Why do you see that specific video?
Algorithms, recommendations and the value of your data

Adaptable for the following subjects: Civic Education Technology, ICT, Media Education, Law and Economics.

Target Group	Students in lower secondary school (grades 7–8) and the first years of upper secondary school.
Topics	Recommendation algorithms, content personalisation, online behaviour tracking, time spent on platforms, economic value of attention.
Group Size	Standard class, approximately 20–25 students.
Pre-requisites and prior knowledge	Regular use of platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram or Netflix. Basic knowledge of the concept of personal data.
Learning objectives from the DataPro Curriculum	**A.1 – Awareness of monetisation** Understanding that platforms generate profit through users' data and targeted advertising. **A.3 – Critical evaluation** Reflecting on who decides which content is shown and for what purposes. **A.4 – Awareness of behavioural control** Understanding that platforms use data and algorithms to influence behaviour and increase usage time.
Additional specific learning objectives	Students will be able to: ● understand that what they see online is not random; ● recognise that likes, views and time spent are data used economically; ● explain how platforms make money thanks to users' time; ● reflect on the relationship between suggested content and personal behaviour; ● develop greater awareness in the use of digital platforms.
Duration	Two lessons (approximately 90–100 minutes)
Technical Requirements	Interactive whiteboard (IWB) or projector; digital devices; internet connection.
DataPro training materials and tools	**Worksheet "Why that specific video?" (Appendix I)**

Additional teaching materials	Video: Social Media Algorithms Explained
Suggestions for lesson implementation	**1. Introduction – 10 minutes** Guiding question: “Why do you think you see certain videos on TikTok or YouTube?” Students share their ideas. The teacher writes key words on the board (e.g. *likes, interests, friends, random*). **2. Video activity – 15 minutes** Students watch the video: “Social Media Algorithms Explained” (TED-Ed / CBC Kids News) Before watching, ask students to focus on: ● What is an algorithm? ● What kind of data does it use? After watching, quick check: ● What does the algorithm track? ● Why does it suggest certain videos? **3. Guided explanation – 10 minutes** The teacher reinforces key concepts: ● recommendation algorithms ● behavioural data (likes, watch time, scrolling) ● personalisation of content ● goal: keeping users engaged to generate profit **4. Main activity – Worksheet – 20 minutes** Students complete individually the worksheet: “Why that specific video?” Instructions: ● Work individually ● Reflect honestly on your real behaviour Focus of the activity: ● making personal data production visible ● connecting actions → data → platform decisions **5. Pair discussion – 5 minutes**

	Students compare answers in pairs: ● Are your results similar? ● Do you behave in the same way online? ● Do you think the algorithm “knows” you? **6. Class discussion – 5 minutes** Guiding questions: ● Do you think the algorithm influences what you watch? ● Who really decides what you see? ● Is your choice completely free? ● Why do platforms want you to stay longer? Teacher links discussion to: data → recommendations → attention → profit **8. Final assessment – 5 minutes** Quick recap questions: ● What is a recommendation algorithm? ● What data does it use? ● How do platforms make money from your behaviour?

APPENDIX I

Worksheet: Why do you see that specific video??

Name: _____ Class: _____

PART 1 – My experience

Write the last thing you watched on TikTok / YouTube / Instagram:

_____

_____

Why do you think it appeared?

_____

_____

PART 2 – My behaviours

Tick the boxes:

☐ I like videos
☐ I watch videos until the end
☐ I scroll quickly
☐ I comment
☐ I search for content

PART 3 – The data I produce

Every action produces data. Match:

ACTION	DATA PRODUCED
Like	
Watch Time	
Search	
Comment	

PART 4 – What happens next?

In your opinion, what does the platform do with this data?

☐ Shows similar content
☐ Keeps you on the platform longer
☐ Shows targeted advertising
☐ Other: _____

PART 5 – Who makes money?

Complete:

The platform makes money when I…

_____

Why?

_____

_____

PART 6 – Reflection

Do you feel influenced by suggested content?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don’t know

Explain:

_____

_____

PART 7 – My choice

Complete:

“To use these platforms better, I could…”

_____

_____

Syllabus Data Pro

Work Package 2

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