



2A – Who am I? Challenge my assumptions.

Time required:

- 90 minutes.

Resources:

Part 1 (60 mins).

- Access to smart board/TV for sharing iceberg image, pens, pencils and erasers.
- [‘Iceberg’](#) image for the characteristics of identity and characteristic list.
- [‘Identity booklet’](#) template printed out for each student.

Part 2

- Access to [Stereotypes](#) video and a large screen TV (30 mins).

Aims:

- 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, changes and how it can contribute to people being included or excluded.
- To explore definitions and examples of stereotyping, prejudging and discrimination.
- To appreciate that we are likely to prejudge based on our own conditioning.
- To build capacity for questioning stereotyping, prejudging and social conditioning.
- To discover personal strategies that stop stereotyping, prejudging, and discriminating against others.

Teacher notes:

Concepts of identity underpin why people include or exclude others. This lesson links the idea that characteristics of identity can be used to stereotype us. In helping to understand diversity it is important to help students understand what makes up people's identity. Some aspects of our identity confer power over others. Some are relative (age, physical size) while others are social constructs (colour, gender, attractiveness).

Procedure:

Part 1 (60 mins)



Warm-up Activity – ‘Circle of belonging’ - understanding your own identity.

Everyone stands in one large circle. 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.)

- 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 like music. Take one more step if you like rap music. Return to the circle.
- Step in if you were born in Australia. Now those born in Tasmania stay in. (Those born in Tasmania should remain.) Return to the circle.
- Step in if your family are religious. Return to the circle.
- Step in if you speak more than one language. Return to the circle.
- (Make up more if you like).



Discussion - Introduce the concept of identity. Discuss the inquiry questions:

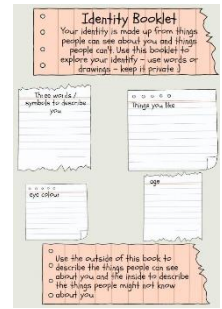
- What makes up our identity?
- Which aspects of your identity are visible from the outside and which ones are invisible and on the inside?
- What are your values, strengths, skills, and abilities?
- Which aspects of your identity come from family, culture, history, nationality, peers, economic or social status, education, media, and social norms?
- How does identity contribute to people being included or excluded?



Ask students to reflect on what characteristics make up our identity based on the previous activity. Write their suggestions on the board. Show the iceberg image on the big screen to scaffold the definition once students have shared their ideas or draw on the board as suggestions come through. This will help with the “Identity Booklet” activity.



'Identity Booklet' - Students are to create their own identity booklet using the printed template. They can use the identity traits lists to help them think about what makes up their identity. They can use words or drawings to illustrate who they are. They put on the front the things that they think other people will first see about them (such as looks and behaviour) and on the internal pages the things that are harder for other to know (interests, family, and values). Working with a person they know well can help them develop a fuller picture, or students may wish to work on their own. Some students may prefer a loose page inside that can be shredded later for privacy. Students should keep their 'Identity Booklet' as part of their folio.



Whole class discussion - Students share their books with a different person, perhaps someone they don't know well. What surprises you about this person? 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?

- 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?

Part 2 (30 minutes)



Activity – 'Challenge Assumptions'. What's going on?

This activity starts by showing a short video of a Muslim man carrying a large bag with people running behind him. A woman observer is looking worried. When students see this, they are likely to make assumptions – E.g. he is a terrorist, carrying a bomb. However, when the video is played to the end, it is revealed that he is not. This helps to set the scene for how it is easy to stereotype.

1. [Play the Stop stereotypes and discrimination video](#). Stop it at around 58 seconds (do not go over one minute). Students to discuss with the person next to them - What is going on here? Who are these people? What do you think is going to happen next?
2. Play the rest of the video. Think-pair-share – How are you thinking now? What surprised you?



Discussion - Whole class discussion.

- How many of you thought the man was a terrorist? Why did we think that way?

It is useful to remind students that a stereotype is a generalisation or a way of thinking (usually part of a cultural norm); prejudice (or prejudging) is an attitude based on a stereotype; and discrimination is a behaviour that we choose to do. Discrimination is always wrong and sometimes against the law.

Tease out notions of stereotyping and prejudging and the fact that we all do it because of our social conditioning and the effects of the media.

- How can we change this?
- How can we challenge our assumptions?
- Discuss examples of stereotypes.



'Warm up' activity - Ask students to call out words to complete the following sentence prompts.

Blondes are...

Teachers are ...

Italians eat...

Teenagers are ...

Muslims are...

Is this the case? Why do we believe that? If we believed it, how would we be likely to act towards that person? (e.g., If students believe teachers are arrogant and controlling, how would they act?)



Activity – 'Thinking Routine' activity.

We can become aware of prejudging and stop ourselves acting out of prejudice. We can check ourselves to notice our thinking, challenge our assumptions, and be open and curious to finding out more about the individual, rather than labelling them as a part of a group.



Students, working in pairs, design a "thinking routine" that will help them when they are prejudging/stereotyping; something that will make them think about a person in a different way and act differently. It should be catchy and memorable. What are the key steps? Is there a visual image?

An example would be to "red flag" themselves every time they label a person or a group and ask if it can really be true. i.e. "He's a ..." or "Americans are so..."



Reflection - Ask students to share their thinking routine to help others try different techniques.

Useful definitions:

Identity: is the characteristics or traits that describe us including our age, skin colour, religion, sexual attraction, country of birth, values, gender. Some of these traits are visible and some are invisible. Many are created through the media, culture, family traditions and values, and the rules of the standard of behaviour or norms in society.