

Aim: To explore the concept of identity and self-image

Learning objectives:

- To explore and define identity
- To explore our own sense of identity and the different facets to identity (appearance, opinions, thoughts, feelings, skills, etc)
- To explore ways in which we form or shape our identity
- To identify similarities and differences between ourselves and others

Resources:

A1 paper, felt pens, Inner/Outer Identity worksheets (Resource 1), strips of coloured card, glue.

Vocabulary:

Identity; characteristics; personality, attitude; beliefs; values; culture; conform; emotion; positive; negative; feelings vocabulary; unique; special

Intro – 10 mins

Explain to the class that over the next few weeks we will be exploring the theme of being 'free to be me' and today we are exploring identity. Before initiating the session you might wish to create a class contract that can be displayed and referred to each session, asking pupils to define their promises for how everyone will behave and treat each other during the sessions, particularly as they may be discussing sensitive issues. For example, 'we will respect everyone'; 'everyone is entitled to their own opinion' and 'there are no right or wrong answers'. Ask pupils to define the promises and display them on a large piece of paper somewhere central.

Discuss what we mean by the term identity and record answers on the board. Highlight some themes such as being unique, an individual, distinctive.

Activity 1: Brainstorming Identity – 10 mins

Place pupils into small groups of approx 5-6 and give each group a large sheet of paper (e.g. flipchart paper). Ask pupils to brainstorm what makes our identity, (e.g. our characteristics, personality, interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, culture, family, etc) and to explore where our identity comes from – who creates it? (our own choices, our family, culture, peers, media influences, etc).

Activity 2: Inner and Outer Identity – 20 mins

Ask pupils to work individually now to consider their own identity. Give each pupil a copy of the 'Inner and Outer Identity' worksheet and ask them to consider what makes them unique and an individual. Ask pupils to label the outline of the person on the one side of the sheet with everything their outer identity consists of (i.e. that which can be seen by the world) and on the other side their inner identity (i.e. the parts of them that are more private, hidden or not visible to the world). E.g. outer identity – looks, height, shape, talents, skills, age, gender, family, race E.g. inner identity – thoughts, feelings, dreams, values, hidden talents, faith, religion

Discussion Points:

- Which parts of my identity make me unique?
- Are there any similarities or differences between my identity and others?
- Are there parts of us which are the same for every person? (i.e. feelings, thoughts, fears, what makes us human)
- Are there ways in which we try to have a similar sense of identity to others? (e.g. dressing and looking the same)
- Why do you think this is?
- What happens when a person tries to fit in or CONFORM to how they think they should be in their outer identity? (e.g. dressing the same way as others) but it doesn't match their inner identity (e.g. their values and what they think is important)?

Activity 3: Feelings Ladder – 15 mins

In small groups, ask pupils to write as many 'feelings words' on the coloured strips of card, and order them from what they consider to be the most positive feelings to have, to the most negative feelings, sticking them onto a large sheet of paper in a ladder shape. The ladders should be kept as they will refer to them throughout the sessions to link pupil's awareness with their emotional state and develop an emotional vocabulary. You may wish to extend this activity by asking pupils to consider the impact feelings have on our identity and self-worth, or how our sense of identity affects our feelings.

Activity 4: (if time) The Sun Shines On – 5 mins

Play a game of The Sun Shines On, discussing the ways in which we are different and the same. For this game everyone needs to be seated on chairs in a circle, with one less chair than there are people. The person without the chair stands in the middle and says 'The sun shines on all people who....' and names something, such as has brown eyes, is wearing blue, ate breakfast this morning, likes science, etc. If the statement applies you must swap chairs with someone else, without sitting in the chair you just sat in or the one on either side.

Conclusion: Remind pupils that we have been exploring our sense of identity today, and ask them to consider, between now and the next lesson, ways in which they find it difficult to show their identity and if at times they notice themselves conforming to someone else's idea of what identity should be.

Opportunity for assessment:

- Most pupils should be able to:
- Understand the concept of identity and define aspects of their identity
- Explore how our sense of identity is formed and how it can be shaped by other influences
- Define aspects of their identity, including their inner and outer identity
- Understand ways in which people are different and similar.
- Utilise a range of emotional vocabulary and understand the difference between a positive and negative feeling
- Contribute to class and group discussions, verbalising thoughts and feelings.

Resource 1: Inner and Outer Identity

Name:..... Date:

Think about your identity – what makes you who you are. Consider your inner identity and your outer identity and label the outline below with all the different aspects that make you unique and special. Your inner identity consists of the parts of you which are not seen by others and that may be hidden or private, such as your thoughts, feelings, dreams. Your outer identity is made up of the parts of you that the world sees – your looks, interests, gender, race.

Inner Identity

Outer Identity

