

# Rights and personal freedoms

## Topic

Personal information and privacy

## Aims

- To allow learners to develop oral fluency through a series of discussion activities
- To allow learners to develop an awareness of the sharing of personal information and its implications

## Age/level

Older secondary  
CEFR level C1

## Time

60 minutes

## Materials

1. discussion cards from the UK Parliament's website:  
<https://www.parliament.uk/education/teaching-resources-lesson-plans/personal-freedoms/>
2. situation cards (one card per small group of learners)

## Introduction

This lesson focuses on the topic of personal freedoms and rights.

In the lesson, learners will take part in a series of short discussions relating to the rights of organisations to know and record personal data, and an individual's right to privacy. In the final activity, they will discuss who they support in situations where those rights may have been breached.

The activities in this lesson plan use discussion cards from the UK Parliament's website and expand on the teaching suggestions that accompany the cards.

## Procedure

### 1. Warmer (5–10 mins)

- Ask learners to brainstorm in groups what rights and personal freedoms they think they have, and which ones they would like to have but don't, or are limited, such as:
  - the freedom to wear whatever you want
  - the right to be treated equally whatever your gender, race, religion, etc.
  - the freedom to express your personal opinions and ideas publicly.
- Ask each group to report back to the class. Did any group suggest the right to keep your personal information and data private? If not, suggest it to the class and ask the learners how important this is to them.

<b>2. What should the government know? (10–15 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give each pair of learners a set of the discussion cards. You may want to explain the context of some of them, for example ‘What route do you take to school/college?’ refers to the use of CCTV cameras to follow citizens, and ‘What is in your bag/pockets?’ refers to stop-and-search measures.</li> <li>• Ask the pairs of learners to sort the cards according to which information they would be happy for the government to have. If they can’t agree or they think ‘it depends’, the card should go in the middle. Before starting, you may wish to introduce or remind learners of functional language for giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing or interrupting.</li> <li>• Now group the learners, putting two pairs together. Ask them to compare how they sorted the cards. Learners should discuss the cards they sorted differently and ones they put in the ‘middle’, and say why they feel it should be in one category or another or what the decision depends on.</li> </ul>
<b>3. What should others know? (15–20 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a class, brainstorm a list of organisations other than the government which hold personal information on people, such as the police, the healthcare system, an insurance company, the tax office, your school, an employer, your bank, your internet provider or social networking sites, e.g. Facebook.</li> <li>• Put learners in new groups. Now assign (or let learners choose) one of the organisations to discuss. Which of the information referred to on the cards should that organisation be entitled to? What are the advantages and disadvantages for the organisation and the public of having that information? What implications are there if that organisation has a database of that information? Are there any controls that should be in place?</li> <li>• After the groups have discussed their organisation, they can present their conclusions to the class. As the other groups listen, they should make a note of what they don’t agree with.</li> </ul>
<b>4. What else should we be able to keep private? (5–10 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For further work on the topic, learners can work in pairs and use the blank cards to write further ideas of personal information that sometimes people are asked to share, such as family medical history, political opinions, school performance records, etc.</li> <li>• They should then swap the cards they wrote with another pair and discuss which organisations they would or wouldn’t be happy to share that information with.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Our personal freedom (10 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell learners they are going to work in small groups to discuss situations related to possible infringements of people’s personal freedoms and rights. They need to decide who they support in each situation.</li> <li>• Hand out one situation card to each group and monitor as the groups discuss.</li> <li>• When they have finished, regroup learners so that in the new groups there is one learner who has discussed each of the situations.</li> <li>• Learners then share with the other members of their new group what their situation was and what conclusions they came to.</li> </ul>