



Belong To LGBTQ+
Youth Ireland

Senior Cycle

Politics and Society Resource



Teacher Notes: Pedagogical Approach for Lessons:

- **Create safety together:** We suggest that a way to begin Stand Up Awareness Week lessons is by co-constructing classroom agreements with your students that emphasise safety and respect. This helps everyone feel secure and valued. Display the agreements in the classroom or keep a copy in student journals or copies. What values are important to your students and what do they need to feel respected and safe?
- **Keep an open mind:** Use language that welcomes all identities and experiences, avoiding assumptions about sexuality, gender or family structure. (all voices included)
- **Pause and reflect:** Take time to notice your own comfort levels, possible biases, or areas where you might want to grow your knowledge. This modelling of reflection shows students that learning is ongoing for everyone.
- **Support deeper learning:** Give students opportunities to think quietly, speak when ready, reflect individually and ask questions. A layered approach helps everyone engage at their own pace.
- **Protect student choice:** Encourage participation but never expect or ask students to share personal stories in order to make the learning 'real'. Their voices matter, but their privacy matters too.
- **Shape respectful dialogue:** Debate and discussion can be powerful, but not every issue should be up for debate. Work with your students to agree on safe and respectful boundaries for discussions, so the classroom remains supportive for all.
- **Belong To's** e-learning module is a fantastic resource to learn how to best create a safe inclusive environment at school. (Accessible at: <https://www.belongto.org/training/>)
- **Free speech is not hate speech!** Hateful comments are never acceptable.
- The resources listed here promote inclusion and belonging and are intended as an aid for schools to help implement their **Bí Cineálta policy**.

Lesson Plan: Identity and Power – Who Gets to Belong?

Year: 5th/6th

Strand: All three strands

This lesson plan explores how systems of power, culture and citizenship shape whose voices are heard in society. Students examine LGBTQ+ rights movements, the role of civil society, and how laws and policies affect identity and participation. The unit builds political literacy and encourages empathy, critical engagement and inclusive citizenship.

Learning Intentions

- Understand how identity intersects with power and inclusion
- Explore the concept of privilege and marginalisation in society
- Reflect on personal and collective identity in civic life

Materials Needed

- Identity wheel template
- Inclusion spectrum line posters
- Excerpt from UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Activity 1: ‘Step In’ Activity – Instruction.

Students stand in a circle or around the walls in the room and are instructed to step ‘in’ if they agree with a statement. This is a good way of getting students to air their views on topics before you explore a strand.

Strand 1: Power and Decision-Making

This strand examines the concepts of power, authority, and decision-making at various levels of society.

- The rules in our school are applied fairly to everyone.
- People of all genders and ethnicities are well-represented in the national government.
- Everyone can effectively voice their opinion to a local politician.
- Everyone’s voice makes a difference in an election.
- Everyone is well-equipped to identify biased or false information in the media.
- Young people can feel powerless due to their age.
- The economic system is set up to benefit everyone.

Strand 3: Human Rights and Responsibilities

This strand explores human rights and responsibilities in Ireland and internationally.

Everyone in Ireland:

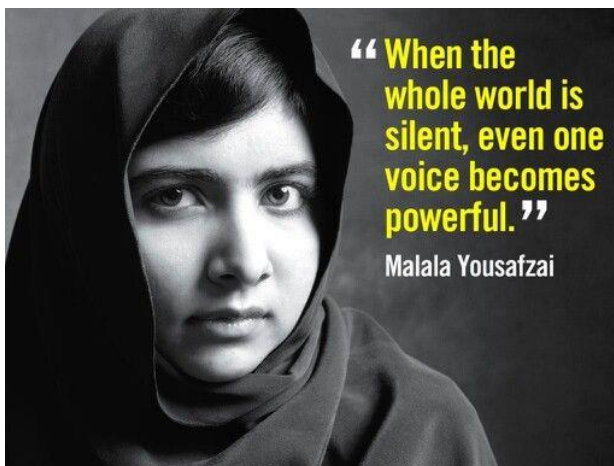
- ...has enough food to eat.
- ...has a safe and stable place to live.
- ...has access to the medical care they need.
- ...feels safe and protected by the Guards.

- ...is confident that their rights are protected by the Irish legal system.
- ...can openly express their political and religious beliefs without fear.
- ...has been taught about their human rights.

Step In Debrief: Guiding questions

- Without speaking, just look around the room. What do you notice? How do you feel?
- What was it like to step forward? What was it like to stand still?
- Were you surprised by any of the statements or by the final outcome?
- Did this activity make you think differently about power or privilege?
- How does what we saw in the room relate to what we see in Irish society and the wider world?
- What statements could be added to better reflect the experiences of different groups in society?
- What can we, as individuals and as a class, do to address some of the inequalities this activity has highlighted?

Discuss as a group this quote from Malala Yousafzai:



Activity 2: Identity Wheel

An identity wheel is a visual tool that helps students explore the different aspects of their identity. Find a template wheel below. This activity is designed to encourage students to reflect on their unique qualities, social identities and the various factors that shape who they are.

Instructions for Students

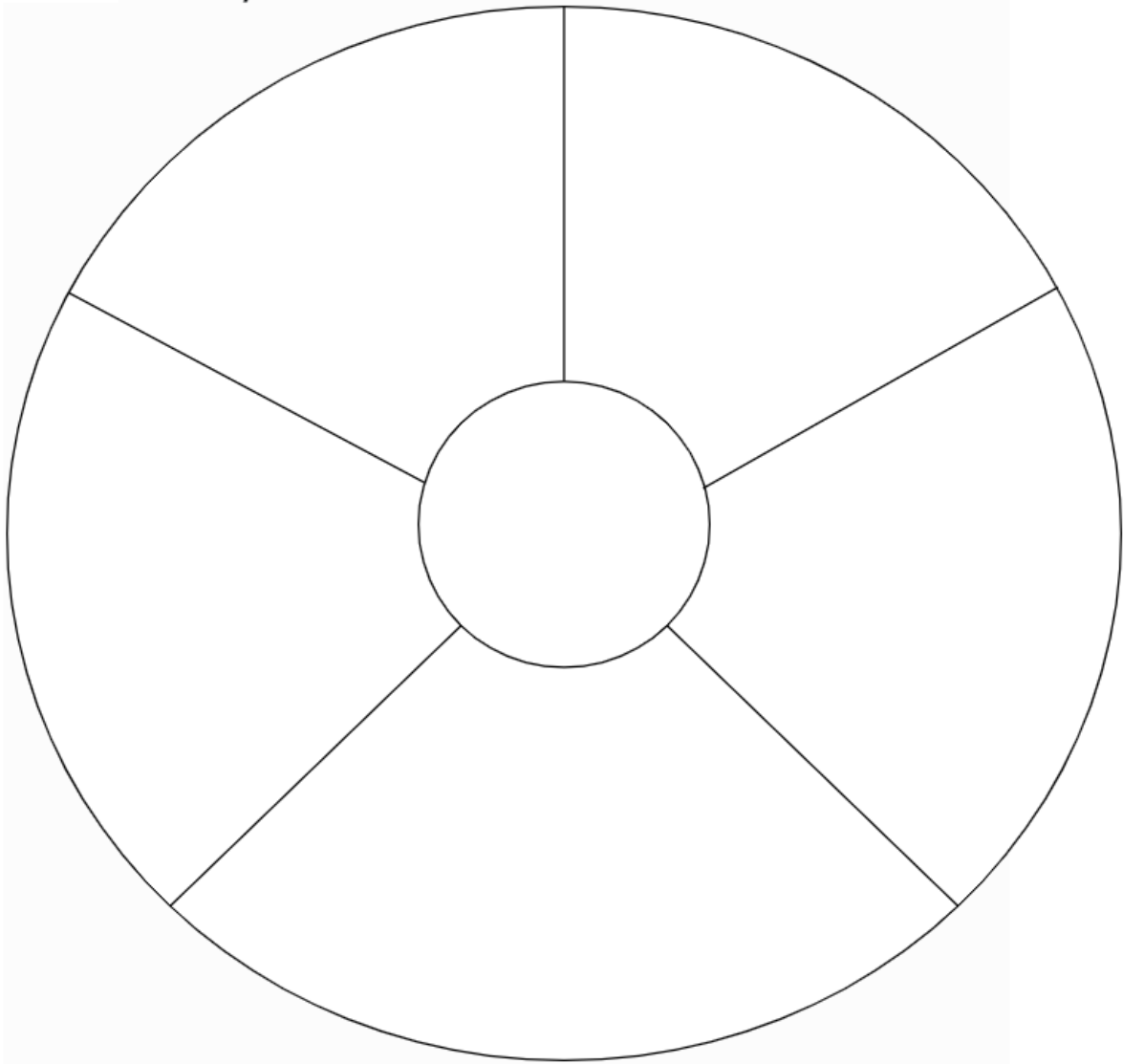
1. In the centre of the wheel, write your name.
2. In the sections of the wheel, write down different aspects of your identity. These can include:
 - **Personal traits** (e.g. funny, kind, shy, creative)
 - **Hobbies and interests** (e.g. musician, artist, gamer, athlete)
 - **Social identities** (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, religion, heritage)
 - **Relationships** (e.g. sister, brother, friend, son, daughter)
 - **Aspirations and goals** (e.g. future doctor, activist, traveller)

After filling out the sections, use the reflection questions below to encourage the students think more deeply about identity.

Identity Wheel Reflection Questions for Students:

- Which of these identities do you think about most often?
- Which of these identities do you think about least often?
- Which identities have the strongest effect on how you see yourself?
- Which identities have the greatest effect on how others see you?
- Are there any aspects of your identity you would like to learn more about?
- How do our unique identities influence how we see the world?

Identity Wheel



Activity 3: 'Inclusion Spectrum Line' Posters

The 'Inclusion Spectrum Line' is a physical activity where students place themselves along a line based on their agreement or disagreement with a statement related to inclusion, power and belonging. The posters below provide the statements for this activity.

Instructions for the Teacher:

1. Print out the following 'Spectrum Line' posters on separate large sheets of paper.
2. Place the posters in a line on the floor, leaving enough space for students to stand along the spectrum from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'.
3. Read each statement aloud and ask students to position themselves along the line that best represents their viewpoint.

Inclusion Spectrum Line Posters to be Printed and Placed on Floor

- Poster 1: STRONGLY AGREE
- Poster 2: AGREE
- Poster 3: NEUTRAL
- Poster 4: DISAGREE
- Poster 5: STRONGLY DISAGREE

Statements for the Activity to be Read Aloud:

- "I feel like all voices are heard and valued in our school."
- "I see people who look like me in positions of power in society (e.g. in government, media)."
- "The laws and policies in our country are fair to everyone, regardless of their background."
- "I believe that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed in life."
- "I feel a strong sense of belonging in my community."
 - Teachers and students can add their own statements

Activity 4: Explore this Excerpt from UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a foundational document that outlines the fundamental rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled.^[4] This excerpt can be used as a basis for discussion about how these rights relate to identity, power, and inclusion.

Excerpt from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Simplified Version):

- **Article 1:** All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
- **Article 2:** Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- **Article 3:** Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

- **Article 7:** All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.
- **Article 18:** Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- **Article 19:** Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 27:** Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Closing Discussion Questions for Students:

- What do you think is the most important article in this excerpt? Why?
- Which do you think is the least important?
- How do these rights relate to a person's identity?
- Can you think of examples where these rights are not being protected for certain groups of people?
- How can we work to ensure that everyone's rights are respected in our school and community?