

# Personal Data – What's it all about?

Understanding what personal data is  
and why it is valuable



Age group 11–16



# Personal Data – What’s it all about? (England)



This lesson aims to make pupils aware of what personal data is, how it is collected and how it is used. It can be used as a standalone session or with the follow-up session, **Staying Private on Social Media**.

Age: 11-16

Timing: 50-60 mins

## Learning objectives

Students will learn:

- what personal data is
- how personal data is collected
- why personal data is valuable

## Guidance for teaching:

- Take time to set clear ground-rules around listening, respect and not using personal or sensitive examples.
- Create a positive classroom culture where students feel able to ask questions and also have the right to pass if they don't feel comfortable answering a question.
- Ensure you are familiar with your schools safeguarding policy and procedures, including what to do if a student makes a disclosure. [Find more information here](#)
- Also ensure that any other whole school policies are followed such as e-safety.

## Curriculum Links to PSHE programme of Study:

### KS3

H30. how to identify risk and manage personal safety in increasingly independent situations, including online

R42. to recognise peer influence and to develop strategies for managing it, including online

L25. to make informed decisions about whether different media and digital content are appropriate to view and develop the skills to act on them

### KS4

H22. ways to identify risk and manage personal safety in new social settings, workplaces, and environments, including online

L22. that there are positive and safe ways to create and share content online and the opportunities this offers

## DFE RSE and Health Guidance

Pupils Should Know:

- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- how information and data is shared and used online.

## Ofsted personal development judgement

Schools support pupils to develop in many diverse aspects of life including:

- enabling pupils to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being and making them aware of the support available to them
- enabling pupils to recognise the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social media

# Personal Data – What's it all about?

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Learning objectives  
Students will be able to:



describe what  
personal data is



identify how personal  
data is collected



explain why personal  
data is valuable

# HOW MANY OF THESE HAVE YOU EVER DONE?



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used a microphone on your phone/tablet/computer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Saved payment information online</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sent an email</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put something into an online calendar</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Searched online for an image</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Saved something to an online drive.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Looked up how to get somewhere using an online map</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bookmarked a website</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Downloaded an app</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Watched a YouTube video</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taken a photo on your phone</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read an online news article</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used a search engine to find something out</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used a webcam</li></ul>

**Which company provides services that allow you to carry out all these actions?**


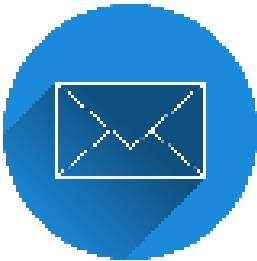
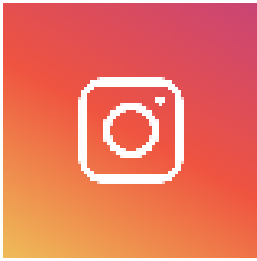
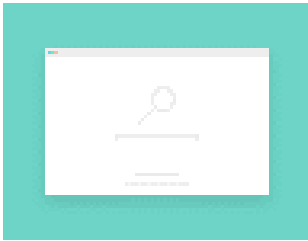







**Google**

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# Q: What data can Google collect about you?



Location		If you have location tracker turned on, Google will store your location every time you turn on your device.
Emails		Google will store every email ever sent or received, including emails categorised as spam and those you have deleted.
Apps		Google stores information on each app that you use. This will include things such as: how often you use them, where you use them and who you use them to interact with.
Search history		Google stores everything you have ever searched for across all your devices. This can mean that if you delete your search history from one device it may still be stored on another. This also includes information such as your YouTube search history.

Images		Google can store all the photos taken across all your devices. They will categorise these e.g., by year. Information will also include things such as when and where pictures were taken.
Contact details		Such as those you share when signing up for particular services.
Files		Any files uploaded to the Google Drive will be stored, this can sometimes include those that you have deleted.
Health		Google owns FitBit. If you own a FitBit they will store the information it collects such as: steps taken, what time they were taken, any recorded workouts, etc.
Calendar		If you use Google Calendar then they store information on all your calendar entries, they can also record whether you attended them and what time you attended, etc.

# What is personal data?

1. Using at least three of the words in the word bank below, create a definition of personal data.

**information**

**behaviour**

**yourself**

**recorded**

**identify**

**collected**



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# What is Personal Data?

Personal data is any information that could be used to identify you.

This includes details about **yourself**, such as your name and age, or your **behaviour**, such as where you shop and what you buy.

- How many forms of personal data can you think of?



Address



Shopping



Hobbies



Religious  
beliefs

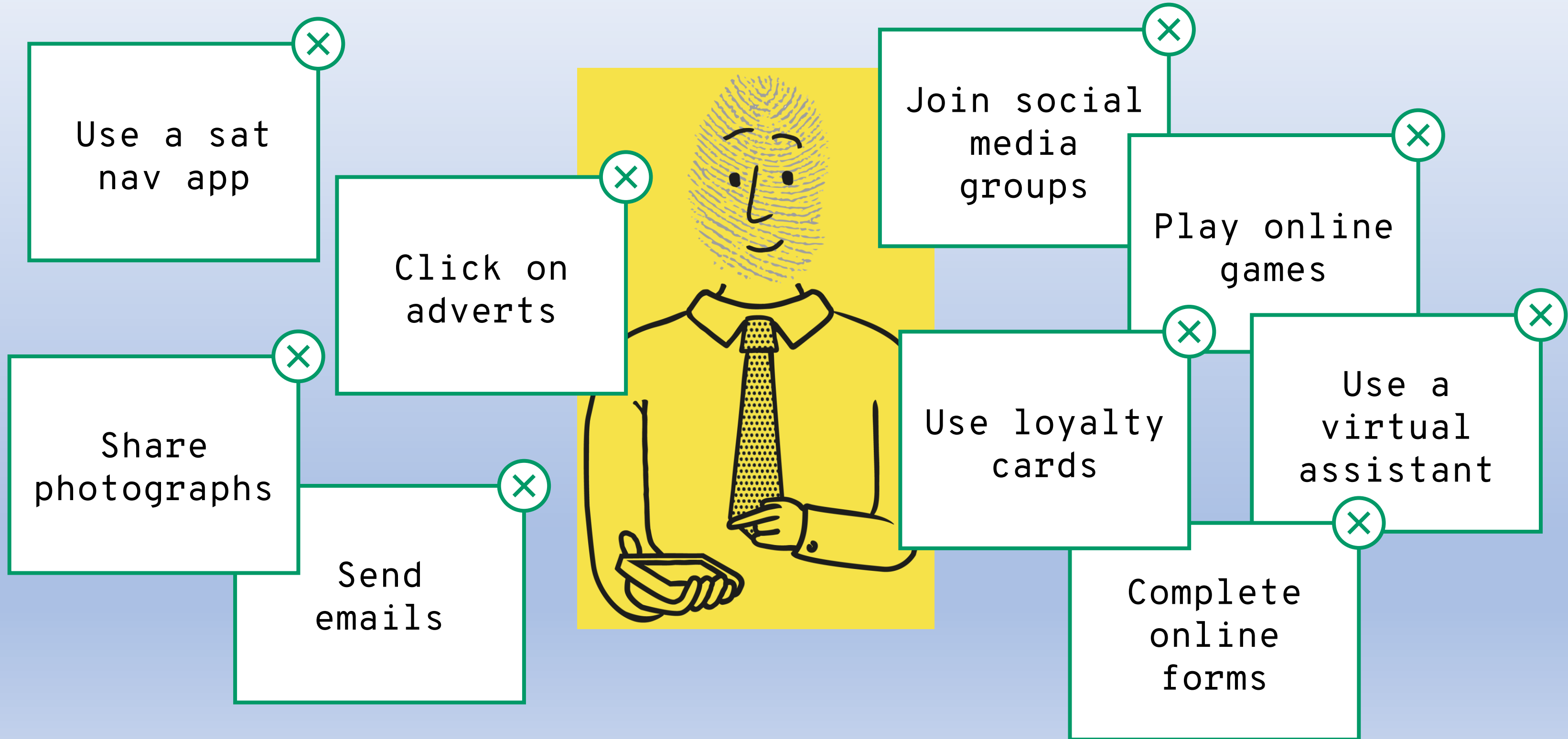


Race/  
ethnicity



Health

# Our personal data can be collected online when we..



Question	Social media platforms	Online retailers	Public Transport Provider	Game Developers
<b>What information might they collect?</b>	<p>Any image/post even if not publicly available</p> <p>Every message you've ever sent or received</p> <p>All the contacts in your phone</p> <p>Frequent conversation topics/ repeated words</p> <p>The apps you've linked to</p> <p>How often and where you log in</p> <p>In some cases, biometric facial data</p>	<p>Search history</p> <p>Shipping address</p> <p>Time spent looking at items</p> <p>Previous website/search engine</p> <p>Demographic information</p> <p>Payment details</p>	<p>Location and travel patterns based on where you connect with free wi-fi</p> <p>Journey history</p> <p>Payment information</p> <p>Marketing preferences</p> <p>Enquiries and complaints</p> <p>Personal information such as name, billing address, email, phone number when registering for customer accounts</p> <p>Photograph e.g. if you are applying for a young persons rail card)</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>Location</p> <p>Trophies, scores and rankings in games</p> <p>Information about connected devices</p> <p>Information about the other users you have interacted with</p> <p>Which services and software you use and for how long for; including how much you use the chat, what music you listen to while you game etc.</p>

# School used facial recognition illegally in canteen

YOUR DATA MATTERS



PA MEDIA

The school's cashless catering had previously been managed through fingerprint recognition technology.

## 'Rights and freedoms'

The ICO, in an announcement published on Tuesday, said the 1,200-pupil school failed to consult with parents and students fully before implementing the technology.

It said a letter was sent to parents in March 2023 with a slip for them to return if they did not want their child to participate.

But there was also no option to give consent to the scheme, meaning the school was wrongly relying on assumed approval until November 2023.

"Most students were old enough to provide their own consent," the ICO added.

"Therefore, parental opt-out deprived students of the ability to exercise their rights and freedoms."

The school was told it must improve how it used data protection impact assessments and was given a set of recommendations.

# Giving away personal data – Pros

Companies use our  
personal data to  
personalise  
services for us.



This can make life more convenient.  
For example: — ●



online supermarkets use our **addresses**  
to deliver our shopping



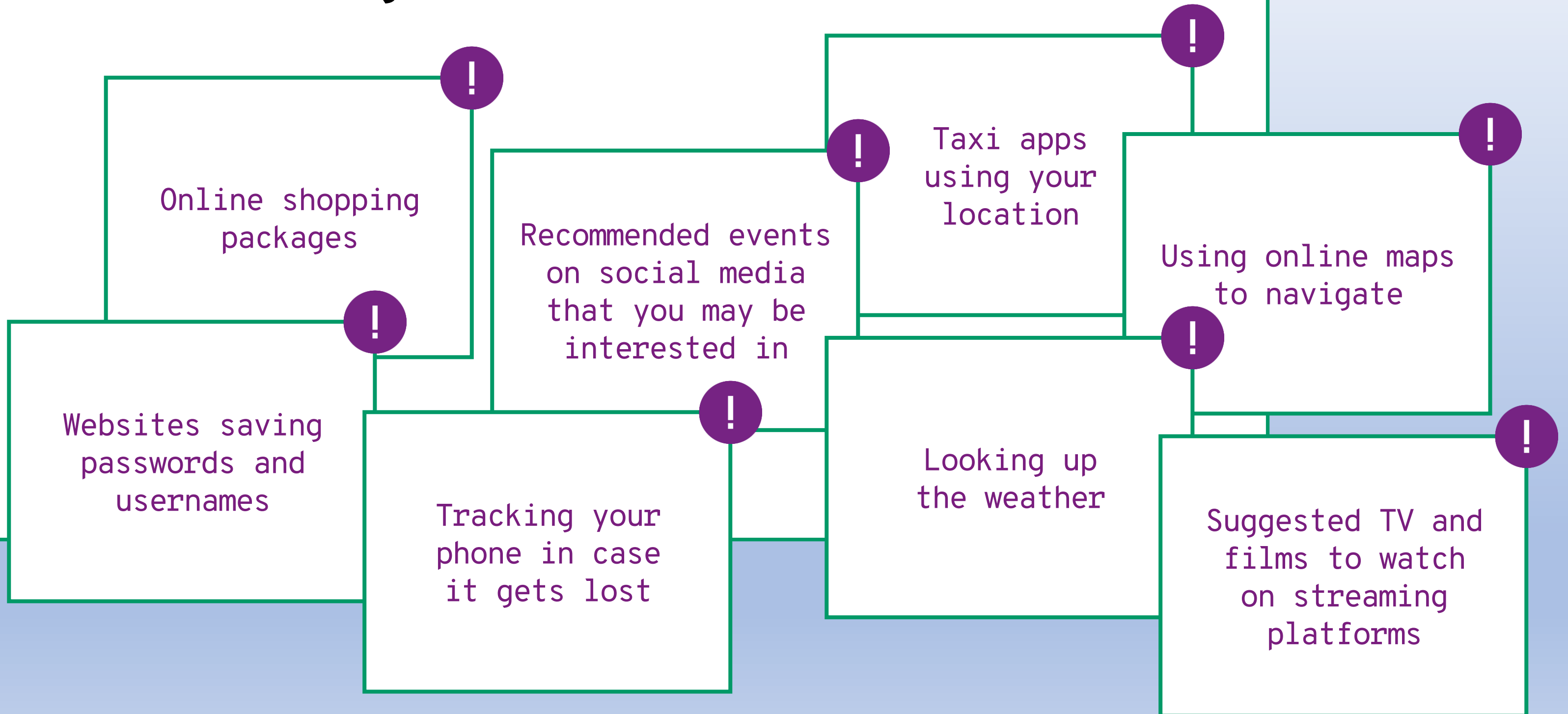
streaming platforms **remember** which  
**episode** we were up to, so we can  
resume easily






online maps can track our **locations**  
to send us directions.



# Challenge: How do you know your data is being collected?




# Giving away personal data – Cons

 Personal data  


**Discuss:**

What might be the cons of giving away personal data?


# Giving away personal data – Cons



Sometimes our personal data can be used in ways we don't expect or don't even know about.




Companies want to know the things people like and dislike, how they spend their time, and what they buy.




'Data brokers' track and analyse large sets of information including personal data, which they can sell to businesses, such as retailers.




# Giving away personal data – Cons



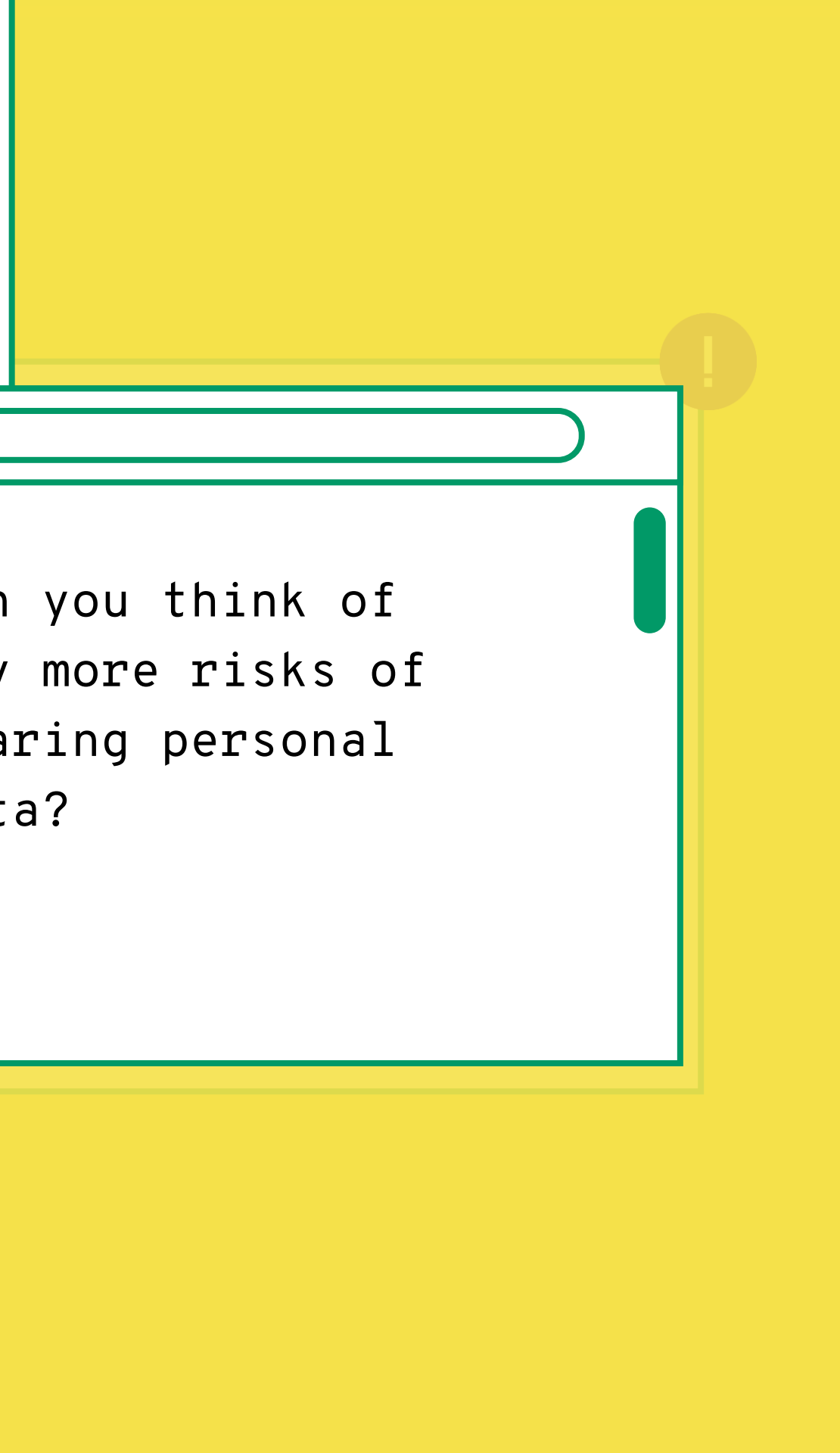
1. Why is this personal data so valuable to businesses?



2. How comfortable are you with your data being shared and why?



3. Can you think of any more risks of sharing personal data?



# Giving away personal data – Cons

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Challenge

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**Challenge:**  
What is GDPR and how does it link to the sharing of personal data? Is it a good thing there are more rules in this area? Why or why not?



Erin likes a  
climate change  
campaign page on  
social media



Erin checks into  
a climate change  
demonstration



Erin clicks on a  
link which takes  
her to an online  
blog about  
climate change

Erin's personal data is  
collected to build a profile  
of her interests



Erin likes a climate change campaign page on social media



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Erin clicks on a link which takes her to an online blog about climate change



## Erin's Personal Data



Websites and apps use our data to build a profile of our interests. This profile is used to show us targeted adverts that appeal to our preferences.

What kinds of adverts do you think Erin will see based upon her online activity?



Erin likes a climate change campaign page on social media



Erin checks into a climate change demonstration



Erin clicks on a link which takes her to an online blog about climate change

Erin's personal data is collected to build a profile of her interests



On her social media feed Erin sees videos advertising her local political party's work on climate change



When she goes online Erin keeps seeing adverts for *Eco-Warrior*, a new sustainable clothing brand

# Discuss:

1. Do you think websites and apps should be allowed to collect our data or would you prefer to keep it private?
2. Do you think it is right that organisations, such as political groups, can use our data to influence our opinions?

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3. What are the potential risks of collecting personal data?
4. What are the potential negative outcomes of targeted advertising? What are the benefits?

Challenge question:

What are the similarities between data rights and human rights?

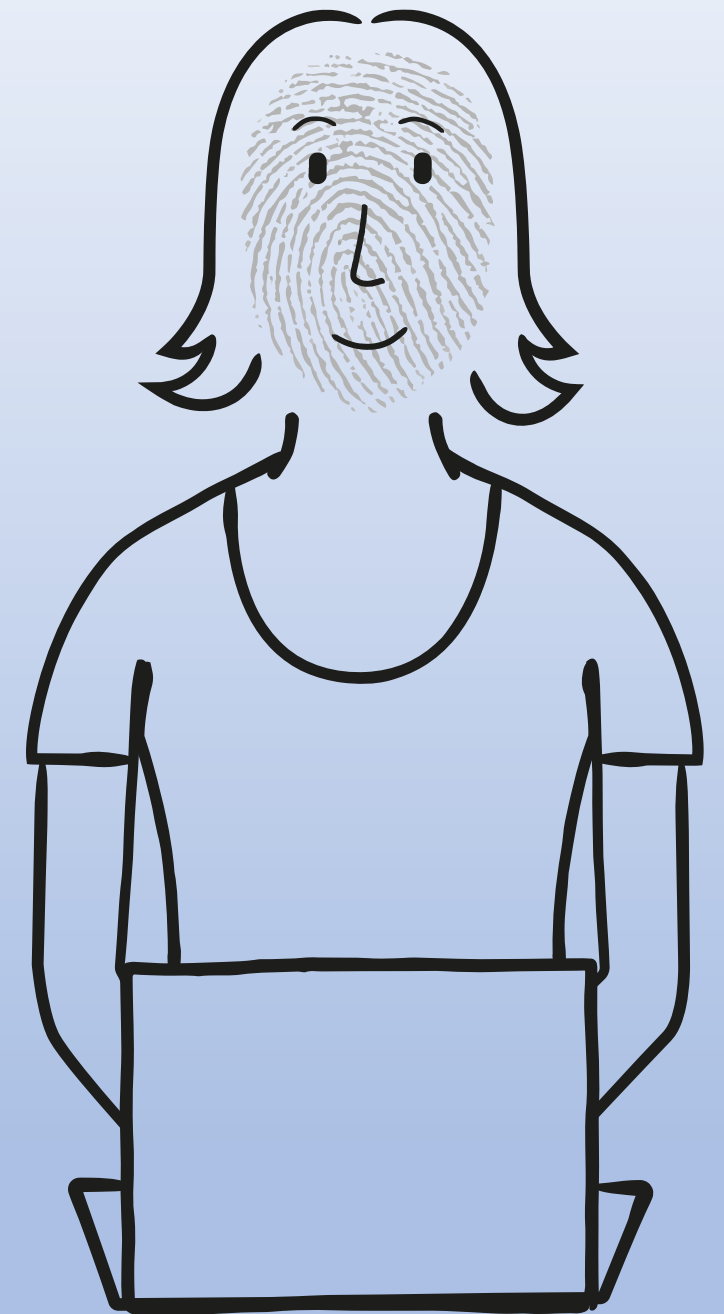
## Echo chamber

Erin's friend has posted an article on social media about how Covid-19 is spreading in a new way that people haven't yet realised.

Erin clicks on and reads the article. It worries her because she doesn't want to catch or spread Covid. She searches online and finds more articles about Covid but they all say different things about how you can catch or spread it.

Over the next week her social media feed is full of blogs and posts about Covid, which is starting to really stress her out.

Erin texts her aunt who is a GP. Her aunt explains that you need to think critically about what you read online and invites her to have a chat to discuss it further.



## Echo chamber

Erin's  
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people

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really

Erin texts her aunt who is a GP. Her aunt explains that you need to think critically about what you read online and invites her to have a chat to discuss it further.

### Echo chamber

This is an example of an **echo chamber**.

How does it come about?

What are the possible risks of online echo chambers?



# The ICO is here for you...

- You have the right to know that your data is being collected. You can ask to see the data that companies have collected on you, and you can ask them to delete it.

- Think before giving data away, such as your name, age, gender, email address. Consider where your data may end up and whether it will be kept secure.

- Check T&Cs (terms and conditions) before you opt in to giving away contact details or signing up to websites and apps.

- Check settings – there are things you can control, such as allowing notifications, location trackers and marketing emails.
- Go to <https://ico.org.uk> for help or to report anything that doesn't feel right.