

Lesson Plan: Understanding Identity in a Multicultural World

Grade Level: 9-12

Subject: Ethnic Studies

Duration: 60 minutes

Lesson Title: *Exploring Identity: Who Am I? Who Are We?*

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Define and differentiate between personal, social, and cultural identity.
 2. Reflect on their own identity and the factors that shape it.
 3. Recognize the diversity and intersectionality of identities in their community.
 4. Begin to understand how identity connects to larger social systems and histories.
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Materials Needed

- Chart paper or whiteboard
 - Markers
 - Handouts with reflection prompts
 - Sticky notes
 - Projector (optional, for visuals or videos)
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Lesson Outline

1. Warm-Up Activity: "What Shapes Us?" (10 minutes)

1. Write the word "*identity*" on the board and ask students:
 - What does identity mean to you?
 - What are some factors that shape a person's identity?
2. Encourage students to call out ideas, and create a word web on the board (e.g., family, culture, gender, hobbies, language, etc.).

Purpose: Activates prior knowledge and sets the stage for deeper discussion.

2. Mini-Lecture: Defining Identity (10 minutes)

1. Provide definitions for:
 - **Personal Identity:** Traits, beliefs, and characteristics unique to an individual.
 - **Social Identity:** Group memberships (e.g., race, religion, gender, socioeconomic status).
 - **Cultural Identity:** Shared traditions, values, language, and customs from one's culture.
2. Introduce the concept of **intersectionality**, explaining how different aspects of identity overlap and influence experiences.
3. Optional: Show a short video (3-5 minutes) on identity and intersectionality (e.g., a clip from Kimberlé Crenshaw's work).

Purpose: Builds foundational understanding of identity as a complex and layered concept.

3. Individual Reflection: "My Identity Map" (15 minutes)

1. Hand out worksheets with prompts like:

- What are 3-5 words that describe you?
 - What roles do you play in your life (e.g., sibling, athlete, student)?
 - What aspects of your identity are most important to you?
 - Are there parts of your identity you feel are misunderstood or underrepresented?
2. Students will create a visual “identity map” to explore the different dimensions of their identity.

Purpose: Encourages self-reflection and personal connection to the topic.

4. Group Activity: "Identity Gallery Walk" (15 minutes)

1. Have students write one aspect of their identity on a sticky note (no names).
2. Post the sticky notes around the room.
3. Students walk around, read the sticky notes, and discuss with a partner:
 - What patterns or differences do you notice?
 - How do these identities reflect our community?

Purpose: Promotes empathy and highlights the diversity within the class.

5. Wrap-Up Discussion: Connecting Identity to Society (10 minutes)

1. Facilitate a class discussion with questions like:
 - How do external factors (e.g., media, laws, education) influence our identities?
 - Why is it important to understand others’ identities?
2. Emphasize the importance of respecting and valuing diverse identities in creating inclusive communities.

Purpose: Links personal identity to broader societal contexts and builds awareness.

Assessment

- **Formative:** Observe participation in discussions and group activities.
 - **Summative:** Collect and review the “identity maps” for completeness and thoughtfulness.
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Extensions/Adaptations

- **For more time:** Incorporate an activity where students create a “Cultural Identity Collage” using magazines or online images.
 - **For deeper analysis:** Assign a short reading on identity in a historical or sociopolitical context (e.g., James Baldwin or Gloria Anzaldúa).
 - **For differentiation:** Allow artistic or written responses for the identity map, catering to varied learning styles.
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This lesson provides a foundational exploration of identity, fostering self-awareness and mutual respect among students.