



30. Be a Netizen

Have you seen or used a computer? Computers have brought about many changes in the way we do things. One of the most amazing features of the computer world is the Internet or the Net.

A network is a system of tubes, wires, roads, etc. which are all connected to each other. **The internet or the net is a network of computers.** It links thousands of computers or smaller networks of computers with one another. It is so large that millions of people around the world can use it at the same time.

The internet makes it possible for computer users to get or send information very quickly. All you have to do is to log on, that is, give instructions to your computer to start using the internet. Then you may see on the net, all the information you need. The information may be in the form of text, pictures, moving images, or even sounds, speeches or music. You can also send your own information on the net.

Once you have gathered or given the information on the internet, you can log off, that is, give instructions to your computer to get disconnected from the net.

The internet is like an ocean of information. You may wonder how one can find tiny bits of information in this ocean, but it is not at all difficult.

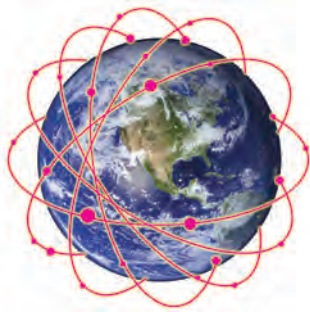
The information on the net is stored and made available in a systematic way on websites. **Websites are places on the net.** Each website has its own address. Using this address, you can visit a website, that is, you can read or view the information stored on it. **The thousands of websites on the net together form the World Wide Web (WWW).**

There are special computer programs known as search engines which help you to find the different websites on the World Wide Web. If you type the word or subject on which you want information, the search engine shows on your screen, a list of websites that have the information. You can then go to that website. Looking at the various websites is known as browsing or surfing the net.

A website is like a book or magazine, but you cannot make changes in a book once it is printed. It is possible to change the text or pictures on a website as many times as you like. So, makers of the website can 'update' a website.



While your computer is connected to the internet, you are 'online'. You can do many things online like reading, watching a movie, listening to songs or even chatting and playing computer games with other people who are 'online' in any part of the world at that time. When you are not connected to the net, you are 'offline'.



Sometimes, you gather a lot of information on the net which you want to read or use later. What do you do, then? You can make a 'copy' of the text or pictures or movies on your computer and store it there. In other words, you download the information on your computer and then use it any time you like.

To send information on the net, you first need to get it ready on your computer in the way you want it on the net. You need a website to display the information on the net.

You can also get your own personal address on the net. You can receive messages on this address and also send them. **This system of sending and receiving messages or mail on computers is known as e-mail or electronic mail.**

An e-mail address is short and unique. No two e-mail addresses are the same. With the address, you get an account on the net. Your account is like your own letter box on the net. The only difference is that you can use this letter box not only for receiving mail but also for sending it. When you grow up, you can get your own e-mail account.

You can lock this 'letter box' by using a password. A password is a secret word or group of letters and/or numbers. The computer will allow a person to use or see the account only when the person types the correct password!

People who live in a city are citizens. People who use the net are netizens. Would you like to be a netizen?



Things to do :

1. List the words or phrases related with computer or the Internet.

2. Answer the following questions in one sentence each.

- (1) Have you ever seen or used a computer ?
- (2) What is the 'Internet' ?
- (3) What is a website ?
- (4) What is the world wide web ?
- (5) What are search engines ?
- (6) What is meant by browsing or surfing ?
- (7) What is meant by being 'online' ?
- (8) What is meant by being 'offline' ?
- (9) What is 'e-mail' or electronic mail ?
- (10) What is a password ?
- (11) Who is a 'netizen' ?
- (12) Would you like to be a netizen ?

3. Draw a diagram to explain the idea of Internet.

4. Find a picture of a computer with the help of your teacher and label the different parts you see.

For example, monitor, screen, speakers, processor, mouse, mousepad, keyboard, etc.

5. List all the pairs of antonyms you find in the passage.

6. WWW is a short form of World Wide Web.

Find ten other short forms related to ICT (Information and Communication Technology).

7. Choose a word that has at least four letters in it.

Imagine that it is a short form. Write the name/phrase/ words it stands for.

For example, STEP : Sunday and Thursday Evening Programmes.

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