



LESSON PLAN

Level: Grades 6 to 8
Duration: 60-90 minutes class time, plus time in class or at home to complete the evaluation task

This lesson was created by MediaSmarts for Canada's federal, provincial and territorial privacy protection authorities.

Know the Deal: The Value of Privacy



This lesson is part of *USE, UNDERSTAND & ENGAGE: A Digital Media Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools*: <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-framework>.

Overview

In this lesson, students are introduced to the idea that privacy is a fundamental human right and that their personal information is valuable. The lesson focuses on the “economics” of personal information and that most “free” apps and online services make some or all of their revenue by collecting (and in some cases reselling) users' personal information. Students will watch a video that illustrates the idea that they may be paying with their privacy and then discuss some of the ramifications of this. They will learn about tools and techniques for minimizing the personal information they share and create a public service announcement that helps them and their peers “know the deal” about the value of privacy.

Learning Outcomes

Personal data:

Students will understand:

- the concept of personal data
- the concept of pseudonymity and masking one's identity
- that privacy is valuable and a fundamental human right and it means you have a choice of what personal information to share and with whom
- that online activity may leave traces which can contain personal data

Students will develop the ability to:

- recognize types of personal data that can be used to directly identify individuals, and technical data that can be used to monitor and identify a person online



Understanding the digital environment:

Students will understand:

- the concept of information architecture, and the collection, structure, and processing of information
- how to recognize key players in the digital economy
- the systems that are used to market products and offer free services for the purpose of establishing personalized user profiles (including that the majority of such offers of services entail collecting and using personal data as well as storing this information in a database)
- what data are collected and stored when they use the Internet, a social network or a service

Students will develop the ability to:

- identify the types of technical data collected when they are online
- find the terms and conditions for use of their personal data
- give examples of digital services whose economic model involves – or does not involve – the collection of personal data

Managing data:

Students will understand:

- how to better protect themselves online
- their rights and responsibilities under the terms and conditions of online services
- how to manage the settings of the online applications and services that they use to safeguard their personal data

Students will develop the ability to:

- use available procedures to protect their personal data and control sharing their personal information
- manage the security and privacy settings of the accounts, profiles and devices they use

This lesson plan also addresses the development of several key privacy education competencies in the [Personal Data Protection Competency Framework for School Students](#), including:

- Understanding the concept of personal data
- Understanding the digital environment – technical aspects
- Understanding personal data regulations – controlling the use of personal information

Curriculum Outcomes

To see a list of all of the curriculum outcomes for school boards in your province, please visit www.mediasmarts.ca.

For curriculum outcomes in English:

<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-and-media-literacy-outcomes-province-territory>



For curriculum outcomes in French:

<http://habilomedias.ca/ressources-pedagogiques/resultats-de-leducation-medias-par-province>

Preparation and Materials

- Prepare to show the videos *Know the Deal* and *How Targeted Advertising Works*
- Prepare to project the slideshow *Informational PSAs*
- Photocopy the handout *Protecting Your Privacy on Apps and Websites*
- Photocopy the assignment sheet *Know the Deal*

Procedure

What's free?

1. Start by asking students how many apps or online services they use that are paid for by either their parents or themselves.
2. Ask how many of the online apps and services they use don't cost them anything to use. (There will be many more of these. You can prompt them by asking them to think of search engines, social networks, blogging sites, etc.)
3. Ask students how they think those services make money. Most likely, students will be uncertain. Make sure to get at least two or three responses, but don't comment on any of them.

Know the Deal

1. Show the video *Know the Deal*.
2. Explain to students that the term "personal information" means any information **about** you or that could be **connected** to you. Ask for some examples of personal information that were mentioned in the video:
 - Email address
 - Social media handle
 - Date of birth
 - List of friends
 - Friends' email addresses
 - Search history
 - Credit card purchase history
 - Location history
 - DNA sample



3. Discuss why protecting personal information is important and why privacy is valuable.

As the video states, privacy is a fundamental human right that allows for free expression. It promotes your autonomy as a person.

Some rights protect your ability to do things – like expressing your opinion – while others guarantee your protection and freedom from certain things, like having your reputation damaged by false statements about you.

The control you have over your personal information is one way that you exercise your right to privacy.

Therefore, it's important for people to have a certain amount of control over how their personal information is collected, used and shared.

Digital media has increased our ability to express ourselves. But the online world is also creating some challenges for privacy.

Personal information can be collected legitimately and in a way that ensures privacy is respected.

When you deal with a business, it's your right to know, and be comfortable with, what personal information you are giving up and how it will be used.

You can choose to share your information – or *not* to share your information – for all kinds of reasons.

4. Next, ask students what they think the video means when it says that we pay for things with information. Obviously the online services students use don't always openly ask them to give up personal information, as they do in the video, so how do services get it, and how does it make them money?

Explain to students that there are a number of ways that are easy to understand in which personal information can be valuable: the more an insurance company knows about someone's driving habits, for instance, the more accurately they can price their car insurance. But what about platforms like search engines and social networks, that aren't charging users money for their services?

Let students discuss this for a few minutes or until one of them mentions advertising. Play the video *How Targeted Advertising Works* and explain to students that most of the money made by these services comes from advertising. The data they collect is funneled used to determine what ads to show them on those and other platforms. Ask students to suggest a few things they might search for on search engines, or post about on social networks, that might influence what ads these platforms show them.

Make sure that students understand that the platforms listed in the video are **only examples**; many more types of online spaces gather data and use behavioural advertising. Some platforms can also continue tracking people after they've left if they don't log out, and in some cases the ad network and the platforms are owned by the same company.



5. Ask students: What are some things you like about this? What are some things you don't like about this? Make sure the following points come up in the discussion:

Positive:

- You get more relevant ads that may interest you
- You don't have to pay for these apps/services with money
- The apps/services provide a useful tool for what you want to achieve with little to no hassle (e.g. without having to enter payment information.)
- User's data allows the apps/services to improve their product

Negative:

- You don't necessarily know what you're agreeing to (you have to read the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy to know what you're giving up and how.)
- The Terms of Service and Privacy Policies are often long and difficult to fully understand
- Your data profile may keep you from seeing certain content (for instance, some ads are only aimed at boys or at girls) or see different content from someone else (some networks use your profile to offer different prices depending on what they think you're willing to pay, for example, and to decide what posts, search engine results or news stories you're shown), so that even if you feel your personal information is not valuable, it gives advertisers power over what you see and how much you pay.
- You may give up more personal information than you're comfortable with (for example, things that you think of as private, like texts, emails or social networking posts, can all be used to build your profile.)
- Your data can be shared with or resold to different companies, or may be shared with companies you don't realize have the same owner as the company that owns the app/service you're currently using.

Tell students there are ways we can limit how much personal information we give out. Distribute the handout *Protecting Your Privacy on Apps and Websites* and go through the different items with the class.

Assessment/Evaluation: Know the Deal

1. Explain to students that data collection and behavioural advertising are not necessarily problems on their own: the problem is that we don't always fully understand the bargain we're striking. As an example, have students imagine that if they wanted to buy something at a store, the store didn't have to tell them how much it cost until after they had agreed to buy it. Would that be fair?
2. Remind students that they have a **right** to make decisions about their privacy and to understand what kind of deal they're making when they give up their personal information. Explain to them that they are going to create print **public service ads** (ads that perform a public service rather than sell a product) about their favourite free online services or platforms that clearly explain what they're getting from the service and how they're paying for it, so that they and their peers can make informed decisions. (This can be done individually or in groups, depending on your preference.)



3. Explain to the class that a good (PSA) does three things: it makes readers *aware* of the issue, gives them a reason to *care* about the issue, and gives them *useful information* to help them address the issue. Print PSAs can use both text and images to do these things.

Project the slideshow *Informational PSAs* and go through the slides with the class. For each one, ask students:

1. What issue is the PSA about?
 - “Spot the Signs”: Long-horned beetles
 - “It’s This Easy...”: Rabies
 - “Help Protect the Manatee”: Manatees

2. How does it make the reader care about the issue?
 - “Spot the Signs”: text (it tells you the beetle kills trees); graphics (big red text suggests danger; beetle with the slash over it suggests action.)
 - “It’s This Easy...”: the text (“It’s this easy to pick up rabies”) and graphics (a cute kid holding a cute puppy) work together to make you concerned.
 - “Help Protect the Manatee”: text (the direct address to the reader makes them feel like they can be part of the solution); graphics (a cute manatee and even cuter baby manatee make you want to protect them.)
 - “It’s This Easy...”: the text (“It’s this easy to pick up rabies”) and graphics (a cute kid holding a cute puppy) work together to make you concerned.

3. How does it inform the reader about how to address the issue?
 - “Spot the Signs”: text (it tells you what to do – “Spot the Signs. Stop the Spread” – and gives you a link to a website for more information); graphics (pictures that help you recognize when a tree is infected.)
 - “It’s This Easy...”: text (gives you information on how rabies is spread and what to do if an animal bites you.)
 - “Help Protect the Manatee”: text (gives you information on how to avoid disturbing manatees in different situations, and a link to a website for more information); infographics (the “Manatee Zone” sign highlights the most important information.)

4. Distribute the handout sheet *Know the Deal* and go through the assignment with the students. Discuss where students can find privacy information on a website or app – for example in the Terms of Service or Privacy Policy.

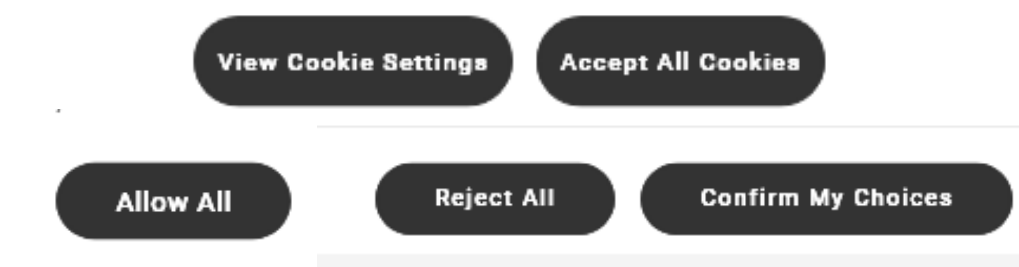


Protecting Your Privacy on Apps and Websites

Almost all of kids' favourite apps and websites make money from targeted advertising, which uses their personal information to choose which ads to show them. Many of them also sell the data they collect to data brokers, which use information from many sources to make detailed profiles of users. Some also share it with other apps that are owned by the same company, such as Google and YouTube or Instagram and Facebook.

But as William Budington of the Electronic Frontier Foundation says, "There are things you can do to protect your privacy by 85, 90, 95 per cent that will not add much friction to your life." Here are a few key ones:

- Install privacy-protecting plugins such as Privacy Badger on laptops and desktops and apps such as DuckDuckGo on mobile devices.
- Review what information different apps are collecting on mobile devices.
- Review and customize privacy settings. For example, here's how you can turn off tracking and targeted ads on:
 - Google and YouTube: <https://myaccount.google.com/data-and-privacy>
 - Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram: <https://www.facebook.com/privacy/checkup/>
 - TikTok: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/account-and-privacy/personalized-ads-and-data>
- Don't sign in to any apps or websites using your social network logins. You can also make secure and disposable email addresses using [SharkLasers](#) or [ProtonMail](#) if you want to register for something without giving away your regular email address.
- Go into your devices' Settings and turn off apps' permission to access the camera, microphone and location.
- If you use iOS devices like iPhones or iPads, make sure to refuse data collection when installing new apps. If you use Android devices, install the DuckDuckGo app and turn on App Tracking Protection.
- Accept only the minimum required level of data collection on websites – first, by never clicking "Accept All," and then by looking for phrases like "Reject All" or "Only Necessary."



Know the Deal: Public Service Ads Assignment

For this assignment, your class will be creating a public service campaign called *Know the Deal*.

You will choose an online tool, app or platform that you use or your family uses regularly that doesn't cost money to use. (Examples: social networks, search engines, video-sharing or photo-sharing sites.)

Identify **what the service offers**: why do people use it? What benefits do you get from it?

Next, find out **what personal information** you give to be able to use it. (Think of the types of personal information mentioned in the *Know the Deal* video, and keep in mind that most platforms have access to everything you post and do on them.)

Finally, produce a **print PSA** that:

- 1) makes readers aware that they're paying for these services with their personal information;
- 2) uses text, images or both to show why they should care about this issue; and
- 3) gives information on what they can do about it.



This lesson plan is available free of charge to educators and program facilitators. We encourage you to copy and share it. We invite your feedback to help us make improvements in the future. Email your comments to:

Youth.Jeunes@priv.gc.ca.



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