San Francisco bans facial recognition software

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San Francisco has become the first city in the USA to ban facial recognition software. The city has said police and other public departments cannot use the software. San Francisco already uses surveillance cameras for reading car number plates and police officers wear body cameras. There is facial recognition at airports. Many officials wanted to introduce facial recognition in the city to increase security. They said facial recognition technology would make it cheaper and faster for police to find crime suspects and identify missing people. An expert on information technology said: "A ban on facial recognition will make [San Francisco] frozen in time with outdated technology."

There are many opponents of the technology, which is being widely used in other parts of the world. San Francisco official Aaron Peskin called facial recognition a "Big Brother" technology. Big Brother is a character in the book "Nineteen Eighty-Four" by George Orwell. The phrase Big Brother is now used to describe attempts by governments or authorities to increase surveillance and "spy" on citizens. Mr Peskin said: "We can have security without being a security state. We can have good policing without being a police state." He added that: "Part of that is building trust with the community based on good community information, not on Big Brother technology."

Sources: *sky.com / foxnews.com / bbc.com*

Writing

The idea of Big Brother is scary. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

San Francisco / city / USA / facial recognition / software / police / airports / frozen / technology / character / Big Brother / 1984 / surveillance / spy / security / community

True / False

a) San Francisco is the first U.S. city to ban facial recognition software. T / F

b) There is facial recognition at airports in San Francisco. T / F

c) Officials said facial recognition increases the cost of policing. T / F

d) An expert warned about San Francisco having old-fashioned technology. T / F

e) There are very few opponents of facial recognition software. T / F

f) A writer called George Orwell wrote a book called "Big Brother". T / F

g) The phrase "Big Brother" means a country looking after children. T / F

h) An official said information was better than Big Brother technology. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

1.	**ban**	a.	establish
2.	**surveillance**	b.	extensively
3.	**introduce**	c.	confidence
4.	**identify**	d.	representative
5.	**outdated**	e.	observation
6.	**widely**	f.	watch
7.	**official**	g.	prohibit
8.	**spy**	h.	country
9.	**state**	i.	recognize
10.	**trust**	j.	old-fashioned

Discussion – Student A

a) What do you know about facial recognition?

b) What are the advantages and disadvantages of facial recognition?

c) Should facial recognition be everywhere?

d) Do you think police officers should wear body cameras?

e) How else can police find criminals quickly?

f) Do we have too much technology?

g) What happens to cities with outdated technology?

h) Would you like to see facial recognition in your town?

Phrase Match

1. police and other public
2. cameras for reading car
3. increase
4. frozen in
5. outdated
6. There are many opponents
7. widely used in other parts
8. Big Brother is a character
9. spy
10. building trust

a. of the technology
b. with the community
c. technology
d. on citizens
e. number plates
f. departments
g. in the book
h. security
i. time
j. of the world

Discussion – Student B

a) What do you think about what you read?
b) What do you know about Big Brother?
c) Why are people afraid of the idea of Big Brother?
d) Are you worried governments have too much information on us?
e) Do you worry that people are spying on you?
f) Is it a bad thing to live in a police state?
g) How can governments build trust in people?
h) What questions would you like to ask San Francisco's mayor?

Spelling

1. ban facial recognition twrasofe
2. police and other liucpb departments
3. to increase seucyrit
4. An exretp on information technology
5. ezonfr in time
6. eatddtou technology
7. There are many etnsppono of the technology
8. a thrareacc in the book "Nineteen Eighty-Four"
9. governments or uhiaerttois
10. spy on sitniecz
11. being a police ttsea
12. building trust with the cuinmtmyo

Role Play

Role A – Airports

You think airports are the best place for facial recognition. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't need facial recognition. Also, tell the others which of these places definitely do not need it (and why): schools, banks or shops.

Role B – Schools

You think schools are the best place for facial recognition. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't need facial recognition. Also, tell the others which of these places definitely do not need it (and why): airports, banks or shops.

Role C – Banks

You think banks are the best place for facial recognition. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't need facial recognition. Also, tell the others which of these places definitely do not need it (and why): schools, airports or shops.

Role D – Shops

You think shops are the best place for facial recognition. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places don't need facial recognition. Also, tell the others which of these places definitely do not need it (and why): schools, banks or airports.

Speaking – Facial recognition

Rank these with your partner. Put the best places for facial recognition at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- hospitals
- banks
- parks
- train stations
- airports
- schools
- prisons
- shops

Answers – Synonym Match

1.	g	2.	e	3.	a	4.	i	5.	j
6.	b	7.	d	8.	f	9.	h	10.	c

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	F	h	T

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.