

Chalk It Up

Who Am I? - Activities

Teachers and Parents:

Activities in this section are focused on the notions of 1. **Identity**, 2. **Self esteem** and 3. **Being in control**.

These notions will be defined so there is a shared understanding at the start.

Students will consider

- the many aspects of their identity.
- the uniqueness of their identity.
- different ways that people define identity.
- how a person's identity develops.
- self-esteem as a product of values and beliefs.
- how they can have control over their future.

1 . Identity

Exercise 1a

For ages 12+

Who am I? Outer Identity

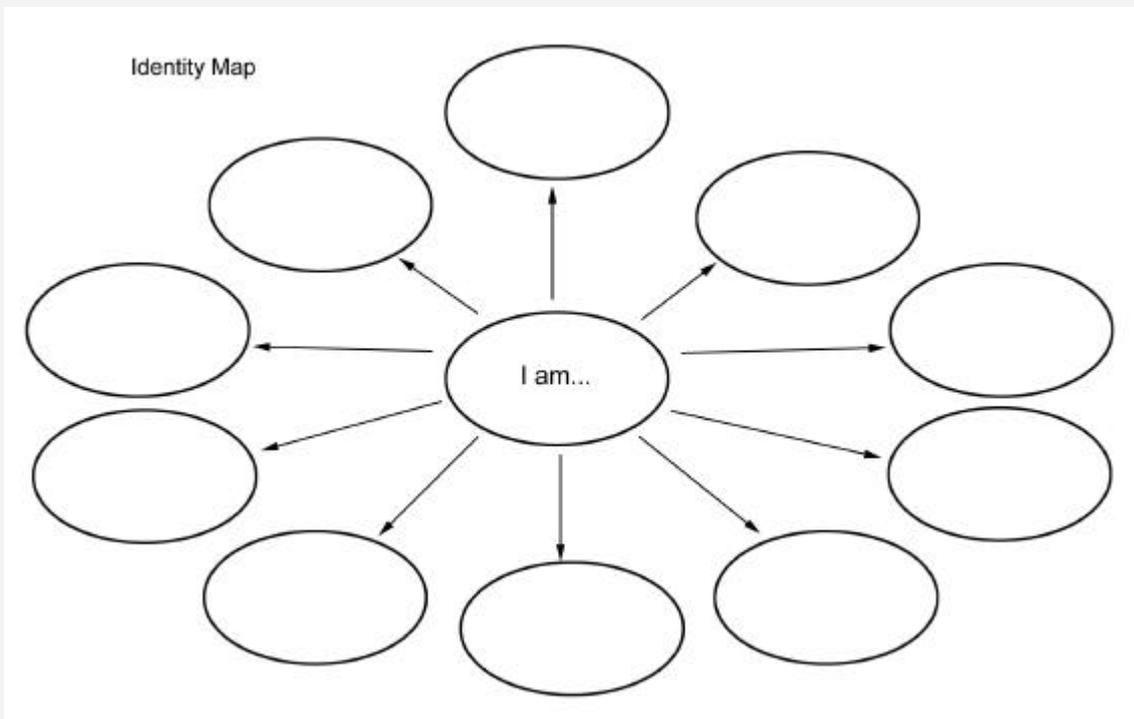
That's a top question. Your identity is developed as you grow up relating to particular people in particular places. You identify as part of your family because that is what you have learned to become.

You identify as Australian because you are a citizen

When you start at school you identify as a student.

If you join a sports team you take on "team member" as part of your identity.

Complete this mind map to answer it about yourself.



Identity Map

Now look at what you've written. We can call this your *identity* or *your sense of who you are*.

These are some identity terms:

girl / boy
member offamily
male./ female
son / daughter of ...
brother / sister of...
grand son / daughter of
.....'s friend
only child

student at ...
niece / nephew of...
cousin of ...
athlete
Australian
sailor
working class
immigrant from ...

musician
Christian / Buddhist / Muslim
Aboriginal person from..
farmers' child
Chinese
scout or guide
adopted child

Add anything that you need to make the mind map of your identity clear.
Remember that this is about how you see yourself.

Exercise 1b

For ages 12+

If you're working with others:

A If you're willing to show your mind map, move around the group and look for anyone who has the same as you.

Do you think this is possible? Give reasons for your answer.

B Find the 2 people whose identity is most similar to / most different from yours.

Does the result surprise you? Explain why.

Exercise 2

For ages 12+

Who am I? Outer Identity Symbols

Our society recognises a person's identity in a number of official ways. For example:

birth certificate
passport
voter registration

1. Which other ones can you think of?

2. Which ones do you have?

Sometimes people wear badges or custom-printed T-shirts that, incidentally, make statements about their identity. Eg a badge that says ' footy rules'.

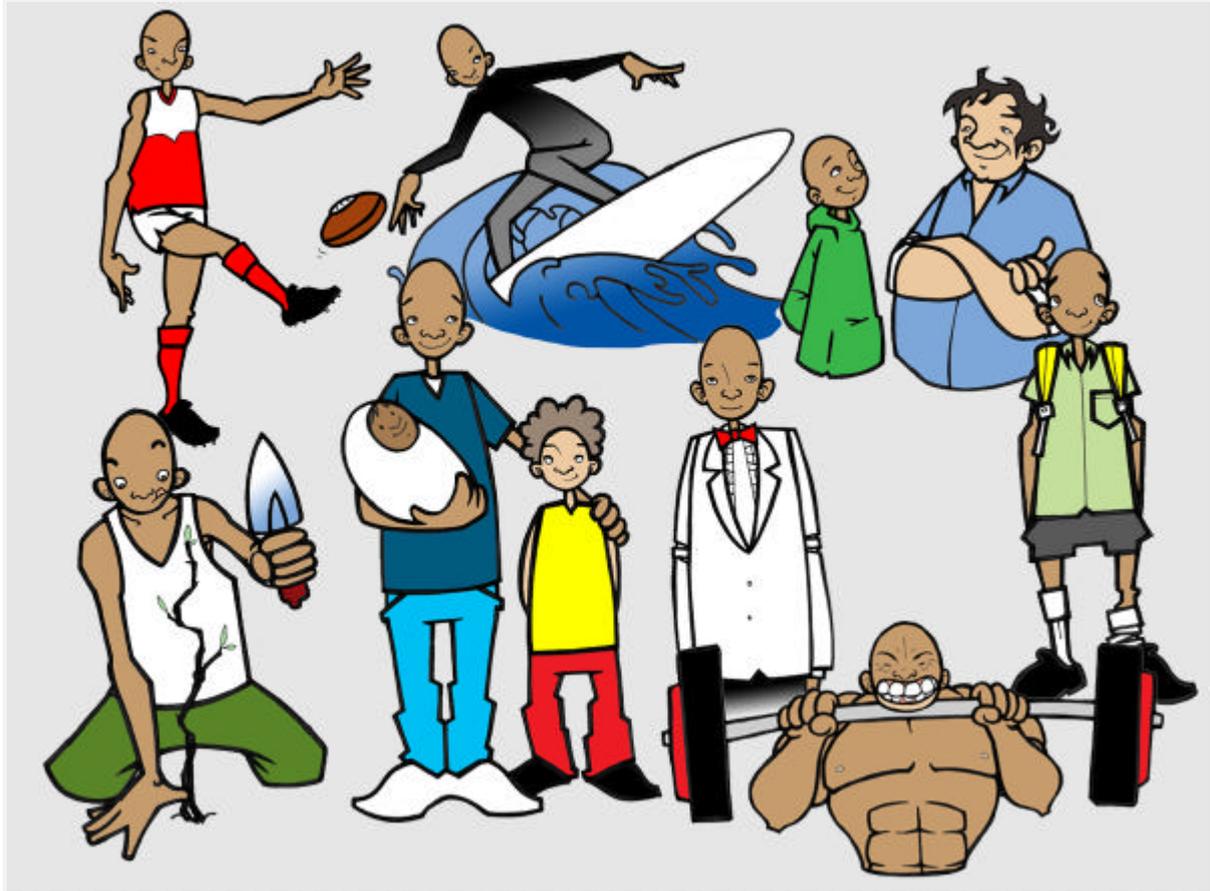
3. - Design a badge or T-shirt that makes a statement about your identity.

Developing identity

Exercise 2a

For ages 12+

What identity do you think this person might have 'owned' at these stages of his life?



Exercise 2b

For ages 14+

- How has your identity changed over the years? (Forget your changing hair colour or your piercings)
- Look at some photos of yourself in the past.
- Can you remember how you saw yourself at an earlier stage in your life? This is not so easy to do.
- Try to recall that past identity.
- Is that still part of the way you see yourself?

Exercise 3
For ages 12+

Who Am I? Inner Identity

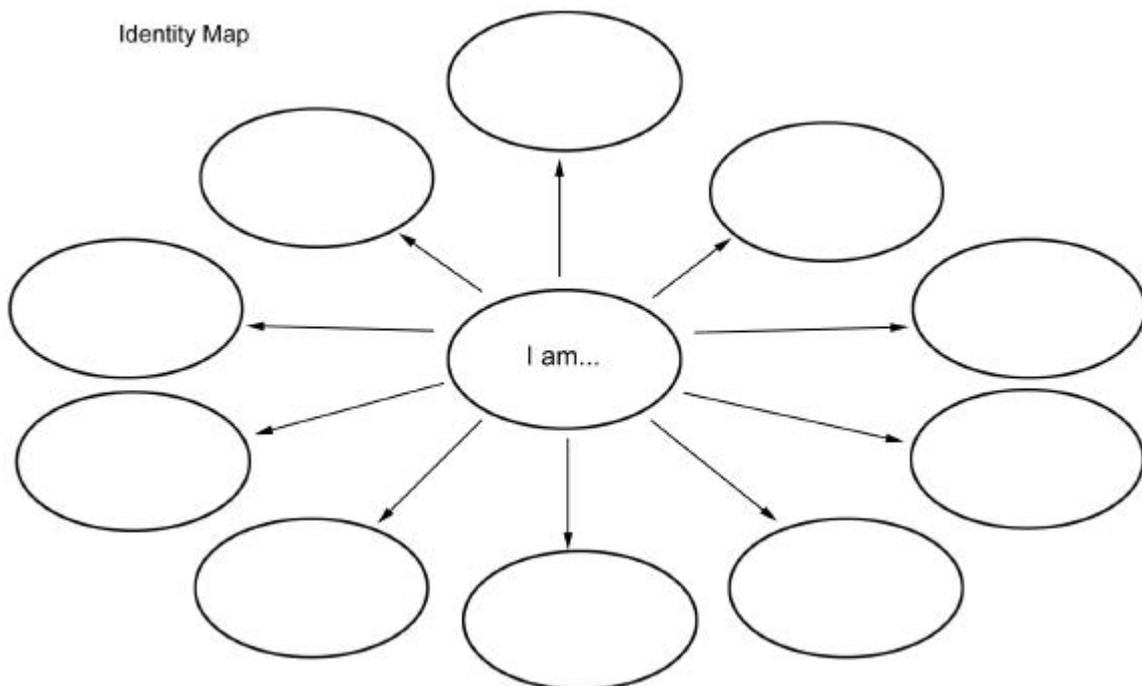
This activity is designed to raise awareness of how we perceive ourselves and others.

Your inner identity is more about the way you feel, how you act and what you think and say. This stuff is a lot more subtle and hard to identify.

It's about

- personality
- cultural background
- feelings and thoughts about ourselves and others
- emotional responses to life
- how we respond and deal with stresses and challenges
- how we communicate
- how we respond and deal with others in our lives
- how connected we feel to other people
- our friends and family
- our relationships

**If you were to do an identity map again it would look a whole lot different.
Why don't you try it?**



Refer to **some** inner identity terms on page 5

Identity Map

These are **some** inner identity terms:

girl/ boy	very verbal	artistic
out-going	quiet	logical
energetic	noisy	traditional
affectionate	athletic and physical	avant guard
distant and cool	friendly	confident
quick to anger	approachable	
shy of large groups	simple in my thinking	emotional
a lone-wolf	not confident	talented
lacking in natural talent	hard working	short of energy
unhappy a good deal	positive about myself	happy most of the time
reliable	trustworthy	a good friend
a gossip	can't keep a secret	loyal
I swear a lot	I like animals more than	I hit people sometimes
I can talk to all people	people	I love animals
		I prefer computer games

Exercise 4 - Research

For ages 12+

Identity and Family Origin

Developing our identity is not always straightforward.

A child who grows up in an adopted family might choose to connect with their biological family at some time.

This could cause some confusion in their identity, if they discover that they are a son/daughter or sibling to another group of people.

In history, people have been forced to hide part of their identity because of the negative treatment they feared. In Australia some Aboriginal people have had that problem.

Identity - **Sally Morgan** (author)

First go to the website at the Fremantle Arts Centre

Fremantle Arts Centre Press website - Reading Notes

<http://www.facp.iinet.net.au/myplacenotes.html>

"In 1982 Sally Morgan travelled back to her grandmother's birthplace. What started out as a tentative search for information about her family, turned into an overwhelming emotional and spiritual pilgrimage." FACP site

Read these lines from **My Place**, an autobiography by Sally Morgan

My Place: Fremantle Arts Centre Press

ISBN 186368 278 3

Winner of the 1987 Australian Human Rights Award for Literature and the 1990 Order of Australia Book Prize,

Bibliographical Information , Background to My Place, 2 interviews. (cont)

My Place – Sally Morgan

Chapter 22

"I was very excited by my new heritage. When I told Jill that evening what mum had said, she replied, "I don't know what you're making a fuss about. I told you years ago Nan was Aboriginal. The fact that Mum's owned up doesn't change anything."

'Jill, it does mean something to have admitted it. Now she might tell us more about the past. Don't you want to know?'

'Yeah I guess so, but there's probably not much to tell'

'But that's just it, we don't know. There could be tons we don't know. What other skeletons are lurking in the cupboard?'

'We all felt shy and awkward about our new-found past. No one was sure what to do with it, or about it...'

'I wanted to do something positive. I wanted to say, "My grandmother's Aboriginal and it's a part of me, too." I wasn't sure where my actions would lead, and the fact that Nan remained singularly unimpressed with my efforts, added only confusion to my already tenuous sense of identity.'

My Place – Sally Morgan
Chapter 22

Exercise 4a

For ages 14+

a. Sally felt positive about her new identity, even though she found it confusing.

Which parts of your own identity do you feel most positive about?

b. Jill wondered about *skeletons lurking in the cupboard*.

Check the meaning of this expression and then ask your family about any (ancient) skeletons that might be lurking in your family cupboard.

Exercise 4b

For ages 15/16

a. Sally Morgan was born in Perth in 1951.

From your knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal issues, suggest why Sally's family might have been 'shy and awkward' about their Aboriginal identity.

b. Do you think it's possible that some Aboriginal people might feel the same way in 2003? Give your reasons.

Identity, as You Get older

As your sexuality is developing, it is quite common to be confused about your identity. You might be bothered by the terms gay, lesbian, heterosexual and bisexual and worry that you don't seem to fit neatly into any of those gender groupings.

The good news is that people don't fit neatly into any categories of identity. You are unique in a world of diverse billions of people. That's OK.

In extreme cases, even identifying as **human** can be a problem.

There have been reports of abandoned children brought up in the care of animals. Can you imagine the confused identity of those individuals?

Exercise 5

For ages 14+

John Ssabunnya

If you are interested in reading about John Ssabunnya:-
BBC's Sue Nelson: "*John was fed and sheltered by monkeys*"

"John Ssabunnya, aged 14, was abandoned as a two-year-old in the dense jungle of Uganda to what seemed certain death....

But a colony of African Green monkeys came across him and adopted the real-life Tarzan as one of their own.

He learnt their mannerisms, became adept at climbing trees and lived on a diet of fruit, nuts and berries for the next three years....

In 1991 a tribeswoman saw him scavenging for food with the chimps and reported it...

When villagers first found the boy and attempted to take him away, the terrified youngster, hurled sticks at them and hid up a tree.

His monkey guardians put up a ferocious fight to prevent the tribesmen taking him away, believing they were protecting one of their own.

John was abandoned when his mother was murdered in 1988.

The naked boy was caught and taken to the Kamuzinda Christian Orphanage...

For the last eight years, he has been taught to speak, has learned human ways - and as he began to utter his first words, it was discovered he had a fine singing voice...

He has now joined the 20-strong Pearl of Africa children's choir..."

Sue Nelson

Read the full story on the BBC site at

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/466616.stm>

Who Am I? Identity symbols

In our society there are a number of official ways that a person's identity is recognised:

For example: birth certificate
passport
finger print records (if you misbehave)

Which other ones can you think of?

Which ones do you have?

So, you have a driver's licence. Congratulations.

Does being a driver make up an important part of your identity?

Perhaps it does, especially if you haven't had your P plates for long.

But that might change when you've been a driver for a long time.

Exercise 6a

For ages 12+

Sometimes people wear badges or custom-printed T-shirts that, incidentally, make statements about their identity. Eg a badge that says 'footy rules'.

Design a badge or T-shirt that makes a statement about your identity.

Exercise 6b

For ages 12+

If you're working with others:

Make an exhibition of all your badge and T-shirt designs and invite other groups to see them.



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