

Identity - Self, Community, and Empathy

What is the relationship between our stories and our identity?

An interdisciplinary Unit

LESSON - PART 2 - Identity Box/Collage

For The New Mexico Holocaust Museum

Grade Level:

Middle school; can be adapted to upper elementary or high school.

Subject:

English/Language Arts; Art, Health, History

Rationale:

Dorothy Adams Greene wrote a narrative about her experiences during and following her work in 1947-1949 Germany; she also kept a scrapbook with artifacts, photos, and items of interest and importance to her. These primary sources are one way we learn about her, as well as about post-war Europe.

We can also share what is important about us. Students will make an Identity Box or notebook collage where they pick 10 symbols to represent their life right now. They are allowed to include photographs or objects that represent important people, animals, places, mementos, treasured gifts, symbols of personal strength, goals, dreams, struggles, beliefs, or deep secrets. Then they are asked to reflect on what they discovered about themselves in creating the project. The goal is to have students consider the key question: **What is the relationship between our stories and our identity?**

Our identity influences how we approach our learning, and life. The purpose of the box/folder is to allow students to share something of themselves that the class might not otherwise get to see, something more than might ordinarily come through in a classroom. These identity pieces are intended to reflect some of the deepest roots of our personal interests and history, in all of their complexity, and to help bring those into our learning space. While much of what you bring is likely to reflect fullness and joy, you may also want to include important items that reflect more difficult or challenging aspects of your heritage or personal family background.

Key Question(s):

- What is the relationship between our stories and our identity?
- How can our identity be reflected through art?
- How does understanding ourselves support our learning about others?
- How can we use mixed media to artistically deepen our understanding of our personal context of history, society, and culture?

Educational Outcome(s):

- Describe the use of diverse images, symbols, words, and objects to signify identity.
- Define and explore cultural and personal identity.
- Create an identity box/folder collage with representation of external and internal identity.
- Celebrate students' own identity.
- Understand the power of knowing and sharing parts of yourself can support you in a healthy self- concept, break down barriers, demystify stereotypes, and humanize others' stories.

Teacher preparation:

Gather materials and supplies

Provide copies of:

- [Identity Survey](#)
- [Identity Box Discussion/Reflection Questions](#)
- [STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT](#)

Pre-Lesson Work:

- Identity work, especially when used in conjunction with Holocaust study, should consider 'Safely in, Safely Out' [Guidelines](#)

Lesson details:

- Students may have already completed Identity writing. Build on that if appropriate.
- Allow time in class as needed to plan, create, and share; these work times can take place over the course of several class periods

Materials:

You will need:

- A cardboard box (shoe boxes work well) OR a folder or composition book.
- Pens, markers, or paint
- Newspapers, magazines, photos
- Paper
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- A photo or drawing of yourself

Common Core Standards

New Mexico Core Arts Standards:

Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding

New Mexico Health Education Standards:

Content Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health. Students will:

5-8 Benchmark 4: demonstrate ways to communicate care, consideration and respect of self and others:

5-8 Benchmark 5: demonstrate communication skills to build and maintain relationships

9-12 Benchmark 2: analyze how interpersonal communication affects relationships

9-12 Benchmark 4: demonstrate ways to communicate care, consideration and respect of self and others

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Speaking and Listening Standards 6–12

6-12 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly

HANDOUTS This document will ask you to make a copy. This will allow you to make changes and 'own' the Handouts for your class. The activities you choose to do will be at your discretion.

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