Self Awareness. The first step towards self knowledge is self awareness. Discovering more about who we are empowers us with the confidence and honesty to live authentically. While building a positive, comfortable environment develops the culture of trust that supports our self exploration.

L E S S O N S

Who am I?

Explore the many factors that shape who we are as individuals. Share these with peers to deepen relationships and develop class community.

Can symbols define us?

Use symbols to represent different aspects of our identity—those aspects that define us and those we share. Reflect on whether using symbols may influence how we see ourselves.

Is my self knowledge shared?

Practise using feedback to develop an awareness of how important communication is in building a safe environment for sharing perspectives and 'seeing' ourselves.

Lesson Life-Skills

Self Awareness

Empathy

Communication

Perspective-taking

Lesson Plan: Can Symbols Define Us?

Lesson support:

- Click on the lesson plan for a detailed guide to each activity.

- There are supporting notes beneath each slide

- Note: Learners will understand the activities in this lesson best when they are modelled and shared by the teacher.

Equipment needed:

- Pen, paper, identity chart (form the last lesson if possible) and mandala template printed (optional), class computer/projector.

CURRICULUM FOR LIFE

Lesson Guide – Can symbols define us?

Purpose: Use symbols to represent different aspects of our identity–those aspects that define us and those we share. Reflect on whether using symbols may influence how we see ourselves.

Equipment needed: Pen, paper, computer, projector, optional identity chart and mandala templates printed.

Lesson timings (50 minutes): The timings are just a guide. The lesson can be delivered as a whole, in sections, or if there is a rich discussion in one section, take the time and allow that to develop.

Pre-Work		
Teachers: If lesson 1 is complete, remind students to bring their identity charts from Lesson 1 to class. Students : If complete, bring identity charts to class.		
Lesson structure	**Lesson Content**	**Resources / Comments**
Class Environment 5C Slide	Share the 5C's of the CfL classroom to create a respectful, safe atmosphere and to build trust with each other.	Together we are growing a creative, critical, caring, collaborative environment where positive, supportive communication is developed through listening, sharing and building on ideas.
Check-In Individually (2 mins) How are you feeling today?	Many cultures use animals as symbols or 'totems'. In some cultures people have the same animal totem throughout their lives. Learners think about how they are feeling today and decide on an animal that best represents that feeling.	We introduce symbolism through this activity.

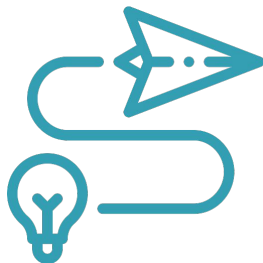# Lesson Video Guide: Can symbols define us?

Lesson support

Click on the video for a short introduction on how to approach this lesson.

CURRICULUM FOR LIFE

Uni
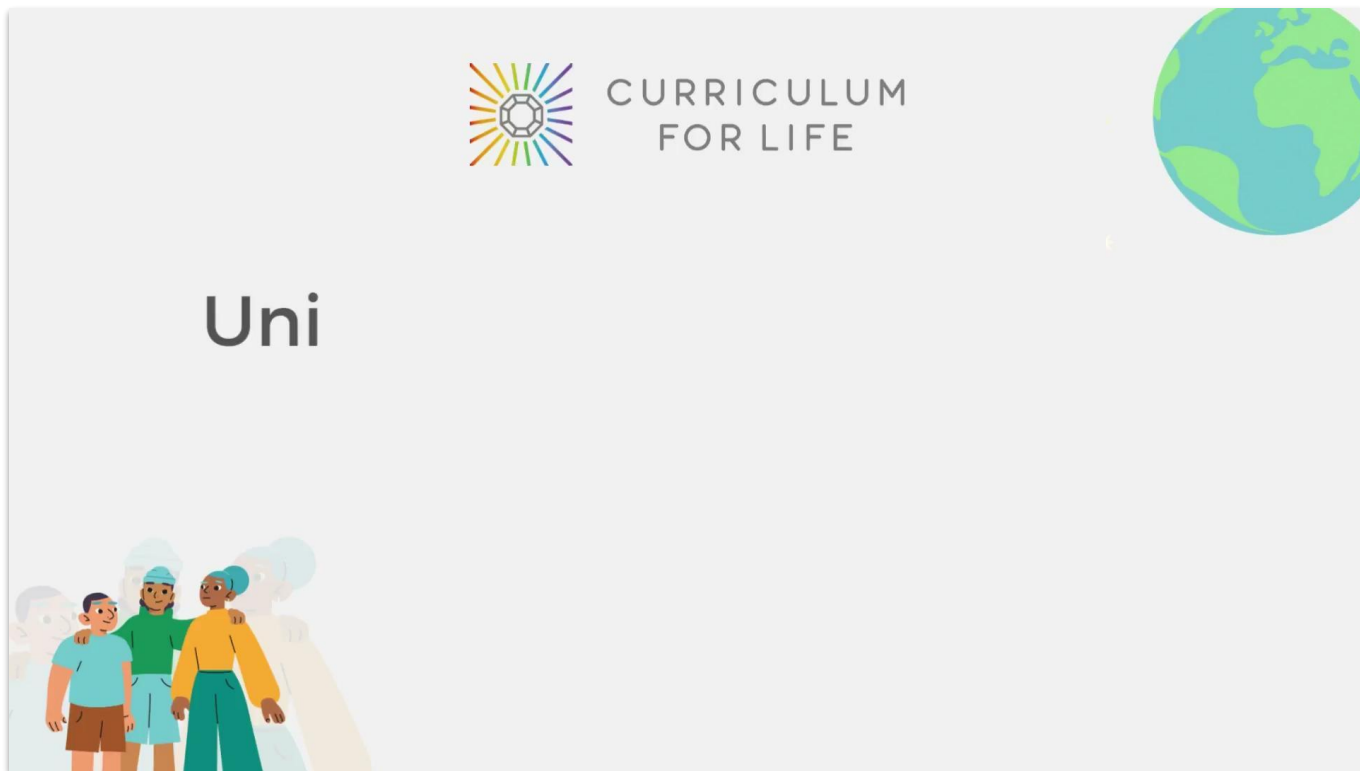
The 5 C's
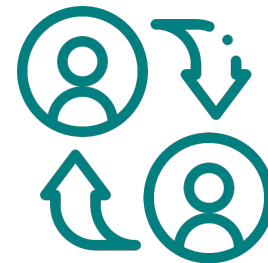

| Collaborative | Creative | Caring | Critical | Communication |

Lesson guide: Can symbols define us?

Use symbols to represent different aspects of our identity–those aspects that define us and those we share. Reflect on whether using symbols may influence how we see ourselves.

Check-in

Warm-up

Main Task

Reflection

How are you feeling today?

The meaning and impact of symbols

Creating identity mandalas

Does reflecting on identity affect our self perception?

- What animal best describes your how you are feeling today?

- What power animal that would help you most today.

- What characteristics does the animal have, that you need?

A power animal is an ally that provides you with what you need.

Many cultures use animals, plants, natural features (rivers, forest, desert) as symbols to describe their mood, feelings, traits.

Below are some examples of the traits/moods animals can represent.

Strength

Discipline

Calm

☀ **Warm-up: The Impact of Symbolism**

In Pairs share:

- What symbols have you used or seen today?

- What was their purpose?

- What role do symbols play in our history, nations, beliefs and daily lives?

Whole Group: Watch the video to explore how we use symbols.

https://www.youtube.com/@UNSW

Part 1: Put yourself in the center, connect words that show who you are.

Include aspects of your identity that are:

- Unchanging and central to who we are (core identity).

- Changing depending on the situation, and experiences (fluid identity).

- Labels given to us by others, which may be correct or incorrect.
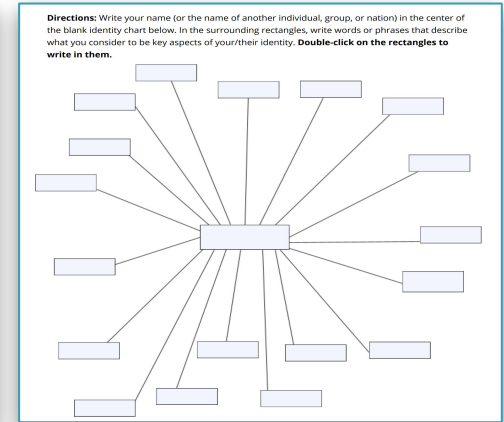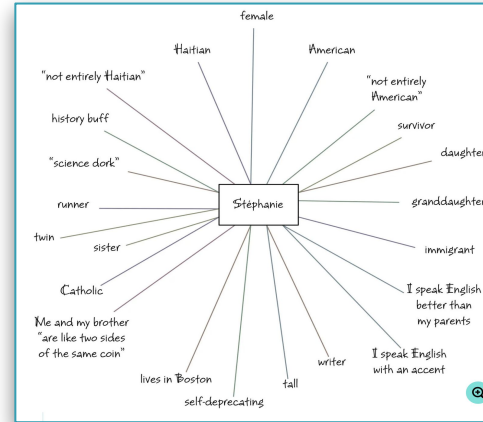
Part 2: Add pictures to symbolise the labels on your identity chart.

Part 3: Use one of the sample mandala templates or draw your own.

The mandala will help you organise your identity into layers;

- Inner Circle: Core identity is shown in the center
  - Factors that are unlike to change.

- Second Circle: Fluid identity
  - Factors that change depending on situations and experiences.

- Outer circle: Share identity or labels that are given to me
 - Labels others give us maybe correct or incorrect.
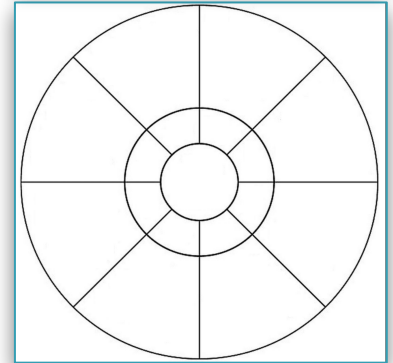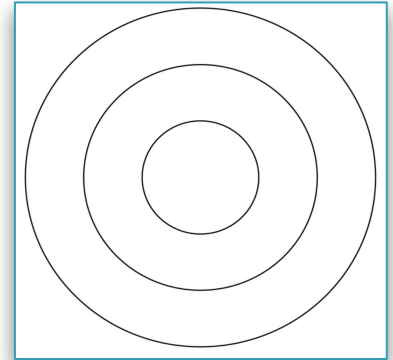
Discuss in your pairs:

- How has organising your identity into layers made you think about who you are?

- Has using symbols rather than words affected how you view aspects of your identity?

- Do the symbols represent you more effectively than words? If so, why is that?

If you had a class mandala what symbols would represent us?
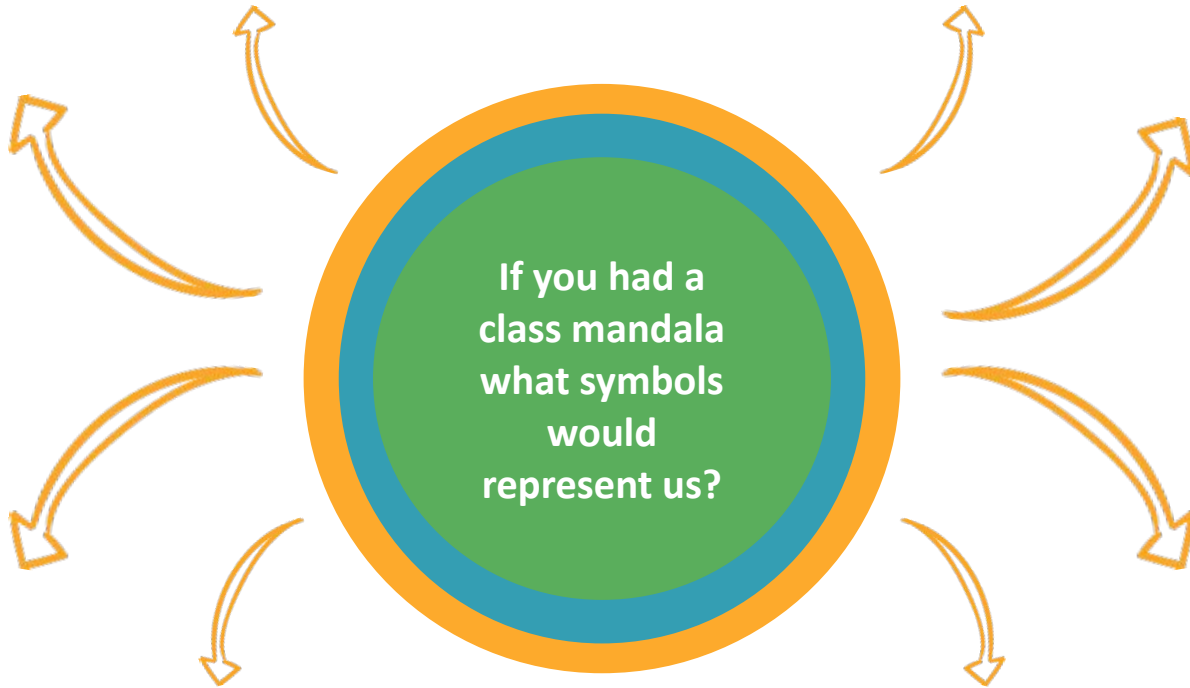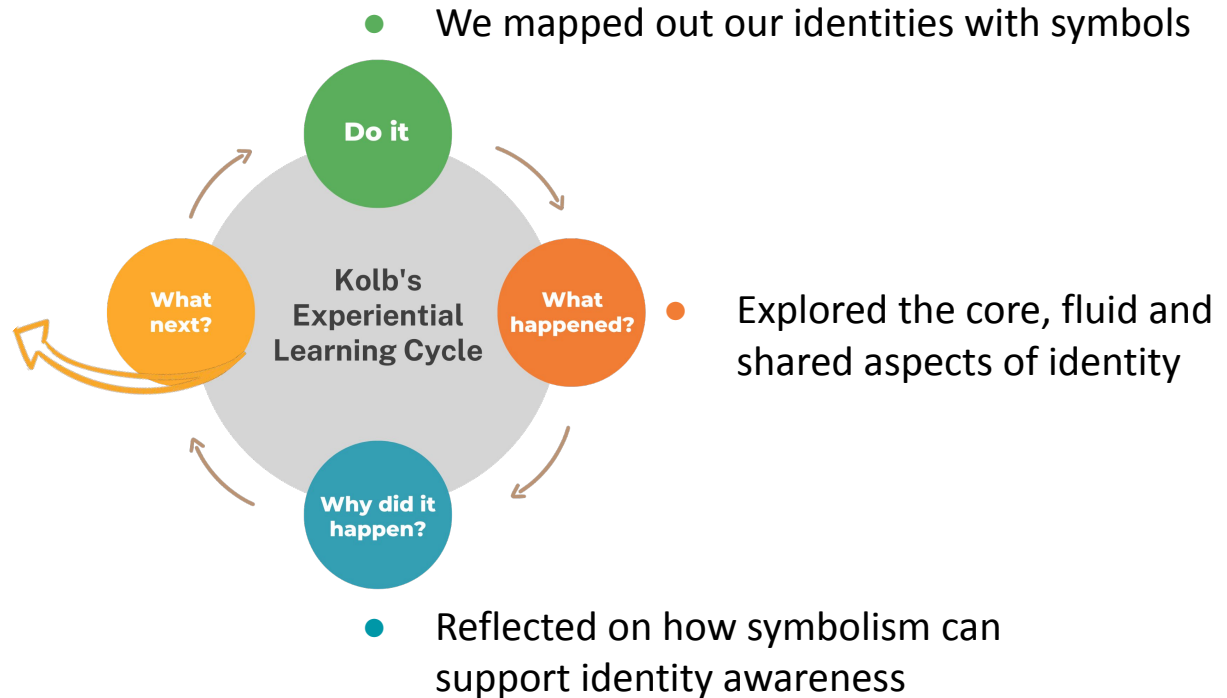
- How can you use what you have learned in the future?

- Example: In the week ahead, keep an eye out for things that could symbolise different aspects of your (or the class') identity

- We mapped out our identities with symbols

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

- Do it
- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What next?

- Explored the core, fluid and shared aspects of identity

- Reflected on how symbolism can support identity awareness

How was this lesson produced?

This lesson was co-created with youth, educators and topic experts from around the world.

Together, we:

- Discussed what, why and how we'd like to learn

- Curated resources

- Created experiential learning activities

- Weaved in evidence-informed approaches

- Built-in opportunities for reflection and contextualisation

CURRICULUM FOR LIFE

CURRICULUM FOR LIFE

curriculumforlife.com
Instagram | LinkedIn | Twitter | Facebook
Co-creating freely accessible Life Skills Learning