

Lesson 1: Who am I?

Objectives

1. Students are able to analyze how some artists show who they are through their artworks.
2. Students are able to find art ideas by thinking about their own identities.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

RELATE: Artworlds: PO 101, 201 & 301: Interpret meanings and/or purposes of an artwork using subject matter, symbols and themes.

RELATE: Artworlds: PO 203 & 303: Use contextual information to investigate and interpret meanings and purposes in artworks from the viewpoint of the culture in which it was made.

CREATE: 101, 201 & 301: Contribute to a discussion about ideas for his or her own artwork.

Preparation

Preview [Who Am I? PowerPoint](#) and the [Mixing It Up: Building an Identity Exhibition Preview PowerPoint](#).

Because “culture” is an important concept in this unit, consulting the [“What Is Culture” PowerPoint](#) in the “Outsiders Within” exhibition unit may be helpful. This unit presents a young person’s introduction to culture and includes a [lesson plan](#) with activities for more fully introducing the concept of culture.

Decide whether you might want to use [Questor Questions about Frank Ybarra’s Art PDF](#) to extend students’ thinking about how artists can express their identities through art. The exhibition includes several works by Ybarra, so, if your class is able to visit the exhibition, you may wish to use the handout after students have seen Ybarra’s work in person.

You may want to bring to class artworks, images or artifacts that reflect your own identity to show as examples. You might invite students, parents or other community members from diverse cultures to bring in and talk about images and objects that reflect their cultural identities.

Resources

[Who AM I? PowerPoint](#)

OPTIONAL: [What Is Culture PowerPoint](#)

OPTIONAL: [What is Culture lesson plan](#)

OPTIONAL: [Questor Questions about Frank Ybarra’s Art PDF](#)

OPTIONAL: Samples of artworks or other artifacts that reflect your own, your students’ or community’s cultural identities.

Activities

Unit Preview and Definitions: Introduce the theme in life: “Every culture builds its identity from shared activities, beliefs and values” first defining “culture” and then “identity.” Explain that a culture is a community in which people share activities and ideas, and most people are members of several groups or cultures. Explain that a person’s identity is made up of the characteristics that tell him or her who he or she is.

- Culture = a group of people who share activities and ideas
- Identity = the things that make you - you

Guided Practice: Lead a discussion of cultures by sharing some of the groups with which you identify, such as generation, gender, ethnicity, professional groups, activist groups (as appropriate) and recreational groups. Ask students if anyone would like to share some of the groups with which he or she identifies.

Introduce the theme in art: “Artworks can help us understand the activities, beliefs and values of our own and others’ cultures” by explaining that images and objects can sometimes express a person’s identity. Name or show examples, such as state and national flags, school colors, sports team logos, city seals and club insignia (Scouts, Audubon Society, Star Trek regalia). Explain that the class will be examining artworks that express cultural identity and that, later, students will have an opportunity to make their own identity artwork.

Introduce the key questions students will be working with in the unit:



1. Why do artists choose to use bright and muted colors in their work?
2. Why do artists sometimes choose printmaking when they want to express their ideas to more people?



3. What activities, beliefs and values from their own cultures do artists sometimes show in their art?

Practice and Assessment: Display slides 1-3 of the Who Am I PowerPoint to recap the concepts of “culture” and “identity.” Next, while showing slides 4 and 5, explain that you will be showing examples of art by Mexican American artists that reveal their cultural identities. After showing and reading the background information about Larry Yáñez on slide 6, ask students to identify details in his work that suggest his American and Mexican identity. Slide 8 offers an opportunity to interpret how identity is expressed in Tony Ortega’s work.

Application: As a culminating activity ask students to write on the left side of a piece of paper lists of groups (cultures) with whom they identify, and then, on a column on the right, list possible ways they might visually refer to each culture, for example, colors, symbols, special objects, etc.

Vocabulary

identity
culture

activity
value
symbol

Extension Activities

Language Arts: Students might write “Who Am I?” identity essays.

Assessment Checklist

_____ Students are able to analyze how some artists show who they are through their artworks.
(Discussion during Art PowerPoint presentation.)

_____ Students are able find art ideas by thinking about their own identities.
(Lists of cultures and visual references)