

Reflection Activity: Identity

Identity can be defined as the “the collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing or person is definitively recognized or known,” or as “the set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group.”

Reflect for a moment on the following:

- Would you identify yourself as white or European American? Would others identify you as white or European American?
- Would you identify yourself as black or African American? Would others identify you as black or African American?
- Would you identify yourself as Native American? Would others identify you as Native American?
- Would you identify yourself as Asian American? Would others identify you as Asian American?
- Would you identify yourself as Hispanic or Latino/a? Would others identify you as Hispanic or Latino/a?
- Would you identify yourself as Middle Eastern? Would others identify you as Middle Eastern?
- Would you identify yourself as multiracial or multiethnic? Would others identify you as multiracial or multiethnic?
- Would you identify yourself by national origin, i.e. Italian, Jamaican, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, Saudi Arabian? Would others identify you by national origin?
- Would you identify yourself by tribal affiliation, i.e. Ute or Lakota? Would others identify you by tribal affiliation?
- Would you identify yourself as “a person of color”? Would others identify you as “a person of color”?
- Would you identify yourself solely as “American”? Would others identify you solely as “American”?
- Would you identify your race or ethnicity some other way entirely? Would others see you that way, too?

Next, write a short biography about your racial identit(ies), answering the following questions:

- When and how did you become aware of your racial identit(ies)?
- Describe a moment when your racial identit(ies) were important to, or took on particular meaning for, you.
- Describe a moment when your racial identit(ies) were important to, or took on particular meaning for, others.
- How do you benefit from your racial identit(ies)?
- How do you suffer or “miss out” because of your racial identit(ies)?
- Are some of these questions easier or more difficult to answer than others? Why might this be?