

Lesson Plan 1 What Is Identity?

Resources

Identity: I wouldn't be me if...

Slides 1-2

This lesson is about introducing the concept of identity and exploring what makes up our identity and how it is created.

Therefore, it is important that the classroom is a safe space where we can all share our views and ideas. Let's re-cap our class Safe Space agreement and / or watch the Safe Space film outlining the RADIO principles.



Learning Objectives

- To explore and understand the concept of identity
- To learn and understand the different things that make up our identity
- To reflect on what influences our identity and how it is created

Curriculum Mapping

RE

- Identity: when have issues of Identity mattered to me?
- Belonging: when has a community / family / clubs / groups / religion / unique skills mattered to me?
- Places: when has a space / place / sacred place / place of worship mattered to me?
- Ritual: when has a certain day of the year / month / week mattered to me?

PSHE

- Mental Wellbeing: maintaining a healthy self-concept
- Clarifying own values; including reflection on the origins of personal values and beliefs
- Self-improvement through constructive self-reflection

Citizenship

- Roles played by public institutions and voluntary groups in society, and the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities

Preparation

- Identity film downloaded (included)
- PowerPoint (included)
- Identity tree activity sheet printed and copied per pupil (included)
- Identity tree filled out by teacher
- A ball / or another object that they can throw to each other

Running time

50 mins

Topic Introduction I Wouldn't Be Me If... / 5 mins

Slide 3

Objective To begin thinking of parts of our identity

Activity 1

Activity 1 Ball game

Clear some space in the classroom and ask the students to stand in a circle.

Start with a ball / object and say 'I wouldn't be me if...' and complete the sentence with something that's an important part of your identity and that if it wasn't there, you wouldn't feel like you e.g. 'I wouldn't be me if...I didn't have brown skin / support Man U, I wasn't a Muslim, I wasn't English, I was unkind etc.

Then throw the call to somebody else in the circle who then has to complete the same sentence stem, 'I wouldn't be me if...'

Once somebody has had their turn and thrown the ball to the next person, ask them to fold their arms. This shows that they've had a go and ensures that nobody will throw the ball to them again.

The last person will throw the ball back to you. Once everybody has had a turn, the game ends.

If students struggle to think of things about their identity, you might need to help them with a few ideas.

Play the Identity film

Play the first scene of the Identity film again and pause, ask some of the following questions to the class:

Slides 5–8

- 1 What do you notice about the students in the film? Maybe they are all the same colour, they are different shapes, they all have backpacks etc.
- 2 Why do you think they are all the same colour? What do you think their colour represents? Maybe they all go to the same school, are the same age / religion / gender etc.
- 3 Why do you think that they are different shapes, what do you think the different shapes stand for? Maybe they are different rages, religions, nationalities, cultures, genders, sexualities, body shapes, have different personalities etc.
- 4 From what we can see from the film, the only thing that we can tell about the students in the film is that they're students, their colour and their shape. If you met some of the students in the film for the first time, what questions would you like to ask them to find out more about them and get to know them better? For example, what is your name? How old are you? What's your favourite hobby? What's your favourite subject? Etc.

Slide 9

Explain that all of the things that have just come up in the class' conversation e.g. age, school, race, hobbies etc. are all part of our identities.

- Explain that our identity is what makes us who we are.
- All the things that make us 'us'.
- Everybody's identity is unique, there are no two people in the world with the same identity, not even twins.
- Some parts of our identity might be the same as other people's, e.g. maybe we have the same colour skin as someone else, and other parts of our identity might be different to other people's, e.g. maybe we are good at different things.
- Our similarities and differences are things to be celebrated.

Objective To reflect on the different things that make up our identity and what factors influence our identity.

Game Stand Together If

Clear some space in the classroom and ask the students to stand in a circle.

Use the phrase, ‘Stand together if’ and then make a statement

- 1 ‘Stand together if you walked to school today’, and invite all the students who that’s true for to come into the centre of the circle.

Then ask them to return to the circle.

Repeat this with different phrases / statements listed below or include your own statements more relevant to your class and school.

‘Stand together if’

- 2 you are the oldest in your family
- 3 you speak more than one language at home
- 4 you enjoy spicy food
- 5 your parents / your grandparents came to the UK from another country

Process: Ask the class

- How was that?
- What did it feel like when you were in the middle? Did you like / dislike it?
- You can draw out themes about being in the majority / minority, being similar different etc.

Slide 12

Identity Tree: Part 1

Explain to the class that they will now be doing an activity to think a little bit more about their own identities.

Activity:
Identity Tree
worksheets

Hand out the Identity Tree worksheets

Ask the students to answer the questions on the presentation and fill in the leaves on the worksheet. Let them know that their answers are only for themselves and they don't have to share them with anybody else if they don't want to although you will be asking them to share some of their answers, if they would like to.

Slide 13

Questions on worksheet:

- Which people are important to me? (Family / friends / role models)
- Which places are important to me? (Area, city, my / my family's country etc.)
- Which beliefs, values or ideas are important to you? (Religious, non-religious, political etc.)
- What is your personality like? (Kind, creative, funny etc.)
- What do you do well and enjoy doing?
- What do I look like?
- What are you studying
- What job do you want to do / what job do you do?
- What gender am I?
- What is my sexuality?
- What groups do I belong to?
- What are your hopes for your future? (What type of life do you want?)
- What type of person do you want to be?

Teacher's own
Identity Tree

Slide 14

Pick some of the questions and ask the class if anybody would like to share some of their answers.

Affirm that things like family, beliefs, values, ethnic/cultural heritage, pets, hobbies etc. are all hugely important parts of our identity and contribute to making us who we are.

Identity Tree Part 2

Show the class an Identity Tree that you have completed for yourself beforehand.

Talk them through your answers to the questions on the roots of the tree, for example:

- My religion / beliefs / values beliefs, values come from... e.g. my family, a book that changed my life, somebody I met when I was young, an experience I had etc.
- My personality comes from... e.g. my parents always taught me to be helpful I have a lot of younger siblings so I've had to learn to be patient etc.
- My hobbies come from...e.g. my best friend loves rap so I listen to rap a lot, dancing helps me to feel calm and manage my stress / etc.
- My strengths and skills come from...e.g. I come from a sporty family so I've played a lot of sport / I'm just good at maths!
- My appearance comes from...e.g. my parents' genes!
- My dreams for the future come from...e.g. a teacher at school inspired me to want to be a teacher / I wanted to be a teacher like my mum etc.

Slide 15

Ask the class to think about where their identity comes from e.g. family, friends, community, culture, religion, the media, books, a life experience, education, a role model/influential person, genes, social norms etc.

Ask the class to complete the questions on the roots of the tree.

Slides 16–19

Process Ask the class some of the following questions:

- How was that?
- Does anybody want to share something that surprised you?
- What has had the most influence of shaping your identity?
- Which parts of your identity do you think you have more choice and less choice about?
- Do you think your identity would be different if you'd been born in a different country / family / culture? Do you think your identity would be different if you lived in a different city / went to a different school / had different friends?
- Who decides what your identity is?

Extension Questions

Slide 20

- Which parts of your identity feel the most important to you at the moment?
- Do you think that will change in the future? Why?

Plenary Reflection session / 5 mins

Slide 21

Key Question

Do you think your identity is something that you are born with or that is created once you are born?

Slide 22

The next lesson is about the different layers of our identity, how we see our identity and how other people see our identity.

Extension Activity Empathy Pairs

Following the Identity Tree Activity, put the class into pairs, ideally pairing students with people who are likely to be quite different from them.

Ask students to share where different parts of their identity came from with their partner.

Emphasise that they only have to share things that they are comfortable sharing, and if they're not comfortable sharing anything, they can just discuss how they found the previous activity.

Encourage students to ask one another questions but not to challenge or debate anything, this activity is about increasing understanding and not about agreeing or disagreeing with parts of others' identity.

Ask the pairs to consider the following questions:

- Were there any similarities between you?
- Were there any differences?
- Were you able to understand why parts of your identities were different?