

STUDENT TASK

Identity Portraits

Grade Level 3-5 **Do Something**

Handout: Do Something Student Planning Guide , Progress Monitoring Worksheet , Assessing Your School & Community

Rubric: Identity Portraits Rubric

Web Version: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/student-tasks/do-something/identity-portraits>

What?

Students interview one another, then draw or paint portraits containing symbols that represent the subject's identity, beliefs, values or areas of interest.

Estimated Time

One week

Why?

Identity portraits give students an opportunity to consider their peers through a social justice lens. Creating portraits encourages students to get to know one another better through interviewing their peers about facets of their identities, perspectives and values.

How?

GET READY

1. Introduce the concept of identity portraits. Model the creation of an identity portrait for students, perhaps with another teacher familiar to the class.
2. Facilitate a discussion about a character or figure from the central text and how their identity and actions represent social justice themes. As a class, brainstorm symbols that represent the identity and themes under discussion (e.g., scales of justice, Star of David, etc.).

GET SET

1. Introduce students to the Do Something Student Planning Guide. Instruct them in mapping the steps necessary to complete their identity portrait.
2. Share the sample rubric or adapt it into a checklist for students. Refer to the rubric to define expectations.
3. Share sample interview questions with students related to identity, diversity, justice, values and beliefs. Model how to make connections between the content of the interview and the symbolism in the portrait. For example, a student might ask their classmate about something they care about; if the interviewee were to mention global peace and nonviolence, the interviewer could include a peace sign in the portrait background.
4. Support students in generating their own interview questions. To ensure that students feel adequately represented, both the interviewer and the interviewee will converse and work together to agree on the symbols to be included in the portraits

GO!

1. Students will create identity portraits of their classmate in the medium of their choice (collage, watercolor, colored pencil, etc.). Each portrait should include symbols representing the subject in the background.
2. Assemble the portraits on a bulletin board. If students feel comfortable, consider displaying the portraits outside of the classroom so other members of the school community can observe students' work.

Reflection

Students can journal about how their identity portrait reflected central text themes. Some suggested reflection questions include:

- What did you learn about yourself and your classmate through the process?
- How are you similar to and different from your classmates?
- How do the themes or topics present in the central text connect to the portraits and their representation of identity?

English language learners

Identity portraits provide students with an interactive, creative way to demonstrate their learning through a task that is not purely language-based. This task engages spatial/artistic and interpersonal learning modalities.

Connection to anti-bias education

The process of creating identity portraits teaches students to think deeply about identities, values, interests and beliefs, all central to the goals of the anti-bias education. Students gain a better understanding of the diversity within their class and reflect on their own identities.

X



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