



I Am Unit

Grade 8 • Ages 14-16

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 10 minutes
Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

Before class, create an Identity Circle as described in the activity to model for students. You could also draw the model on the board.

RAK Journals

[Kindness Concept Posters:](#)
Respect, Self-Care

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.
SL.8.1

Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3,
GLE.2, EO.a; Reading, Writing and
Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a

SEL: Self-awareness

[Learning standards key](#)

Identity

Students will explore their the concept of identity and apply it to themselves to create an identity chart.

Lesson Background for Teachers

5th Grade Unit: What Influences Us

Developing a healthy identity and self perception is an integral part of mental health and well-being. Students ages 10-13 are at a critical period where they are detaching from the identity in the home and forming their identity through peer relations and the world around them. Navigating this can be overwhelming and confusing for many students.

Article: Education.com, Identity Development:
<http://www.education.com/reference/article/identity-development/>

Key Terms for Students

Consider writing key terms on the board before class to introduce vocabulary and increase understanding.

RESPECT Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

SELF-CARE Taking care of yourself through kind words, actions and thoughts.

RESPONSIBILITY Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community and environment

IDENTITY The characteristics and associations you use to define yourself.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Having a partner to move around the circle with if the activity is challenging or confusing.
- Note cards with the written questions to help them track on the activity.
- Discussing the questions in small groups after they finish the activity.

RAK lessons teach kindness skills through a step-by-step framework of **Inspire, Empower, Act** and **Share**.

The **Share** step in the first lesson of each unit is intended to set the tone for teaching kindness.



The RAK paradigm is the framework for teaching and building kindness skills.



Resources

Psych Central article: Your Teens Search for Identity <http://psychcentral.com/lib/your-teens-search-for-identity/>

How to build your personal identity: <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/psychology-how-to-build-your-personal-identity.html>

Share (3 mins)

Tell the person next to you what you think is your strongest personality characteristic. (friendly, quiet, kind, strong, etc.).

Inspire

What Is Identity? (10 mins)

Identity is who or what makes a person who they are. That's a pretty broad statement. Let's think about what that means. When you think of yourself, what are the kinds of things that make you "you"?

Write brainstormed ideas on the board. Examples might include:

- Where you're from.
- How you look.
- People you know
- What you believe.
- Groups you belong to
- What are your views?
- What are your opinions?
- How you see the world

Empower

Identity Circles (10 mins)

We are going to start with an activity where you identify different parts of who you are. Take out your RAK journal and draw a large circle in the middle of a piece of paper and write your name in it. Then draw smaller circles around the larger circle, in each of the smaller circles write a word that describes your identity. If something is more important to your identity, you may make that circle a bit bigger, if it has a smaller impact, you may make that circle a bit smaller. For example, if your heritage is very important to you, then write that in a larger circle. Or maybe it is being a great soccer player or jazz saxophonist, or being a sister or brother, a child, a grandchild. If wearing mismatched socks is part of your identity, maybe you want to write that in a smaller circle. You choose!

Draw a model on the board and fill in the circles with your own identity as you talk so that the students have an example to follow.

Have student share or post their identity circles.

Wrap Up (5 mins)

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from either the evaluation or reflection questions as discussion, writing or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

- What is identity?
- What are some of the things that make up someone's identity?
- What are the things that make up the biggest circles in your identity?

Reflection

- If you were to take all the things in your bubble and make a list from the most important to the least important parts of your identity, what would that order be?
- What did you notice about the things that were the same and different in your and other people's identity circles?
- Do you think in order to be close to someone you need to have similar identities? Why or why not?

Summary

Many things go into making us who we are. Life would be boring if we were all the same, but sometimes we feel judgmental of people because of their identities. By understanding ourselves and other people, we can gain an appreciation for our differences, which creates a kinder world.



Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

Celebrate who you are today. Write on your hand, "I am..." and fill in the blank. If you don't feel comfortable writing on your hand, you can write it somewhere you will see it often, like on your notebook.

Kindness in Action

Make an identity circle with the people in your home. Write your family name or address in the middle and in the other circles, all the things that you connect with and make up your identity together.

