

Ad Detective

NAME _____

DATE _____

Directions

Read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow.

Keet was riding the bus and saw a man wearing a new pair of shoes from his favorite brand. He liked them but thought they'd look better in black. When he got home, he went online and found them in black at an online store, Zaps. They were pretty expensive so he decided to post a picture of them on his social media account to see what his friends would think. The next day, he started seeing ads for the exact shoes and for the online store he had visited. He saw the ads appear when he typed in a search, when he went to his favorite news site, and when he was scrolling through his social media feed. At first he thought it might've just been a coincidence, but when it kept happening, he started to wonder, why am I seeing this everywhere?

1. How did the advertising company know he was interested in those shoes? Or in that store?

The online store Zaps may have used cookies to track what he searched for. His social media app may have collected what he posted. Either of these companies may have shared this info with a third-party advertiser.

2. If Keet didn't want to be tracked by the advertising company, what could he have done differently?

He could have disabled cookies on his browser before he went to the online store. He could have reviewed the privacy policy for his social media app to see whether the content he posts is collected and shared. He could have stopped using the app or changed the way he used it.

3. Are you OK with using apps or websites that collect and share information about you? Does it matter what information they collect? Or whom it gets shared with? Why, or why not?

Answers will vary. Support students to identify specific pieces of information that they're OK with sharing and information they're not. Students should also weigh the benefits and importance of the specific device, website, or app in their thinking (social media app vs. online game, etc.)



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