

Allyship Spotlight Introduction



grades 6-8



30 minutes

“Allyship is standing beside us when we need support, standing behind us when we need back up, and stepping in front when we need protection.”
– Emma Cusdin

Lesson Summary

Students consider who they are by charting their identity's visible and invisible parts on an Identity Web. In this way, they can recognize and understand all they have in common and the character traits they possess that might help them support others.

Students will Examine

- The various characteristics and traits that make up their identity.
- What are the visible and invisible parts of their identities and the identities of their peers?
- What opportunities do they have to use parts of their identity to support others?

Pre-Activity Prep

- Prepare to project the Identity Web sample ([PDF](#)) (THINK.GIVE section).
- Print or digitally share the Worksheet: Identity Web ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (1/student) (REFLECT section).
- (Optional) Print or digitally share the Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (CONNECT + CLOSE section).



MATERIALS

ThinkGive Journals
Student Journal Guide ([PDF](#))
Blank paper (8.5x11 or larger)
(1/student)
Identity Web sample ([PDF](#))
Worksheet: Identity Web ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))
Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Introduction](#)
Video: [What Would You Do?](#)
(9:47)

SHARE

Nothing for the Introduction, no actions to share yet!

THINK • GIVE

Our Identities

Explain: Understanding our identity is an important first step to acting as an ally. Knowing ourselves allows us to authentically learn about others and discover how we are all connected. Building and sharing our identity webs will make us more prepared to take action as allies.

Project the Identity Web sample ([PDF](#)) (or make your own) to help students consider how to include visible and invisible character traits on their web.

Discuss:

- What are Justine’s visible character traits (those we can identify about her by looking at her)?
- What are Justine’s invisible character traits (those we can’t identify about her just by looking at her)?

As a class, brainstorm identity characteristics or different ways people identify themselves. These can include phrases, words, categories, interests, and traits (e.g., gender, ethnicity, race, religion, socioeconomic status, language, family size and composition, sexual orientation, etc.). Underline the invisible characteristics.

DIGGING DEEPER

Watch: [What Would You Do?](#) (9:47). This video highlights the need for sensitivity around invisible parts of our identity and how our experiences can impact our identities.

Discuss:

- What assumptions did the waitress make about the man trying to order food?
 - What would you do in this situation?
 - Why is it important to treat everyone respectfully, even if we do not know them?
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CONNECTION

[TeacherVision.com](#) offers a collection of traits if students need help generating examples.



TEACHER TIP

Provide time for students to brainstorm identity characteristics in their ThinkGive journals before discussing them as a class.

REFLECT

Build your Identity Web

Hand out the Worksheet: Identity Web ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (1/student) or a large piece of blank paper. Students can also use their ThinkGive Journals. Students write their name in the center box, then add as many character traits as they want (minimum 6-8). Encourage them to include both visible and invisible parts of their identities.

Discuss/share webs (in pairs or small groups):

- What similarities do you have with your partner?
- What differences do you have with your partner?
- What parts of your identity might you be able to use to help support others?
- What aspects of your identity have been recognized by others? How did that make you feel?
- How can learning about visible and invisible identities strengthen a community?
- What are the challenges of sharing certain parts of your identity?

COLLECT STUDENT IDENTITY WEBS TO USE IN THE NEXT LESSON.

CONNECT + CLOSE

Take Action

Explain: Before our next ThinkGive session [give date], use your words, actions, or presence to support someone. Your action might require bravery, but most important things do.

Things to Consider

- Be aware so you don't miss opportunities to support others!
- We all have character traits that we can use to support others.
- You can support others with your words, presence, and actions.

Closing Quote

Use this quote to close out the lesson. The reflective questions could serve as an Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)).

"Allyship is standing beside us when we need support, standing behind us when we need back up, and stepping in front when we need protection." – Emma Cusdin

- How can understanding our identity help us find the right time to stand beside, behind, or in front of someone who needs an ally?
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★ THINK.GIVE THREE

1. True: be authentic
2. Small: small is all! (simple actions have a big impact)
3. Brave: step into your courage zone

🎥 CONNECTION

Emma Cusdin is the director of Global Butterfly. She has fought for LGBTQ+ rights in the workplace and business.

Reflection Questions

- What action did you take to support someone?
 - Which of your character traits did you use to support someone?
 - Would you retake this action? Why or why not?
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Student Journal Questions

- Think back to who you were five years ago. What parts of your identity have changed? What parts have stayed the same?
- What is the most important part of your identity on your Identity Web? Why?
- What parts of your identity are you most proud of?
- Who in your life has been an ally to you? How did they support you?