

Lesson 1

Views on choices and identity

Whose view do I agree with?

This matrix sums up the information a teacher needs to plan and deliver the lesson.


Competence training refers directly to EDC/HRE.

The **learning objective** indicates what students know and understand.

The **student task(s)**, together with the **method**, form the core element of the learning process.

The **materials checklist** supports lesson preparation.

The **time budget** gives a rough guideline for the teacher's time management.

Competence training	Clarifying personal standpoints and choices.	
Learning objective	Through our choices, we tell others something about who we are, about our identities.	
Student tasks	The students choose a quotation and give reasons for their choices.	
Materials and resources	Three copies of  materials for teachers 1.1, with the quotations cut into separate strips before the lesson.	
Method	Group work. Plenary discussion.	
Time budget	1. The students make choices.	15 min
	2. The students give reasons for their choices.	15 min
	3. The students compare and reflect on their choices.	10 min

Information box

In this lesson, the students make choices, and are introduced to the topic of choices through their personal experience. This is a task-based approach to the complex concept of identity, rather than a theory or text-based approach, in order to help the students realise that the concept of identity is connected with their lives in a very practical way.

Communication among the students dominates the lesson. A frontal seating arrangement would be counter-productive; therefore, if possible, the tables and chairs should be arranged around the walls (in a horseshoe setting).

Lesson description

1. The students make choices

The students set the context

The teacher introduces the topic. Every day, throughout our lives, we make choices and decisions – what examples come to the students’ minds? The students answer and give examples from their experience. The teacher makes sure that they talk about the decisions, but that they do not go into further detail to discuss problems or their reasons behind their decisions. As many students as possible should take the floor for the first five minutes. The teacher need not discuss these statements; he/she observes what the balance is between everyday choices (buying a sandwich or a hot snack for lunch) and key decisions (choosing a job). The teacher points out what tendencies became apparent in the students’ choices.

The students choose a quotation

The teacher explains to the students that they will hear some quotations by authors from different countries, and from both ancient and modern times. Their task is the following:

- The students choose a quotation that they either strongly agree or disagree with.
- The students who have chosen the same quotation form small groups (no more than six members) and share their reasons for their choice. The groups appoint a speaker.
- After five minutes, the speakers each make a brief statement on the choices in the plenary round. They read the quotation and give the main reasons why the students in their group agreed or disagreed with it. If the students in a group hold different views, then the difference of opinion should be reported.

The teacher distributes the sets of quotations, presented on separate strips of paper, on the students’ tables around the room. In turn, each student who has been given a quotation reads it aloud to the class. Then the students begin with their task. The teacher watches them. If a group is too big he/she intervenes and makes sure that the students split into smaller groups. Several copies of the quotations are available in case this happens. The teacher takes note of which quotations the students have chosen and which they haven’t. He/she will not hear much of the students’ discussions, as many students will be talking at the same time, so the noise level will be like that in a café full of customers.

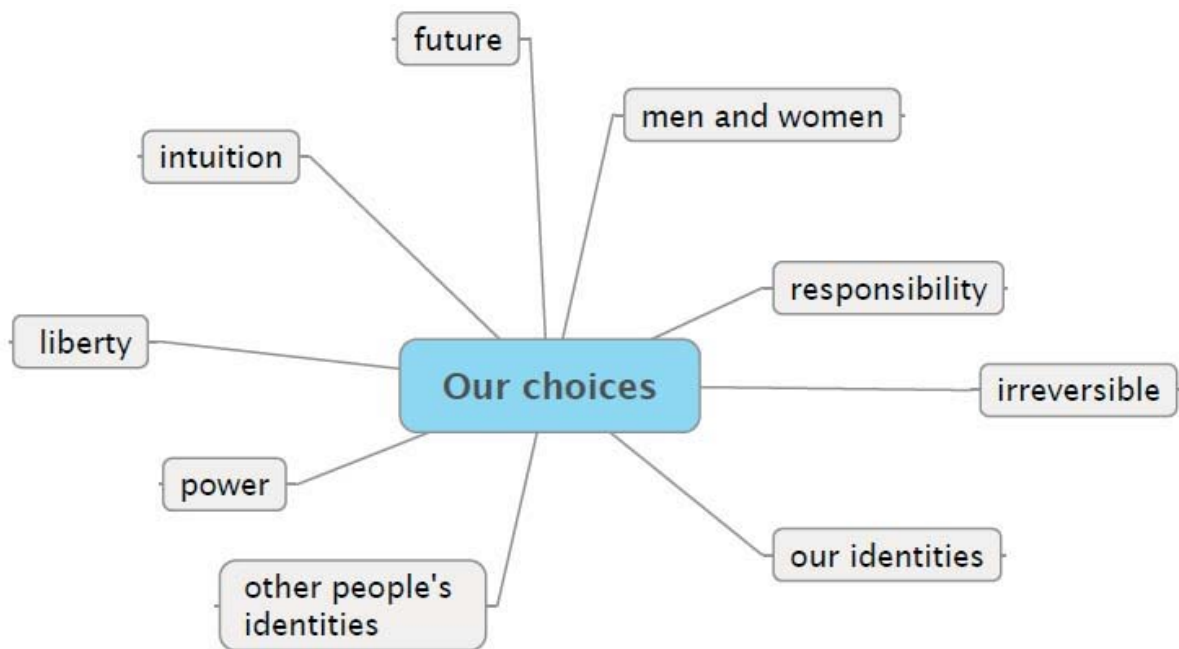
2. The students give reasons for their choices

The speakers make their statements

The teacher announces that discussion time in the groups is up and calls the students to attend the plenary round, chaired by the teacher. The students stay seated at their group tables. In turn, each speaker takes the floor. If necessary, the teacher reminds the speaker to report on the groups’ reasons for their choices, and the students may ask for more explanations. The teacher should make sure that no discussion starts before all speakers have spoken.

Teacher and students produce a mind map as a record

Before the next speaker takes the floor, the teacher asks the listeners to sum up the key statement that they have just heard, for example “Many of our choices are irreversible,” or “When making choices, we exercise rights of personal liberty.” The teacher – or a student – sums up the points in a simple mind map (see example below).



3. The students compare and reflect on their choices

The students read the mind map – a document of many choices

The mind map supports the concluding phase of reflection in this lesson.

The teacher asks one question to provoke thought – many different answers are possible, as the students are addressed as experts on their own behalf: the speakers have just reported on what the students think about the different quotations on making choices. The groups themselves were formed by the students' choices – so what does this mind map tell us about the students?

The students may need some time to think. They should have it – what could be better than a class full of students thinking hard in silence? Therefore this productive phase should not be terminated too soon by immediately giving the floor to the first student who puts up his or her hand. Several students may then speak. Many different views are possible, and they will vary depending on the context that the students have created through their choices and as is recorded in the mind map.

Conclusion: key statements

The teacher's task is to conclude the lesson by summing up the key statements for the students. They may be expressed directly, or they may occur as a leitmotif in several statements. The teacher notes keywords on the board or flipchart to support the summary:

1. In this lesson, the students have *made choices* when *talking about* choices.
2. The students have made *different choices*, for different reasons (here are some examples):
 - personal experience;
 - values;
 - gender;
 - concern for others, responsibility;
 - human rights;
 - ...
3. The students' choices show that they are different personalities – their choices tell us something about who they are, about *their identities*.