

UNIT 1 IDENTITY Primary level

Me in my community



1.1 This is what I like

I am a boy/I am a girl and what I like and do is okay

1.2 My personal symbols (coat of arms I)

This is what I am

1.3 This is our coat of arms (coat of arms II)

We are strong as a group because we are individuals

1.4 Individuals and groups

Strengths of individuals as potential for society

Unit 1: Key concept – “Identity” (for primary level)

Background information for teachers: how do students’ self-perceptions influence their identity, their participation in groups and their view of society?

“Identity” in a psychological context relates to self-image (a person’s mental model of him or herself), self-esteem and individuality. Gender identity is an important part of the concept of identity. It dictates to a significant degree how an individual views him or herself, both as a person and in relation to others, and therefore also dictates the potential he or she can bring to a group.

“Identity” in a sociological context focuses on the concept of role behaviour. In this respect, the individual discovers his or her identity through the learning of social roles and his or her personal experience in these roles.

However, “identity” is commonly used to describe personal identity – all the things that make a person unique. Meanwhile, sociologists often use the term to describe social identity, or the collection of group memberships that define the individual.

It becomes evident that identity is very important in different areas. If identity is considered here in the framework of EDC and HRE, it has a specific character: if people have clarified their own position they are capable of supporting each other individually and in groups. This is a lifelong process and one which is continuously changing. The clarification of one’s identity or finding one’s identity therefore has to be supported from an early age. This should not take place through didactic means but through offering individuals possibilities to find themselves, with all the advantages and disadvantages which that entails. An open and democratic state can only function if individuals can defend others without losing themselves in the process.

The aim of education for democratic citizenship is to support the development of competences in three areas. This unit has the following competence profile:

Competence in ...		
... political analysis and judgment	... the use of methods	... political decision making and action
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Toolbox support

In this unit the following tools from the students’ toolbox will be used. The teacher must decide if some or all of the students need additional preparation to be able to work with these tools.

- 0 Researching in libraries
- 0 Researching on the Internet
- 0 Carrying out interviews and surveys
- x Interpreting images
- 0 Mind maps
- 0 Creating posters
- x Holding exhibitions
- x Planning and giving presentations
- 0 Preparing overhead transparencies or a PowerPoint presentation
- 0 Writing newspaper articles
- 0 Putting on performances
- 0 Holding debates

Unit 1: Identity

Me in my community

How do students' self-perceptions influence their identity, their participation in groups and their view of society?

Lesson title	Learning objectives	Student tasks	Resources	Methods
Lesson 1: This is what I like	The students discover their own and others' abilities and knowledge. They become aware of the effects of gender stereotypes.	The students write down their own preferences and behaviour in four categories. They share their answers with other students and reflect on them.	Paper and pens, printed copies of the handout ("I like and don't like" table).	Individual and group work, plenary discussion.
Lesson 2: My personal symbols (coat of arms I)	The students enhance their self-esteem by recognising and valuing their positive aspects.	The students create their personal symbols which will be part of a group coat of arms. They ask themselves questions about their own perception of themselves and use the strengths identified in lesson 1. The students form groups as a pre-requisite for lesson 3.	Tables from the previous lesson, printed copies of the coat of arms (two per student), coloured pens, scissors.	Individual work, forming of groups.
Lesson 3: This is our coat of arms (coat of arms II)	The students become aware of the potential of their individual strengths that they bring to a group. They agree on a name and motto for the group.	In groups of four, the students explain their personal symbols to the other members of the group. They create a joint coat of arms and agree on a name, a motto and a common symbol for it. The students present their coats of arms to the class.	Copies of the coat of arms from the previous lesson, coloured pens, glue.	Group work (in fours) and a group presentation.
Lesson 4: Individuals and groups	Through discussion, the students understand that their individual strengths have potential within a group. They understand the concepts of teamwork and division of labour. They can identify groups in society where different strengths have to be combined in order to be successful.	The students talk about their strengths and relate them to other experiences in situations outside of school. In a brainstorming session, they identify situations where different abilities are necessary for the success of the group.	Blackboard or flipchart.	Plenary discussion.

Lesson 1

This is what I like

I am a boy/I am a girl and what I like and do is okay

Learning objectives	The students discover their own and others' abilities and knowledge. They become aware of the effects of gender stereotypes.
Student tasks	The students write down their own preferences and behaviour in four categories. They share their answers with other students and reflect on them.
Resources	Paper and pens, printed copies of the handout ("I like and I do" table).
Methods	Individual and group work, plenary discussion.

Lesson description

The teacher introduces the topic by asking questions such as "What activities do you like doing?", "What activities don't you like doing?", "What activities are done by girls?" and "What activities are done by boys?" The teacher waits for the students to think about possible answers and then acknowledges their answers.

As a second step, the teacher gives the students a copy of the handout, paper and pens. The students have to fold the handout in half and use only the top part of it for the moment. The teacher then gives the following instructions to the students:

- Write down whether you are a girl or a boy.
- Write down five things you like doing and do.
- Write down five things you do but don't like doing.
- Write down five things you don't like doing and don't do.
- Write down five things you don't do but would like to.

Indicate next to each thing you wrote down whether you think it is okay for your sex to do it (if you are a boy, whether this is okay for a boy to do, if you are a girl, whether this is okay for a girl to do).

When the students have finished, the teacher asks them to walk around the class and share their answers with five other students. They record these students' answers on the bottom part of the handout.

The teacher asks the students to come together and sit in a circle. A plenary discussion then takes place using the following questions as a starting point:

- What do you think of your classmates' answers? Were you surprised?
- What are the things that only you can do?
- Which of the things your classmates do impressed you most?
- Do you see any common ideas in the things that students like doing but don't do?
- What happens if a girl does boys' things? Or if a boy does girls' things?
- How would your family members answer the questions?
- Why do we answer the way we answer? Why do we think that some things are only okay for girls to do and some are only okay for boys to do?

As a last step, relate the questions to issues of EDC and HRE:

- What happens if someone doesn't know about the things you like doing and do?
- What happens if someone doesn't know about the things you don't like doing but do?
- Who decides what a girl can do and what a boy can do?
- What happens if what boys and girls can do is restricted?
- Do you think that the roles will stay as they are? Was it always like this?

Extension: the lesson can be extended by focusing on the question of what students don't do but would like to do. The teacher tries to find solutions together with the students on how these things could be tried out in the classroom context.

Lesson 2

My personal symbols (coat of arms part I)

This is what I am

Learning objectives	The students enhance their self-esteem by recognising and valuing their positive aspects.
Student tasks	The students create their personal symbols which will be part of a group coat of arms. They ask themselves questions about their own perception of themselves and use the strengths identified in lesson 1. The students form groups as a pre-requisite to lesson 3.
Resources	Tables from the previous lesson, printed copies of the coat of arms (two per student), coloured pens, scissors.
Methods	Individual work, forming of groups.

Information box

In European tradition, a coat of arms, more properly called an armorial achievement, armorial bearings or often just arms for short, is a design belonging to a particular person (or group of people) and used by them in a wide variety of ways. Historically, coats of arms were used by knights to be able to tell them apart from enemy soldiers. In Continental Europe commoners were able to adopt burgher arms. Unlike seals and emblems, coats of arms have a formal description that is expressed as a blazon. In the 21st century, coats of arms are still in use by a variety of institutions and individuals (for example several universities have guidelines on how their coats of arms may be used in order to protect their use).

The art of designing, displaying, describing, and recording arms is called heraldry. The use of coats of arms by countries, states, provinces, towns and villages is called civic heraldry.

Lesson description

1. The second lesson starts by forming the students into groups of four. It is recommended to form the groups using a group-forming game, such as handing out matching cards in sets of four or pictures in sets of four, etc. The students' task is to find their other partners and form the group.
2. Next, the students should sit together in their groups. Each student receives a printed copy of the coat of arms. Another copy of the coat of arms is placed in the middle of the table. There are four sections on the coat of arms and the students should select one section each. They should write their names in pencil on the copy in the middle of the table. On their own copy, they should start cutting out their personal piece of the coat of arms.
3. The teacher should then ask the students to think about what personal symbols they could use to represent themselves. "This is what I am" should be the motto for this task. The extended message of this task could be "This is what I bring to the group". For this, the teacher should ask the students to take out the tables they produced in lesson 1. They can get some ideas from the columns "I like doing and do" and "I don't do but would like to". They now have to find symbols that represent their strengths to draw into their section. The following questions could be of help:
 - How do you perceive yourself?
 - What do you need?
 - What are you capable of doing?
 - What do you regret when you think about your life?

Lesson 3

This is our coat of arms (coat of arms part II)

We are strong as a group because we are individuals

Learning objectives	The students become aware of the potential of their individual strengths that they bring to a group. They agree on a name and motto for the group.
Student tasks	In groups of four, the students explain their personal symbols to the other members of the group. They create a joint coat of arms and agree on a name, a motto and a common symbol for it. The students present their coats of arms to the class.
Resources	Copies of the coat of arms from the previous lesson, coloured pens, glue.
Methods	Group work (in fours) and group presentation.

Lesson description

Continuing from lesson 2, the students discuss the symbols they have produced and share their thoughts. The teacher then asks the students to perform the following tasks:

- Explain your symbol(s) to your group members;
- Glue all parts of the symbol(s) onto your coat of arms;
- Find a common symbol for your group (centre), a motto for your ideas (top flag) and a name for your group (bottom flag).

The teacher should tell the students that decisions have to be made together in order that everyone can identify with the decision.

The completed coats of arms are then presented to the plenary session by a group member and are displayed alongside everyone else's on the wall.

Lesson 4

Individuals and groups

Strengths of individuals as potential for society

Learning objectives	Through discussion, the students understand that their individual strengths have potential within a group. They understand the concepts of teamwork and division of labour. They can identify groups in society where different strengths have to be combined in order to be successful.
Student tasks	The students talk about their strengths and relate them to other experiences in situations outside of school. In a brainstorming session, they identify situations where different abilities are necessary for the success of the group.
Resources	Blackboard or flipchart.
Methods	Plenary discussion.

Information box

A discussion (an exchange of arguments, from the Latin, *discussio*, i.e. argument) is a specific form of verbal communication between two or more persons in which one or several issues are addressed – i.e. discussed – with each side presenting their arguments. A discussion should be held in a spirit of mutual respect. A good style of discussion requires the speakers to allow and even encourage views and opinions other than their own to be expressed, considering them carefully instead of rashly rejecting them. Personal qualities such as serenity, composure, and politeness will work to the advantage of both sides. In the best case, a discussion will lead to the solution of a problem or a compromise that everyone involved can accept.

In modern societies, discussions are a civilised – a non-violent – means of handling controversy and dealing with conflicts of interests and objectives. Conflicts are therefore not suppressed, but solved. By learning and practising their discussion skills, students learn a basic element of achieving and maintaining peace in society.

Lesson description

The students sit in their groups with a flipchart in front of them.

They are given the task to undertake a three-step discussion (see also student handout):

- Think about the strengths you drew or wrote down on your coat of arms and write them all down on the flipchart.
- Discuss in which situations these strengths could help your group. Think of examples and write them down.
- As a third step, think about situations outside of school. Where could these strengths and abilities help you? As an individual person? Within a group?

When the students have finished, they form a circle to discuss the results in a plenary session.

It is the teacher's task to steer the discussion in such a way that the students grasp the concept of using individual strengths and abilities as source of power within a group.