



Session 1 – What makes you, “you”?

Key themes:

Human value and intrinsic worth; the basis for human identity; attributes for self-worth; developing empathy; understanding dignity as a basic human right.

Key Questions:

- What makes someone valuable – is it looks, strength, kindness, or something else?
- Do boys and girls feel valued for the same reasons?
- How do different people show their value in different ways?
- What can I do to remind others they are important?
- Does everyone deserve equal value and respect?

Curriculum Links: ([click here](#))

Delivery guidance: ([click here](#))

Aim – To begin to reflect on identity, self-worth, and value. The aim is not to find definitive answers but to spark discussion and personal reflection. Pupils consider shared human worth (their own and others) as central to identity as key to greater empathy

Ground rules:

- **Confidentiality:** We might talk about personal things, people will share their views, opinions or experiences. This is a safe place for you to be open and honest. We need to know that the things people say doesn't get talked about outside this room
- **Respect:** Discussions need to be respectful, allow people the chance to talk, don't talk over each other. Don't speak about other people in the group or in school.
- **Tolerance:** There will be lots of time to discuss, ask questions and express opinions. We may not always agree and this is ok.
- **Fun:** This is meant to be fun, we will talk about some things that will make you want to laugh, we will be able to be silly at times and laugh at each other. However, if it becomes unkind or rude then I will stop us. We need to know when to stop as some of the things we talk about will be important and serious.

Warm up – The essence of the story

(Why this? – *this activity encourages pupils to begin to focus on the core ideas and values of a story and introduces the idea of the essence of something)*

Activity – choose a well-known story i.e. Red riding hood etc.

– Explain that they are going to tell the story but we are going to “boil the story down to its very essence” – the essential parts.

The first pupil will have 1 minute to tell the story, the next 40 seconds, then 30 seconds, next 20 seconds, then 10. Was it easy? What words did we need to use? What could we leave out?

Then challenge the pupils to tell the story in 10 words, then 5 words. Was it easy? What words did we need to use? What could we leave out?

We have managed to find the essence of the story – the parts of the story we absolutely cannot do without?

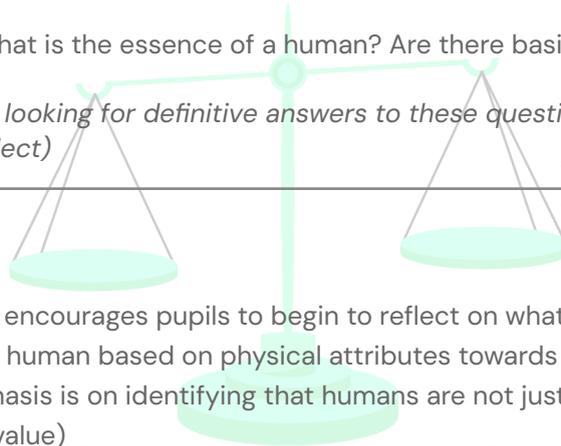
“Essence” – what makes you, you ?

Today we are going to think about what makes you, you? What makes a human, human? Is there something important about us that we all share?

Definition – “**Essence**”– “the basic nature of a thing, the quality or qualities that make a thing what it is, the most important, essential part of a thing.”

Reflection Question – What is the essence of a human? Are there basic things that all humans share and have?

(Remember – we are not looking for definitive answers to these questions but rather we are encouraging pupils to reflect)



What is a human?

(Why this? – this activity encourages pupils to begin to reflect on what defines human worth, moving from identifying a human based on physical attributes towards intrinsic shared characteristics. The emphasis is on identifying that humans are not just a collection of body parts – we have intrinsic value)

Activity - Just like the essence of a story, what is the essence of a human? If we were to build a human what would we include/need?

Draw a human (this can be completed as a whole group or small groups):

- What parts do pupils name/draw first?
- Are there parts that are vital but we cannot draw?
- Encourage pupils to consider listing parts we cannot see (e.g. internal organs)
- Draw the focus onto the things pupils know are vital to human life – what can't we do without?
- What can we do without? What can't we do without?
- What is the essence of a human? What makes a human “human”?

Discuss – Look at the completed drawings of humans. Talk with the pupils about the things that humans can live without. Humans are able to live without various limbs (these people are still human aren't they?). Thanks to modern medicine humans are also able to have organ transplants

or use machines to replace certain organs. Encourage pupils to discuss and list key things that are not physical but are important to human experience – personality, character, talent, skills etc.

(Remember: *The emphasis here is not to actually define what a human is – there may be some very different definitions, philosophers have been trying to answer this question for centuries)*

It is not easy to define exactly what makes a human, human; BUT we can probably agree on what a human is NOT – they are not just a collection of body parts. They are a complex and valuable collection of thoughts, feelings, experiences, skills, talents and personality.

We can all agree **ALL** humans are valuable and important.

Definition – “**Objectification**” – to treat someone as if they are an object rather than as a human being. This might mean not thinking about their feelings or values. This often happens when we judge people based on what they look like etc.

Who are you?

(Why this? – this activity draws pupils deeper into reflecting on the things we use to define ourselves and create identity. It builds on discussing human worth and value by identifying some of the deeper things that contribute to our sense of self-worth/identity)

Activity – Ask pupils the question – “who are you?”. They will probably respond with their name. “That is your name, your name is important – but does that tell me who you are?”

Pupils write three things that are key things to know about them on a post it note. Provide the children with some helpful guidelines – skills, talents, interests, etc.

Collect the post-it notes and see if other pupils can guess who someone is from the post-it note?

Definition – “**Identity**” – Identity can mean different things to different people. Basically – your identity is ‘who you are’, it is the essence of you

Discuss – Who you are is not just your name. Your identity is a complicated thing that can be made up of all sorts of things.

Reflection Question – What kinds of things do people base their identity on? What shapes and influences who you are?

Use the post it notes/mindmap to guide discussion and collect some key things that shape how children identify themselves i.e. achievements, interests, skills, talents, personality, culture, nationality

Example: “I am a girl, a wolves supporter, good at maths, funny”

There might be some things in our lists that are similar (sports we love to play, things we are good at). There might also be lots of things that are different too – we are all unique. But this shows that being human is about more than just our body.

What is it worth? –

(Why this? – this activity focuses on how we cannot assign monetary value to other human beings, our value is different. It emphasises the “value” of others in our lives and encourages pupils to build empathy by viewing others around them as valuable)

Activity – Show children a range of pictures/items – smartphone, car, sweets etc. How much is each item worth? Get pupils to make estimations about the price of each item.

Discuss value:

- How much is each item worth?
- What makes something worth more/less?
- Why are some things more valuable than others?
- How do we treat things that are valuable?

Show a picture of a person/child/human...

Reflection Question – what about people/us? Are we valuable? What makes people valuable?

Discuss – Identity is important as it gives us confidence, self-esteem, a sense of belonging and self-worth. It is important that we know we are valuable and that we know others are valuable too.

Think about the people who are important to you? What do you value about them? Why are people valuable? What kinds of things do we value about others? Are all people valuable? What about you? What is valuable about you?

(This might provide a good opportunity for pupils/staff to tell each other what they value about each other.

