TEXT #2

The History of Social Networking
By Gordon Goble, Internet columnist and technology product reviewer

Date: September 6, 2012 (updated by digitaltrends.com staff, first written in 2009)

Complexity Level: Measures at 1390L, but reads much more easily due to straightforward language and approach; should be accessible to most high school students.

Source/Link: http://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/

TEXT NOTES

This background article from a digital product review site is typical of the informational sources students may encounter when doing a Google-based Internet search. Though written by a relatively unknown author, it presents a straightforward but detailed history of the development of social networking as a technology-based phenomenon, with some lively authorial voice but a reasonably objective accounting. It moves from the antecedents of current social networking sites (e.g., CompuServe and AOL) to Facebook and beyond. Because it is found on a website dedicated to digital product reviews, it presents an interesting first opportunity to discuss credibility of Internet-based sources.

Students might also access the following sites for historical background information:

1.	The Brief History of Social Media – Course Handout prepared by Dr. Anthony Curtis, Mass Communication Dept., University of North Carolina at Pembroke.
http://www.uncp.edu/home/acurtis/NewMedia/SocialMedia/SocialMediaHistory.html
2.	copyblogger.com – History of Social Media Infographic.
http://www.copyblogger.com/history-of-social-media/
3.	mashable.com - History of Social Media Infographic (developed by OnlineSchools.org)
http://mashable.com/2011/01/24/the-history-of-social-media-infographic/

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive initial close reading and discussion):

1.	Initially, Goble suggests that the use of computers for social interaction was an unlikely phenomenon because "this whole sitting-in-front-of-a-keyboard thing was so… isolationistic." As the article progresses, what details/ideas does he present to suggest how this situation changed and led to the "omnipresent cultural phenomenon we know and love" today?

2.	What does Goble imply might be the future of social media – beyond Facebook and Twitter? How might this trend be significant to society, given what he has described as the history of social networking to date?