



2.3 GO DEEPER: IDENTITY BOOK

Reflect on your identity



Time required	50 minutes
Adapted from	<i>Understanding Prejudice</i> , 2014, www.understandingprejudice.org Regent Park Film Festival, 2013.
Grade level	6 – 7 – 8
Resources required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A4 paper ■ Large, clear space for a warm-up activity ■ Identity booklets
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To understand the type of characteristics that make up identity. ■ To think about the components of our own and other's identity and understand that some aspects can be seen while others cannot. ■ To consider how identity is formed, influenced, and changes.
Procedure	<p>1. Circle of belonging – suggested warm-up activity</p> <p>Everyone stands in one large circle.</p> <p>After each of the following statements are read out, students step into the circle if the statement is true for them. They return to the original circle before the next statement is read out. (Select the statements from the following.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Step in if you have brown eyes. Return to the circle. ■ Step in if you are the oldest child in your family. Return to the circle. ■ Step in if you are an uncle or an aunt. Return to the circle. ■ Step in if you like music. Take one more step if you like rap music. Return to the circle. ■ Step in if you were not born in Australia. Now those not born in Tasmania step in. (Those born in Tasmania should remain.) Return to the circle. ■ Step in if your family engages in religious practice. Return to the circle. ■ Step in if you speak more than one language. Return to the circle.

- Step in if you live in more than one house. Return to the circle.
- Step in if you have a paid or volunteer job. Return to the circle.
- Step in if you play a sport outside school. Return to the circle.
- Step in if you believe that you are resilient/hopeful/kind/fair/empathetic. Return to the circle.
- Make up your own...

Turn to the person next to you and share anything you noticed or that surprised you.

2. Introduce the concept of identity

Discuss the inquiry questions:

- What makes up our identity?
- Which aspects of identity are visible from the outside and which ones are invisible inside?
- What are your values, strengths, skills and abilities? (a list of these is found in Teacher Notes and as a slide in Student examples).
- Which aspects of your identity come from family, culture, history, nationality, peers, economic or social status, education, media, and social norms?
- How does identity contribute to people being included or excluded?
- Which aspects contribute to being resilient?

Ask students to reflect on what categories or characteristics make up our identity based on the previous activity. Write their suggestions on the board.

You may wish to have the full list on screen in class.

3. Identity book - see template and instructions on following pages

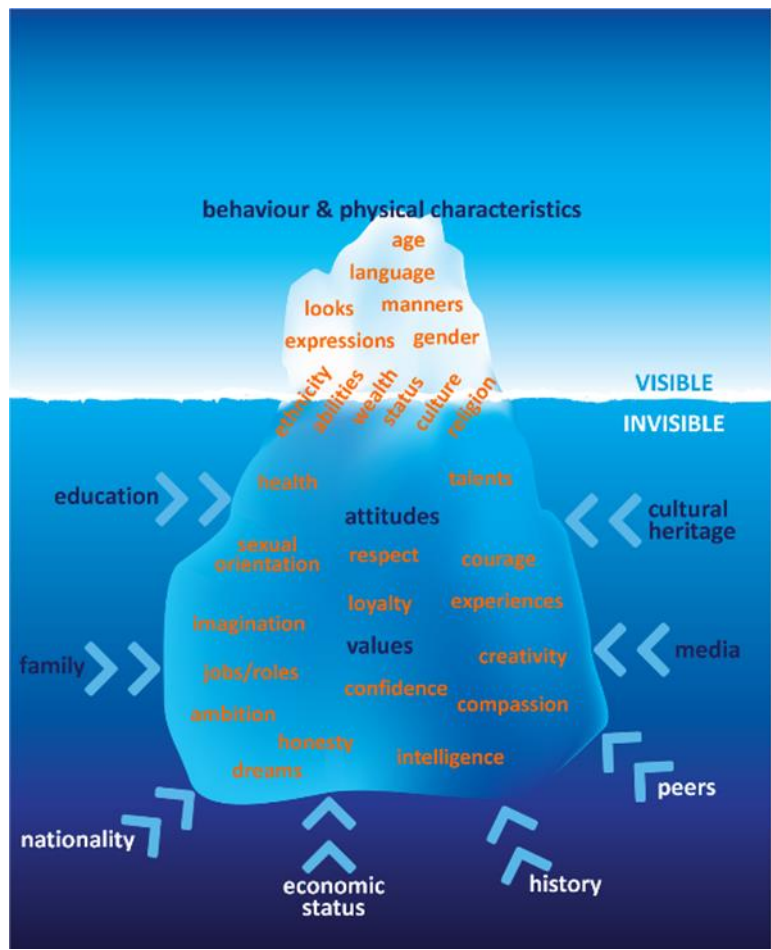
- Introduce the concept of an identity book where there are aspects that are immediately visible to others (such as looks and behaviour) and things that are invisible and people only discover them if they really get to know you (e.g., interests, family and values). Look at the example in the Student Examples.
- Students, in pairs, create their own identity book. They put on the front the things that they think other people will first see about them and on progressive pages the things that are harder for others to know. They use the identity characteristics list to help them think about what makes up their identity. They can use words or drawings to illustrate who they are. Working with a person they know well can help to develop a fuller picture. Some

	<p>students may prefer to put a loose page inside that can be shredded later.</p> <p>4. Pair discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Students share their books with a different person, perhaps someone they don't know well. What surprises you about this person? Students should keep their identity book as part of their folio. ■ Students discuss with their partners their impressions of one of the human "books". What things were they able to pick up about the invisible aspects? What assumptions were they making? <p>5. Whole class discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What influences who we are? Present your identity book and compare with other students' books. Draw out influences such as media, economics and culture. ■ What questions do you have about identity? ■ How is your identity changing this year from last year? What is influencing that? How are you exploring your identity? ■ What assumptions about the identity of others are you making? How might you be excluding or including others based on their identity? ■ How do different parts of our identity (e.g. age, gender) create differences in power?
<p>Teacher notes</p>	<p>Concepts of identity underpin why people include or exclude others. In helping to build an appreciation of diversity, it is important to help students understand what makes up people's identity.</p> <p>Characteristics that define us (see the table below) are also categories that people often use to stereotype others.</p> <p>Some aspects of our identity confer power over others. Some are relative (age, physical size), while others are social constructs (colour, gender, attractiveness).</p> <p>Some of these characteristics are visible, some are invisible, and some have both visible and invisible aspects (for example wearing a cross or a headscarf are visible aspects of religion). Many of these are created through social 'norms' such as peer pressure, media, or history.</p> <p>While these characteristics make up a unique self, they also form categories or groups where we belong and with which we identify. Teenagers are likely to be exploring their own identities in various ways: changing groups with which they identify, excluding and</p>

including different people, trying out roles, exploring emergent parts of themselves, trying to establish new types of relationships.

<p>Characteristics of identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ age ■ skin colour ■ country of birth ■ culture & religion ■ gender ■ sexual orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ health ■ personality ■ strengths & values ■ talents & skills ■ goals & dreams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ wealth ■ relationships & family ■ interests, hobbies, sports ■ languages spoken ■ school(s) attended ■ groups belonged to
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Identity iceberg A common way of representing visible and invisible identity characteristics is an iceberg. Use this image in class.



Character strengths

Each person will define their strengths in a different way. The following list is by no means exhaustive, but is used in Positive Education (see additional resources for slide).

- Creativity – use imagination, see and do things in different ways
- Curiosity – be interested, ask questions, explore
- Judgement – listen and think about all sides before making a decision
- Perspective – take a big picture view to give good advice
- Bravery – speak up for what you believe is right, even if it's difficult to do
- Perseverance – solve problems and don't give up easily
- Zest – be enthusiastic and energetic; love what you're doing
- Honesty – tell the truth, be true to what you know is right
- Social intelligence – be aware of others and how they're feeling
- Kindness – be concerned for the wellbeing of others and try to help them
- Love – accept love, give love; value your close relationships with others
- Leadership –organise others to get things done without being bossy
- Fairness – treat people the way you would like them to treat you; don't be biased
- Teamwork – like working with others and contributing to a group effort
- Forgiveness – let go when a friend hurts your feelings; give people a second chance
- Love of learning – learn new skills and broaden your knowledge
- Gratitude – be thankful for good things in your life and other people
- Sense of meaning – think about life and how everything is connected
- Self-control – be aware of your weak points and careful what you do and say when your emotions run high
- Humility – quietly show what you can do rather than bragging
- Appreciation of beauty – notice the beauty and feel delight, admiration and awe
- Prudence – be careful not to take unnecessary risks
- Hope – be optimistic, believing that good things will happen
- Humour – make others smile and laugh, focusing on the glass half full side

(Adapted from <https://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths>.)

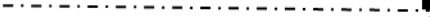
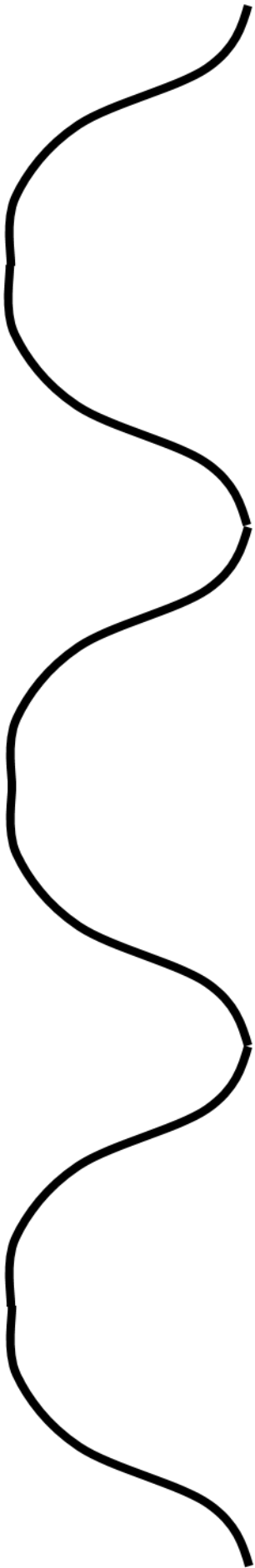
Identity book template

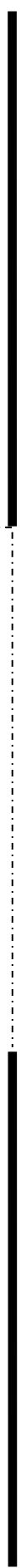
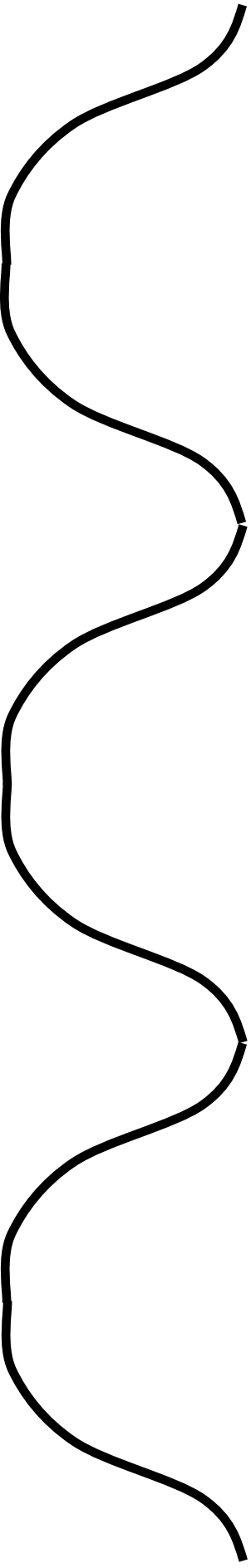
Instructions for Identity Book Template

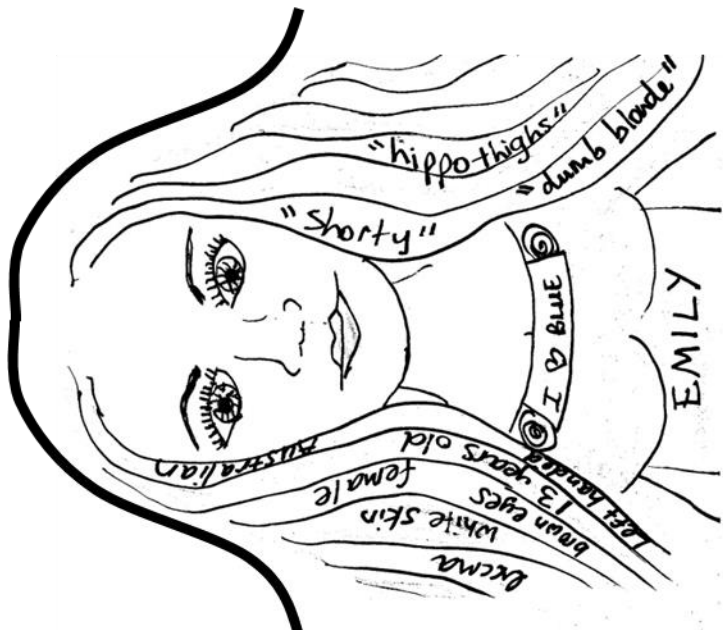
1. Copy/print out the page double-sided and fold it in half lengthwise along the solid/dashed line. You may use a simpler version if you wish.
2. Cut out around the heavily curved lines to form three “heads”.
3. Unfold the page and there will now be up to 12 book “pages” that can be drawn/written on.
4. Starting at the top right “page”, draw your face.
5. On the other pages on this side, you should write/draw less personal/more obvious things about yourself.
6. Turn over the book and use these six “pages” to write things about yourself that are more personal – they should still be things you are ok to tell people. Encourage students to think about and include strengths and strongly-held values as well as skills and abilities.
7. When finished, cut along the heavy straight lines at either end.

Before using the template on the next page, have a look at the examples on the following pages and this photo of an identity book.

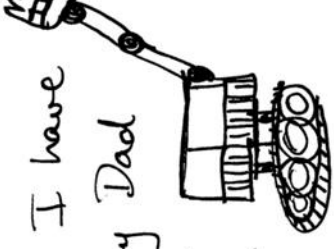
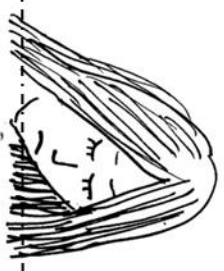









I can drive an
excavator (6 tonnes)
weld, drive a
forklift. I have
helped my Dad
build a
house.





I want to
become a
doctor but
everyone thinks
I am too dumb.




I like to watch
"friends".

I play the piano,
flute & ukulele!



I am OCD
I need everything
in its place.
I am not a
freak.



I have
broken my arms
6 times.



People think I
am accident
prone.



My parents
are divorced.

I live half of the
week with Mum
& half with Dad.

The year they separated
I moved to 6 different
homes.

I have a
boyfriend.

