



NB: This is not a word for word transcript

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**Dan:** Hello, I'm Dan...

**Alice:** And I'm Alice.

**Dan:** And this is 6 Minute English from the BBC. Today it's all about computers on 6 Minute English, because we're wishing a happy birthday to the World Wide Web!

**Alice:** That's right. Tim Berners-Lee published the first website 20 years ago, in August 1991.

**Dan:** We should explain that the World Wide Web is different to the Internet. A lot of people don't realise that they're different things, but in fact the Internet was created in 1969 as a US military project, to connect computers around the world.

**Alice:** But the World Wide Web was new technology that allowed people to access information more easily.

**Dan:** So we know that Tim Berners-Lee published the first website using the World Wide Web 20 years ago, in August 1991. But today's question for you Alice is: roughly how many websites are there in the world today, in August 2011? Is it:

- a) 6.5 billion
- b) 12.8 billion

c) 19.7 billion

**Alice:** I'll go for 12.8 billion.

**Dan:** OK we'll see if you're right at the end of the programme. First, let's have a listen to the BBC reporter Richard Westcott. Here he is talking about the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Wide Web. He uses a great word in this report Alice – **gobbledygook**. Can you explain that for us?

**Alice:** Of course, **Gobbledygook**. It means language that you can't understand; something that's nonsense. It comes from the sound turkeys, I suppose, make, when they go 'gobble gobble gobble' – they're talking **gobbledygook**.

**Dan:** Other good phrases that mean the same thing are **gibberish** and **mumbo jumbo**. If you say someone's talking gibberish or talking mumbo-jumbo, it means they're talking rubbish, and you can't understand them. So listen out for the word gobbledygook in this report. Also, how does the reporter describe the web?

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**Richard Westcott, BBC reporter**

***Now the World Wide Web is actually different from the Internet. No, I didn't realise that either. The internet is much older; the web is actually the bit that turns all the gobbledygook computer language into easy to read pages, all linked together, that you can access on any computer. It's the worldwide book that anybody can read or write.***

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**Dan:** He describes the web as a 'worldwide book that anybody can read or write'. Because we were using easy-to-read pages, rather than gobbledygook computer language, the web meant that, in theory, anyone could set up a website.

**Alice:** Anyone could **set up** a website. **To set something up** means to start something or to build something. So if you **set up a website** you start that website.

**Dan:** So the first website was **set up** 20 years ago at CERN, the European Centre for Nuclear Research. But how did websites become so popular? Professor Wendy Hall is a computer scientist at the University of Southampton in England. She explains that as Tim Berners-Lee **spread the word** about the World Wide Web other scientists set up their own websites.

**Alice:** Tim Berners-Lee **spread the word** about the web. The phrase **spread the word** means that you're telling a lot of people about something – you're literally **spreading the word**, like you spread butter on bread.

**Dan:** So let's listen to Professor Hall using the phrase **spreading the word** in this clip. How does she describe the sort of people who started setting up websites?

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### Professor Wendy Hall, University of Southampton

*In the first place there was one website; the one Tim set up at CERN. As he started spreading the word, others, very early adopters, generally, scientists, geeks, started setting up websites.*

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**Dan:** So it was scientists, **early adopters** and **geeks** who started setting up their own websites.

**Alice:** Early adopters. That's quite a new phrase. It means someone who starts using new technology as soon as it becomes available.

**Dan:** And what about geeks?

**Alice:**       **Geeks.** Now, this is an interesting word. It's an American slang word that used to mean someone who was uncool or unfashionable. If you called someone a geek it was a bit of an insult. But now **geek** quite often means someone who is really interested in a particular topic. So you could be an arts geek, or a history geek, or even an English-language geek!

**Dan:**       And these were technology geeks, who started creating their own websites. They were the early adopters of the World Wide Web. Let's hear the clip again, and listen carefully for the phrases 'spreading the word', 'early adopters', 'geeks' and 'setting up.'

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**Professor Wendy Hall, University of Southampton**

*In the first place there was one website; the one Tim set up at CERN. As he started spreading the word, others, very early adopters, generally, scientists, geeks, started setting up websites.*

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**Dan:**       OK Alice, at the beginning of the programme I asked you how many websites are there in the world in August 2011? Is it:

- a)     6.5 billion
- b)     12.8 billion
- c)     19.7 billion

**Alice:**       And I guessed 12.8 billion

Dan: Well 12.8 billion is a large number but in fact there are a lot more. There are almost 19.7 billion websites in the world, according to recent figures. That's three times the size of the earth's population. It's a huge number. So the World Wide Web was an incredible development, which let people set up their own websites and really get the most out of the internet.

Dan: Well Alice, we're almost at the end of the show, so could you just give us a reminder of some of the vocabulary we've heard today.

Alice: Of course, we had:

**Gobbledygook**

**Gibberish**

**Mumbo-jumbo**

**To set something up**

**To spread the word**

**Early adopters**

**Geeks**

Dan: Thanks Alice

Alice: See you next time!

Both: Bye!

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>Gobbledygook</b>	Language which you can not understand at all
<b>Gibberish</b>	Talk which does not make any sense
<b>Mumbo jumbo</b>	Something that does not make any sense at all to you
<b>To set something up</b>	To start or to build something
<b>To spread the word</b>	To tell a lot of people about something
<b>Early adopters</b>	Individuals who use new technology or products before others
<b>Geeks</b>	Here, persons who are inordinately dedicated to and involved with technology

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