

Year 8 PSHE Unit Plan

Name of unit: Being Me in My World	
Expected Outcomes (PSHE Learning Intentions) Learners appreciate that identities are complex and can change over time. They appreciate the similarities, differences and diversity of people's identities. Learners understand about collective and individual identities and cultural diversity. They understand the influence family has on self-identity. Learners define what stereotypes are. They understand that first impressions can lead to judgements that may be misinformed. Learners understand that there is a range of beliefs within any community and can recognise the beliefs they hold as important to them. They can appreciate that people's faiths and beliefs can affect their personal identity. Learners understand how to identify influences and differences and use these positively in their relationships.	
Developmental Focus Opportunities (Social and Emotional Skills Learning Intentions) Learners understand that faith, families, communities and cultures influence identity and start to identify the influences in their lives. Learners make sense of what has happened in their life and understand the influences from their own history and how they have shaped their self-identity, including those they've chosen to reject. Learners listen actively to other people. They identify what is important for them and what they expect from themselves, taking into account the beliefs and expectations of, for example, their family. Learners understand that they can make accurate and inaccurate assumptions about their own and others' identities. They understand that they can make choices about the influences they accept as part of their personal identity. Learners can see the world from other people's points of view and understand their beliefs. They respect people's right to hold their own views and beliefs. Learners know they have choices in how they respond to the expectations of others.	
Key Learning Points	Powerful Knowledge

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1. Identity is Complex and Evolving

- Identity is not fixed; it can change over time due to experiences, relationships, and personal growth.
- People have both **individual** and **collective identities** (e.g., family, culture, religion, nationality).

2. Diversity and Similarity

- People's identities are shaped by a range of factors including culture, religion, family, and personal experiences.
- Appreciating both **similarities and differences** helps build empathy and respect.

3. Cultural and Religious Beliefs

- Beliefs and values vary within and between communities.
- Faith and culture can significantly influence a person's sense of self and how they relate to others.

4. Stereotypes and First Impressions

- Stereotypes are oversimplified ideas about groups of people.
- First impressions can lead to **misinformed judgments**, which can be challenged through open-mindedness and curiosity.

5. Influences on Identity

- Family, community, media, and personal experiences all shape identity.
- Individuals can **choose** which influences to accept or reject as part of their identity.

1. Self-Reflection and Personal History

- Learners explore how their past experiences and family background have shaped who they are.
- They begin to **make sense of their own story** and how it influences their identity.

2. Critical Thinking About Influences

- Learners evaluate which influences are helpful or unhelpful in shaping their identity.
- They understand they have **agency** in choosing what to accept or reject.

3. Empathy and Perspective-Taking

- Learners practice **seeing the world through others' eyes**, understanding different beliefs and values.
- They learn to **respect others' rights** to hold different views.

4. Active Listening and Communication

- Learners develop the ability to **listen actively** and engage in respectful dialogue.
- They learn to express their own beliefs while being open to others'.

5. Managing Expectations

- Learners recognize that they can respond thoughtfully to the expectations of family, peers, and society.
- They begin to define **what is important to them personally**, building confidence in their own values.

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Subject-Specific Vocabulary	Reading Opportunities
Identity Diversity Stereotype Judgement Community Belief Assumption	Fiction & Narrative Non-Fiction • <i>The Boy at the Back of the Class</i> by Onjali Q. Raúf Explores themes of identity, belonging, and cultural diversity through the story of a refugee child. • <i>Wonder</i> by R.J. Palacio A powerful story about difference, empathy, and how first impressions can be misleading. • <i>Ghost</i> by Jason Reynolds A coming-of-age story that touches on identity, stereotypes, and personal growth. • <i>I Am Malala (Young Readers Edition)</i> by Malala Yousafzai A real-life account of how faith, family, and culture shape identity and resilience. Poetry & Short Texts • “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou A poem about pride in identity and overcoming prejudice. • “Half-Caste” by John Agard Challenges stereotypes and explores mixed-race identity. Non-Fiction & Articles • BBC Bitesize PSHE – Articles on identity, diversity, and relationships. • Newsround – Age-appropriate news stories that explore cultural and social issues. • Facing History and Ourselves – Resources on identity, community, and social justice.
Possible Misconceptions	Cross-Curricular Links

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“Identity is fixed and unchangeable” “Everyone from the same culture or religion is the same” “Stereotypes are always true or harmless” “You have to accept all influences from your family or culture” “Respecting others’ beliefs means agreeing with them” “First impressions are always accurate”	History RE
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