NEWS LESSON

# Can a Government Help People Find Love?



## BEFORE YOU READ

### 1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would you let a friend choose a date for you?
2. Does having more choice make choosing easier?
3. What would make a dating app feel less tiring?

### 2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **introduces** | ☐ | A | say that you will definitely do something |
| 2 | **agency** | ☐ | B | brings one person to meet another |
| 3 | **values** | ☐ | C | money people pay to the government |
| 4 | **taxes** | ☐ | D | things that make you feel afraid or not calm |
| 5 | **promise** | ☐ | E | an office that does a special job for the government |
| 6 | **private** | ☐ | F | different things you can pick from |
| 7 | **worries** | ☐ | G | ideas about what is right and important in life |
| 8 | **choices** | ☐ | H | only for you, not for other people to see |

## 3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

### Singapore's government has launched a dating platform. Can a government really help people find love?

1 Many people use dating apps to meet someone new. They look at photographs, read short profiles and send messages. But after weeks of trying, they may still not find the right person. In Singapore, a group of government technology workers has created a different kind of dating service. It is called FirstDate. Instead of showing hundreds of profiles, it introduces one person at a time, so users can spend less time looking and more time getting to know someone.

2 FirstDate began as a project at Singapore's government technology agency, GovTech. It is being tried out with single public-service workers aged 21 to 35. Users answer questions about their interests, habits and values. The system then suggests one possible partner. Both people can decide whether they want to share their contact details.

3 This idea is very different from many popular dating apps. On those apps, people can keep on looking even when they have already found someone interesting. FirstDate tries to reduce that feeling of having too many choices. It gives people more information about one person and asks them to make a decision. The service also explains how it protects personal information, which is important when a government organisation is involved.

4 Singapore has another reason to be interested in relationships. Fewer children are being born, and the population is getting older. This creates worries about the number of people who will be working and paying taxes in the future. However, finding a partner is not the same as deciding to have children. Many young adults are concerned about the cost of a home, long working hours and the price of raising a family.

5 Some people like the idea of a dating service that focuses on shared values. Others believe the government should stay out of people's private lives. FirstDate is still a small experiment, and officials have not decided whether it will grow. A computer system may be able to introduce two people who like the same things. It cannot promise that they will enjoy their first date, or that they will fall in love.

Sources: Al Jazeera. Picture: AI illustration.

## 4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. The service has already produced several marriages. T F NG
2. The service is open to everyone living in Singapore. T F NG
3. Both people choose whether to share their contact details. T F NG
4. Users see one suggested partner rather than hundreds of profiles. T F NG
5. Singapore's population is getting younger. T F NG

## 5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

| experiment | habits | officials | partner | photographs | population | profiles |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

1. The service is only a small _____ , so nobody knows yet whether it will work.
2. Many countries now have an older _____ than they had fifty years ago.
3. On a dating site, you can read short _____ before you send a message.
4. Eating late and sleeping badly are unhealthy _____ .
5. Government _____ said that they had not decided what to do next.

## 6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. FirstDate _____ as a project at Singapore's government technology agency. (BEGIN)
2. The system _____ one possible partner for each user. (SUGGEST)
3. Officials have not _____ whether the service will grow. (DECIDE)
4. It cannot promise that they _____ in love. (FALL)
5. Yesterday I _____ a long message to a friend. (SEND)

## 7 Language focus: collocations

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some verbs go together with certain nouns. We say make a decision, not do a decision. Learn the pair together.

| do | keep | make | pay | spend | start | tell |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

1. After a long day, I don't want to _____ a difficult decision.
2. Many people _____ hours on dating apps every week.
3. You should _____ attention to the privacy rules.
4. Let's _____ in touch after your first date.
5. Many young adults wait before they _____ a family.

SPEAK

## 8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Would one carefully chosen introduction beat hundreds of profiles?
2. Would government involvement make you trust a dating service more or less?
3. What should people be able to decide without an app's help?

## 9 Role-play: should I try a one-match dating service?

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

**Student A · the friend who is tired of dating apps**

You have used dating apps for months and feel worn out. Your friend suggests a service that gives you one match at a time. You are curious but worried about privacy. Ask questions before you decide.

**Student B · the friend with the idea**

You read about a service that introduces just one person at a time. You think it could make dating less tiring. Persuade your friend to try it and answer their worries.

**Useful phrases**

I'm tired of scrolling through hundreds of profiles.
What if it picks someone I don't like?
I'd rather choose for myself.
Who'll be able to see my information?
It couldn't hurt to try it for a month.
Let's see how it goes.

**Afterwards, tell the class: did your friend decide to try the service, and why?**

ANSWER KEY

**2 Key words**

1 B · 2 E · 3 G · 4 C · 5 A · 6 H · 7 D · 8 F

**4 True, false or not given**

1 NG · 2 F · 3 T · 4 T · 5 F

**5 Vocabulary**

1 experiment · 2 population · 3 profiles · 4 habits · 5 officials

**6 Verb forms**

1 began · 2 suggests · 3 decided · 4 will fall · 5 sent

**7 Language focus**

1 make · 2 spend · 3 pay · 4 keep · 5 start

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