



Representation Matters

LESSON

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

Through this lesson, participants will be able to explore what identity means, and look into the idea of "representation matters." Participants will reflect on representation of their identities in media and how it might affect them today.

MATERIALS

Worksheet, writing utensils

AGE ADJUSTMENTS

For a younger audience, consider using magazines or age-appropriate books for participants to find representations of their identity, rather than Online.

Lesson Plan

Introducing the Lesson

- Introduce the lesson by giving participants a basic explanation of what identity is: a distinguishing characteristic of who we are. As a facilitator, you should give different examples of your own identity to contextualize for students (i.e. teacher, daughter, soccer player, artist, where you're from, etc).
- Emphasize the importance of embracing identity and creating a safe space.
- Ask participants if they have heard of the phrase "representation matters." Explain that this often has to do with representation in media. This means seeing faces and hearing stories that resonate with your own lived experiences.
- Ask participants why they think this matters.



What are some examples of identities?

Experiencing the Lesson

- Begin by having participants think about the question: "Who Am I?"
- Have some participants share their answers, and what led them to this conclusion.
 - Why do these things make you who you are?
 - Why is that important to you?
- Encourage participants to think about identities that have had a key role in shaping who they are/how they see themselves. (See list to the right)
- Now, have participants individually take time to find representations of their different identities in the media and fill out the worksheet in response.

- Race
- Gender
- Nationality
- Activities/
Hobbies
- Clubs
- Religion
- Culture
- Key life experiences etc.



Closing the Lesson

- Have participants take time to answer the question at the bottom of the worksheet: "How does this activity make you feel supported in being you?" And then share with a neighbor.

Further Exploration



- To further explore the representation of participant's identities in media, give participants time to research into movies/television shows/social media influences etc to find examples of ways their identities were represented.
- Have participants compile links to these examples to show other peers.
- In small groups, allow participants to show examples and discuss the accuracy of the way their identity was represented.
- Encourage other participants to ask questions while being shown the examples!

Get Creative

- Have participants create a self portrait of themselves made up of objects, symbols, words, or images that represent key elements of their identities. This can be digital or physical.
- If physical portraits are made, provide markers, magazines, etc. to make collages with.
- Once completed, have participants share in pairs or small groups.
- Display these portraits somewhere in the room so everyone can see the amazing artwork!

Online

- To facilitate this activity Online, have participants go into breakout rooms of 2-4 to do the activity together, discussing their identities, comparing the differences, and sharing with the class.
- Continue as directed.



Representation Matters

What media did you find that represents your identities? Was this an easy process?

Did you grow up with representation of your identities around you?

How does this/lack of this representation affect you today?

What do you wish people knew about/understood more about your identity? How can you have these conversations?

How does this activity make you feel supported in being you?

Worksheet for: Representation Matters