WHAT IS A DATABASE

Explained to a 6 year-old

Think about a teacher entering grades into a computer program.

Abi Bouhmaida
@**forgoodcode**

When the grades are entered, they have to be stored somewhere, right?

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And you have to be able to go back to that place at the end of the year to make a report card for all the students by adding up their grades.

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You might even need to find out a particular student's score on an assignment on the fly if their mom comes to school.

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The place you put the data has to make it **easy to find again.** Otherwise, it's not much use.

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That place is usually a **database**, which is just a program that stores data in some format and provides a way to get it back out.

Some databases are very **simple** and store data in a file on the computer.

Other databases are really **big** and **complex** and store data far away on a server or even multiple servers.

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Servers are just big, fancy computers that some times have special parts.

Abi Bouhmaida
@forgoodcode