



## TEXT #3

### *How Twitter Works*

By Jonathon Strickland,

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Date: Not identified (but currently posted on website as of May 2013)

Complexity Level: Measures at 1260L, mostly due to some technical language used in Sections (pages) 3 and 4 of the article; Sections 1 and 2 should be accessible to most high school students.

Source/Link: [howstuffworks.com](http://howstuffworks.com) (Discovery Communications)

<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet/social-networking/networks/twitter.htm>

#### TEXT NOTES

This text, drawn from Discovery Communications "How Stuff Works" series of web-based articles, presents a multi-part explanation of the technology behind Twitter, moving from a general discussion of background and the history of Twitter's development, to an explanation of what a "tweet" is, and then to more technical discussion of Twitter's application programming interface (API) and how it works on devices such as cell phones. The first two sections should be accessible to all students as background into this technological phenomenon, which will be referenced and discussed in later articles and studies in the text set; more technically-oriented students will find the information in Sections 3 and 4 most interesting and relevant. For a discussion of credibility of the site, this article represents an interesting comparison with Text #1. While it has been produced by a for-profit entity, Discovery Communications, the How Stuff Works site is described by the company as an "award-winning source of credible, unbiased, and easy-to-understand explanations of how the world actually works... founded by North Carolina State University Professor Marshall Brain in 1998." For more information about credibility, go to:

<http://www.howstuffworks.com/about-hsw.htm>

Students might also access/read the similar article: *How Facebook Works*

(<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet/social-networking/networks/facebook.htm>)

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

1. What details in the article suggest how Twitter is interconnected or related to other Internet-based technological phenomena, such as Google, Blogger, and Facebook?
2. What does the article imply are the limitations of "tweets," and therefore of Twitter as a social networking system?