Networks, media and automation

IB DP Digital Society Networks, media and automation full package

A rumour faster than the truth

> A false **claim** travelled faster than the truth through a network of phones.

- In March 2011 the Fukushima nuclear station was damaged by an earthquake and tsunami.
- A rumour spread across China by text and social media: iodised salt protects against radiation.
- Shelves emptied; the claim was false, and China had large salt reserves.

Computers and the network of networks

Layer	Who controls it	What they can set
users	people with phones and computers	what they post and share
platforms	the apps and websites people use	what is shown and allowed
networks	**internet** providers and governments	what can be reached
cables and data centres	the companies that own them	where data goes and is kept

Three things digital media changed



False news travels faster

1. **Misinformation** False information shared by people who believe it, like the salt rumour.
2. **Disinformation** False information spread on purpose to deceive.
3. **Evidence** Science (2018), about 126,000 Twitter stories: false ones spread further and faster.

Decision

True stories took about six times as long to reach 1,500 people; new, surprising claims get shared.

Narrow, generative, general

Type	What it can do	Example
narrow AI	one task or one kind of task	face unlock; AlphaGo beat Lee Sedol 4-1 in 2016
generative AI	new text, images or sound from patterns in its data	ChatGPT (2022); image generators
general AI	any task a human can do, at human level	does not yet exist

When an autonomous car fails, who is responsible?

1. **Sensed** The car's sensors detected her seconds before the crash.
2. **Decided** The system did not brake.
3. **Supervised** The safety driver was looking at a phone.

Decision

Autonomy moves decisions away from people, but responsibility still has to land somewhere - driver, company, programmers or car?

Read every source three ways

Ask	**Question**	**Salt rumour example**
claim	what does the **source** say?	iodised salt protects against radiation
perspective	who made it, with what interests?	anonymous forwarded text; health notice; a scientist
origin and purpose	where, when and why?	made in panic, to warn friends, with no evidence

Worked plan: is false information more dangerous?

1. **Sources** The 2018 Science study (researchers: false news spreads faster) against a platform statement (company: under control).
2. **Own example** The 2011 salt panic spread by text message too - the problem is older than today's apps.
3. **Judgement** Social media makes false information faster and wider, but ranking by **engagement** is the main cause, and it can be changed.

Check yourself

Your turn

Without notes,

A. Name the four layers of the internet and who sets the rules at each.
B. Separate misinformation from disinformation, with the 2018 evidence.
C. Place face unlock, ChatGPT and general AI in the right type.
D. Read one source for claim, perspective and origin.