UNIT 3.3 We are internet detectives

Assessing the trustworthiness of websites

1 About this unit

UNIT SUMMARY

In this unit, children will understand that not everything on the internet is true. They will learn about clues to decide if a website is trustworthy and develop a checklist of these clues to critically compare a trustworthy and untrustworthy website from a given selection. Finally, they will apply their understanding when discussing this skill with parents at home.

REPORTING ROUTES

In Year 3, children should know a range of ways to report concerns and inappropriate behaviour, through:

- Talking to a trusted adult
- Calling Childline (0800 1111)

These points should be re-emphasised in any teaching and learning where children are working online.

ONLINE SAFETY FOCUS

In this unit, children will

- use clues to make choices about which web pages they consider most useful and trustworthy
- understand that not all links are safe or trustworthy
- understand different ways to report concerns and inappropriate behaviour

ENGAGING PARENTS AND CARERS

- In this unit, children will take what they have learned from this session and share it with their parents by asking them to decide if a website is trustworthy.
- Consider running an online safety session with parents to discuss web content that poses risk, and how to support children in searching the web safely.

TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

- Further information on searching safely and reviewing websites can be found on the following websites:
  - NSPCC share aware: www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware
  - CEOP Thinkuknow: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/
  - Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Not all websites and links on the worldwide web are safe/honest/trustworthy. Some web sites contain false/fake information. Some links can automatically initiate downloads for computer **viruses** and other **malware**, which can cause irreversible damage to software installed on your school machines. It is therefore important to be able to distinguish between genuine, safe content from trusted sources, and that which is not.
- Review the definitions of the following terms using the glossary on page 64: **domain name**, **malware**, **URL (Uniform Resource Locator)**, **virus**.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

Computing
Use search technologies effectively, appreciate how results are selected and ranked, and be discerning in evaluating digital content.

Citizenship
Develop an interest in, and commitment to, participation in volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood

2 Getting ready

ONLINE SAFETY PRINCIPLES

Think about how you can embed the online safety learning and outcomes from this unit, within your whole school online safety strategy through:

- whole school e-team engagement
- online safety displays
- use of website online safety area
- Twitter tweets. For example: 'This half term our Year 3 pupils are learning about clues that help us to tell if websites are trustworthy.'
- a school newsletter. You may wish to paste the following advisory text for parents and carers into your school newsletter, or send home in book bags (see editable *Newsletter text* on My Rising Stars): 'This half term Year 3 pupils have been learning about clues we can use to decide if information on websites is trustworthy. All children have been ask to share these clues with their grown-ups at home and challenge you to decide if a website is trustworthy.'

THINGS YOU NEED

- Internet access on an interactive whiteboard to share website analysis with the whole class.

THINGS TO DO

- Familiarise yourself with the steps of this activity before running this online safety session.
- Double-check the content of all websites before sharing in class.
- Decide if you wish to use the sites listed in *Useful links* for this session or prefer to use sites that link more closely to current teaching.
- Test the websites listed in *Useful links* to ensure they are accessible in your setting. Familiarise yourself with their content.
- Open the two websites for comparison (see Step 4) in different tabs so you can switch between them during the lesson.

MY RISING STARS RESOURCES

- *Which websites are trustworthy?* (.pdf)

OTHER RISING STARS RESOURCES

- This content links closely with *Switched on Minecraft Activity 9 – We can create a conservation area*.

INCLUSION/THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Be aware that some children may have already fallen victim to an online scam or experienced inappropriate contact or behaviour online and the issues raised in this unit should therefore be dealt with in a sensitive way following your School Safeguarding Policy.
- Some children with sight difficulties may benefit from screen magnifier tools when accessing web content.

USEFUL LINKS

- BBC Webwise – 'What is a Search Engine?': www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/0/22562913

Examples of untrustworthy websites
- Tree Octopus: http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/
- Dog Island: www.thedogisland.com

Examples of trustworthy websites
- World Wildlife Fund site: www.worldwildlife.org
- Monkey World site: www.monkeyworld.org

3 Running the lesson

Resources

- Tree Octopus:
  http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/
- Dog Island:
  www.thedogisland.com
- World Wildlife Fund site
  www.worldwildlife.org
- Monkey World official site:
  www.monkeyworld.org
- *Which websites are trustworthy?* (.pdf)

Possible outcomes

- The children will use their knowledge of websites to make a list of the top three tips for searching safely online.
- They can share this checklist with a parent or carer.

Step 1: Introducing the session

- Explain to the children that in this online safety session they are going to be internet detectives. They will be looking for clues to help them decide if the information on a website is trustworthy.
- Explain that not all web pages are trustworthy or safe. Sometimes websites provide false or inaccurate information. Some include adverts or links that make devices vulnerable to viruses if we were to click on them (and could delete important files or even make our computers unusable). It is therefore very important to be able to tell which websites are trustworthy and which are not.

Step 2: Looking for clues about the trustworthiness of websites

- Explain to the children that they now going to learn about clues they can use to decide if a website is trustworthy. Talk about one way of doing this: by looking at the **domain name** of a website.
- Use a **search engine** to search for information (see Unit 3.3 for tips on safe searching).
- Point out the **URL (Uniform Resource Locator)** of one of the web pages. It usually looks something like: www.bbc.co.uk/.
  Now look at the **domain name**. This is the name of the site and tells the user who controls it. In the BBC's case, the domain name is bbc.co.uk.
  Ask children to look at the URL. Is the name of the organisation part of the domain name? If not, it could mean that the site is fake.
- Ask children to look at the end of the URL. URLs that have .gov, .edu or .sch are official government or education sites, which means that the information is generally trustworthy. The ending .org is an organisation and, like URLs ending in .net or .com, can be bought by anyone. This means it may not be an official website and so we need to look for more clues to decide if the information on it is trustworthy.
- Explain that another such helpful clue is to look at the 'About pages' that appear on websites. This gives us more information about an organisation and often won't appear on websites that are fake.

- Talk about other clues at the bottom of web pages. For example, is there an address, contact details, a privacy policy or other things such as a registered charity number? These are all clues that tell us a website is likely to be trustworthy.
- Ask children to think about the design and images used on a website. How might these be different between trustworthy websites and those that are not? For example: how professional are the photos or illustrations?
- Talk about the use of adverts. Would children expect to see adverts on BBC or government web pages? Could this be another clue they could use to tell if other websites are trustworthy? How could they use this information?

Step 3: Deciding if websites are trustworthy

For this step, you will need to share two websites with the children: one trustworthy site, and one untrustworthy site. (See the examples provided in *Useful links* but you may wish to choose your own pages that link more closely to a topic the children are studying.) It is advised that you load both pages on separate tabs of your browser so it is easy to flick between the two.

- Explain to children that they will now split into small groups to decide if two websites are real or fake.
- Ask them to start by using their knowledge to create a simple checklist, listing the clues that will help them to decide if a websites is trustworthy. Provide copies of the *Which websites are trustworthy?* photocopiable master to organise their thoughts.
- Provide children with URLs of two separate websites: one which is trustworthy and one which is not (see *Useful links*). Ask children to use their checklist to decide if the websites are trustworthy.
- After 10 minutes, bring the class back together and ask children which of these sites they think are most likely to contain trustworthy information. Discuss the reasons for their choices.

Step 4: Summing up

- Reinforce that we can't always be 100 percent sure that the information on a website is accurate. We can, however, use internet detective skills to find out which websites are most likely to be trustworthy and up to date. Good internet detectives do this every time they research online!

4 Taking it further

- Ask children to talk to a parent or carer about how we can decide if websites are trustworthy. They should first share and explain the checklist of clues created in class, and then challenge a parent or carer to use these clues to decide whether a website is trustworthy. Children could share the URLs used in the classroom activity, or you may wish to provide alternatives for added challenge. Encourage children to discuss whether their parent or carer was successful when they return to school.