



THE WEEK AHEAD

THE FREE ENCYCLOPEDIA

WORLD WIKIPEDIA DAY – 15 JANUARY

ON 15 January, 2001, Wikipedia was founded. Just 18 years later, the encyclopedia that anyone can edit is the fifth most popular website in the world and features more than 40 million articles in 301 different languages!

Back in 2001, two men called Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger set out to create an online encyclopedia. Originally, they planned on checking the accuracy of every article written themselves, but when that took too long, they came up with the idea of Wikipedia. Their big idea was that anyone could contribute their knowledge to it.

Since then, the organisation has grown massively. It's become a non-profit, which means that its aim isn't to make money, and works more like a charity – mostly making its money from donations.

Last month, Wikipedia was visited an incredible 755 million times from the UK alone! Of the 5.7 million English-language articles on the site, 1.5 million were edited and changed.

Since literally anyone can edit a Wikipedia article, there have been lots of debates over how accurate it is. Most of the information on the website will either come from newspapers, websites, books or studies.

While you can always trust the information you read in *First News*, some websites or newspapers can change facts to mislead you. Wikipedia itself warns that you should "always be careful of what you read: it might not be consistently accurate."

So, on Wikipedia Day, remember that while it's pretty incredible that anyone can access millions of pages of information, that doesn't mean it's all true!



Getty

DID YOU KNOW?

The word 'wiki' means 'quick' in Hawaii! A wiki is a website where anyone can edit or add to the information on a page. Wikis were designed in the early days of the web to help people work together and share information.

HOW TO USE WIKIPEDIA

NO, this isn't a guide on how to copy and paste! Here's how to use Wikipedia for your homework and make sure the information you take from it is trustworthy.

● **Use the citations!**

If you click the numbers by the bits of information you want to use, it'll link through to where that information came from at the bottom of the page. This quickly lets you investigate Wikipedia's sometimes unreliable facts.

● **Double-check everything!**

Make sure to search Google for articles and studies that back up the information you want to take from a Wikipedia article.

● **Wait, where did THOSE facts come from?**

Any time you're reading something from a website, you should always ask yourself if it's reliable. Have you heard of it before? How long has it been going? Do people trust it? If you don't know, why not ask a parent or teacher what they think?

THE WEEK AHEAD



GLOSSARY

Encyclopedia – a large book containing articles of factual information on many different topics, often arranged in alphabetical order.

Edit – to make changes to a piece of writing, deciding what to keep, delete or alter.

Copy and paste – to use a computer to make an exact copy of some writing or an image in a computer document.

Citations – information that tells you the source of a fact or a quote. On Wikipedia, you will see a small number in square brackets after a fact. If you click on this it takes you to the list of citations at the bottom of the page showing where the information has been taken from.

1. What is Wikipedia and when was it founded?

Wikipedia is...	
It began...	

2. Find the numbers.

Wikipedia is the ____ most popular website in the world.
 It contains more than _____ articles.
 It has articles written in ____ different languages

3. Why did Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger have to change their original idea?

4. What does the writer describe as “their big idea”?

5. Find **one** fact that shows how popular Wikipedia is in the UK.

6. Can you think of **three** ways in which Wikipedia is different from a book encyclopedia?

7. Why is it very important to consider **accuracy** and **trust** when you use Wikipedia?

8. This picture is taken from a Wikipedia page. What is the number in brackets?

near Charing Cross Station in London and its cost was £106,000.^[32] It was used to complete the Clifton Suspension Bridge.

9. In the last paragraph the journalist summarises the **pros** and **cons** of Wikipedia (an argument in support of the website and an argument showing its drawback). What are they?

Pro	Con

■ Look at the section ‘How to use Wikipedia’

10. Imagine you are using Wikipedia and come across a fact that you are unsure about. Follow the tips from the journalist and explain in your own words what three things you should do to check your fact.

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Extension Activities



USING WIKIPEDIA FOR RESEARCH

A) Choose a topic you already know a lot about. For example, your favourite football team, favourite animal, a place or a hobby.

Write down all the facts that you already know about this topic in the space below.

My chosen topic:

.....
.....

Facts that I know:

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.....
.....
.....

B) Now, go to Wikipedia and look up your topic.

- Can you find **three** new facts about your subject?
- If possible, try to choose facts that have a citation or footnote (it will have a number in square brackets after the fact).
- Write down the source where the Wikipedia writer got the fact from.

For example:

Topic: Liverpool Football Club.

New fact: Liverpool FC is the eighth most valuable football club in the world.

Wikipedia footnote:

4. [^] Ozanian, Mike. "The World's Most Valuable Soccer Teams 2018"  *Forbes*. Retrieved 2018-06-12.

Source: An article called "The World's Most Valuable Soccer Teams 2018" written by Mike Ozanian, for *Forbes*. (*Forbes* is a famous and well-respected business magazine.)

New fact 1.....

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Source

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New fact 2.....

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Source

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New fact 3.....

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Source

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New fact 4.....

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Source

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Teacher Answers

AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS: News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news 'stories' are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE: The teacher answers are intended to provide a quick reference guide. Suggestions are given for the 'Expected response' or starting point that pupils could give. The 'Development' then gives more in-depth ideas that students can work towards as they develop their reading comprehension skills.

For a list of the reading skills used, please email schools@firstnews.co.uk.

1. What is Wikipedia and when was it founded?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that began in 2001.

Development

- It is a website that provides lots of factual information written by the public on millions of topics.

It began... in 2001.

2. Find the numbers.

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

Wikipedia is the fifth most popular website in the world.

It contains more than 40 million articles.

It has articles written in 301 different languages.

3. Why did Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger have to change their original idea?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- They planned on checking every article themselves to make sure the information was correct, but this took too long.

4. What does the writer describe as “their big idea”?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- The idea that anyone could add and edit information on the site.

5. Find one fact that shows how popular Wikipedia is in the UK.

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

Expected response

- It was visited 755 million times in just the last month.

6. Can you think of three ways in which Wikipedia is different from a book encyclopedia?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence (NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- It's a website.
- Anyone can write the articles.
- It has millions of pages.

Development

- It's a website and doesn't appear in printed form.
- Anyone can write content for Wikipedia. A book usually has just one or a few authors.
- Unlike a book, there is almost no limit to the number of pages and the number of topics it can cover.
- None of the facts are checked. The information in a book is usually carefully checked.
- It is constantly updated. A book is only updated when it is reprinted.

7. Why is it very important to consider accuracy and trust when you use Wikipedia?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence (NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- You don't know if the facts on Wikipedia are true. You have to check them.

Development

- Because anyone can write a Wikipedia page, you don't know that the information is correct.
- It's important to check where the information has come from, consider whether you trust the sources and double-check facts before using them.

8. The picture is taken from a Wikipedia page. What is the number in brackets?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information (NC 2a)

Expected response

- It shows that the fact (its cost was £106,000) is a citation from another source. It will link to information telling you where the fact came from (called a footnote).

9. In the last paragraph the journalist summarises the pros and cons of Wikipedia (an argument in support of the website and an argument showing its drawback). What are they?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence (NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

It's incredible to be able to access millions of pages of information.

Just because there's a lot of information doesn't mean that it's all true!

Look at the section 'How to use Wikipedia'.**10. Imagine you are using Wikipedia and come across a fact that you are unsure about. Follow the tips from the journalist and explain in your own words what three things you should do to check your fact.**

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence (NC 2c & 8)

Expected response

- Look at the citations.
- Double-check the fact.
- Ask where the fact came from.

Development

- Click on the number by the fact to find out where it has come from and check the source.
- Double-check the fact by Googling it and finding another source that confirms the fact.
- When you're checking the sources, always ask yourself if it's reliable and if you trust it. If you're not sure, ask an adult.