



## What Would You Collect? (aka “Shark Tank”)

We’ve nicknamed this lesson “Shark Tank” because, like the popular TV show of the same name, it lets students pitch an idea to a potential “investor” (you!). This engaging activity challenges students to “invent” an online product in order to think about **what personal information they would collect and how they would use it** given the chance. This forces them to think about online privacy and data collection from an entirely different perspective. While it’s tempting to think of all the nefarious reasons websites and apps collect personal data, it’s important to remember that often it’s simply a matter of monetary survival. Remember, **personal data is the currency of the Internet**. Students understand this complex concept much better after this lesson.

Key Standards—Common Core ELA, 7th: W.7, W.7.2, W.7.2.a, W.7.2.b, W.7.2.d, W.7.2.f, W.7.3, W.7.3.a, W.7.4, W.7.8, SL.7, SL.7.1, SL.7.1.a, SL.7.1.b, SL.7.1.c, SL.7.1.d, SL.7.4, L.7, L.7.3, L.7.3.a, L.7.6. ISTE: 1d, 2d. CASEL: 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5e 5f.

## Learning Objectives

Students will...

- Learn to think like an inventor of a website or app.
- Consider the issue of online privacy from a different perspective.
- Share ideas for online privacy collection with their peers.



## Introducing The Lesson

Ask students to report on the results of their homework assignment: *What online privacy strategies did you find and/or implement on your family’s devices?* Lead a classroom discussion about some of the best ideas!

Next, ask students if they are familiar with a popular U.S. TV show called “Shark Tank.” If you are unfamiliar with this show yourself, it is a reality television series that originated in Japan in 2001. It shows aspiring entrepreneur-contestants making business propositions to a panel of “shark” investors who then decide whether or not to invest in the idea. Tell students that today they are going to play your version of Shark Tank.

## The Lesson

1. **Activity.** Tell students that you would like each of them to come up with an idea for a new website or app. This can be anything—from a make-believe site where users can order their own custom-made unicorn to an app that restricts drivers from texting while driving (these are actual ideas students have

## The Lesson, continued

come up with in the past). The purpose of this activity is for students to consider what personal information *they* would gather from users of their sites/apps, and how they would use that personal information to customize their service or to “monetize” it (make money). Tell students that as they think about what they are going to create, they should consider the following:

- *How do you want to customize the experience for your users?*
- *What information will you need to collect in order to offer this customization?*
- *How will you collect this information?*
- *How will you protect your users’ personal information?*
- *What if users don’t want to share their personal information?*
- *How will your site make money?*

2. Although it will be tempting for students to focus solely on the product or service offered by their site or app, remind them that the purpose of this activity is to **consider their own views about “personal information” when they step out of the role of a consumer and into the role of an inventor.**
3. Ask students to write a two to three paragraph “pitch” that they will deliver to you in class and remind them to use the vocabulary words they have learned in previous lessons (because your students have not had the lessons that proceed this one, the vocabulary words are attached). Distribute the instructions that follow.
4. Have students begin this assignment in class, assign unfinished work as homework. During your next class let students deliver their “pitch.” Remember, you are the “shark” investor and get to decide who has done the best job!

## Goal

Students will consider, from an entirely new perspective, the reasons why websites, social media sites, and apps collect personal data and understand what they do with it.

## Homework

If students have not finished writing their pitches in class, assign it as homework.

## “Shark Tank” Instructions For Students



Now that you’ve learned how and why websites and apps collect personal information from users, it’s your turn to think about what kind of information *you* would collect if you had your own website or app.

So for this episode of “Shark Tank” imagine you have created a brand new website or app (the service you offer can be something you think is really needed today **or** it can be entirely make-believe). The point is, you want users to sign up to use it. But, remember, people might be wary about providing their personal information to you. What will you do?

In two or more paragraphs, describe:

- Your site or service (**one or two sentences only**).
- How you will **customize** the site or service for your users.
- What information you’ll need to **collect** in order to offer this customization.
- How you will collect it.
- What you will do if users don’t want to provide their personal information.
- How your site will be “monetized” (make money).

Please use the vocabulary words you have learned including: **personal information, user-generated content or user content, cookies, web beacon, third party, geo-location or location data, IP address, etc.**

**Good Luck!**

## **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

This can include your name, address, email address, phone number, age, etc.

## **USER-GENERATED CONTENT OR USER CONTENT**

Any kind of media—video, pictures, images, blogs, discussion posts, audio files, etc.—that a user creates and posts.

## **COOKIES**

Small computer text files placed in your computer by the sites you visit. Cookies allow websites to “remember” your personal data.

## **WEB BEACON**

Tiny graphic image placed on a website or in an email that is used to monitor the behavior of the user visiting the site or sending the email. Often used in combination with cookies.

## **THIRD PARTY**

The word “party” is a legal term for an individual or a company. A “third” party is an entity *other* than you or the app/site you visit or use.

## **GEO-LOCATION OR LOCATION DATA**

Refers to physical location. Apps or websites sometimes use information from cellular, Wi-Fi, GPS networks, and Bluetooth to determine a user’s location.

## **IP ADDRESS**

An Internet Protocol address (IP address) is the address of your device. All devices connected to the Internet have a unique IP address.