking to the library or waiting for the news to be on the TV or radio.
- **Choice** – You could read up on a topic on lots of different sites or you might prefer to watch videos on YouTube. You might find an influencer you really like or someone campaigning on an issue that is really important to you. The range of ways and people you can go to for this information is unbelievable.
- **We are all part of this** – No need for a reporter to write up a second-hand account, people will pick up their phones and show the world what is happening now. We are all a part of this new age of information sharing, and the online space is one where we can all be heard.
- **Equality** – Whilst not everyone in the world has the same access to the internet that

many of us enjoy, this information is open to more people now, and usually for free. However, in some countries, established news sites are often paid for services. This can lead to some people thinking that free news is more likely to be fake news.



It's important that we remember the great aspects of getting our information online. However, there is one big area that we need to look at and that is the news. Research found that only 35% of 12-15 year olds in the UK think that social media provides trustworthy news all or most of the time . You have probably seen and heard people talking about fake news. This has led to some people thinking that the news we see online cannot be trusted.



So, how does it make you feel when you go online, knowing that some of the things you see might not be right or true?

Annoyed, disappointed, or not that bothered? Take 10 seconds to think about it. You might feel more than one of these or have some very different ideas.

Do you feel...

- annoyed?
- disappointed?
- not bothered?
- powerless?
- something else?

You might feel a mix of different feelings. It probably depends on the situation – what you see, what impact it has on you or how you are already feeling that day.

We can all sometimes feel that this is just one of those things, and there is nothing we can do. This is what those who put out news like this rely on. If we stop challenging things there is a risk there will be more of it.



Remember, the news that we get online is very important. Good quality news and information helps us to make informed decisions and educates us about the world we live in.

Good quality news is out there, you just need to find it.

If we allow ourselves to stop trusting any news online, how will we know what is going on in the world? How would you know about a pandemic? How would you know about important social issues, like the Black Lives Matter movement or climate change marches?

What kind of future do you want?



We have an internet that allows lots of us to get information and news, in an easy and convenient way, in seconds. However, this is under threat.

- What kind of future do you want?
- How do you want your information?
- What can you do to stop fake news spreading?
- What can you do to make sure that other people are not misled?

Steps we can all take

You might even be doing these already 😊

✓ Unfollow unreliable accounts

✓ Share good quality information

✓ Talk to friends and family

✓ Report

✓ Seek out support

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#SaferInternetDay

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The key is working together. You are not alone in dealing with this, we are all affected by false information.

Here are some steps you can take and may already be doing:


- Unfollow unreliable accounts.
- Share good quality information when you find it.
- Talk to friends and family if you see them sharing things that you have heard something different about.
- Report fake news and accounts spreading false information.
- Talk to friends and family for support, if what you see online upsets or worries you.

By all of us playing our part, we can help to build an internet that we can trust.



**Safer
Internet
Day 2021** | **Tuesday**
9th February
saferinternetday.org.uk



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