

EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO

1. Identification of the educational scenario

1.1 Title of the scenario

“I Am What I Am”

1.2 Creator

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1.3 Topics or courses involved

Mental health; Sexual Identity; Citizenship Education.

1.4 Educational level

Primary

Secondary **X** (lower secondary education) 14-15 years old

Second chance school

Reception class

Other

1.5 Learning outcomes of the scenario

At the end of the scenario, students are expected to have acquired the skills that will enable them to:

- Be aware of key-concepts and understand the difference between sexual identity and gender identity;
- Think critically about the relevance of sexual identity in personality development and in the relationships we establish with others and the world;
- Understand how they can provide and ask for help in situations in which guidance about sexual identity is needed;
- Improve their skills of establishing and maintaining a healthy and balanced relationship with others;
- Respect the singularity of different people.

1.6 Time-duration

Class time: 2,5 hours

Outdoor preparation: 30 minutes

How many hours to be used in total: 3 hours

2. Development of the educational scenario

2.1 General description

1. Warm-up

1a. Challenge students to think and discuss “**sexual identity**”, based on the following questions:

- Do you ever hear about “sexual identity”? In which context/situation?
- What do you understand about “sexual identity”?
- Do you consider important to think and discuss “sexual identity”? Why?
- Does anyone ever talk or discuss with you about “sexual identity”? In case of yes, which was the conversation or discussion?

After the discussion in a large group, is important to introduce and clarify the concept of “sexual identity” (**Worksheet 1**). (15 minutes)

2. Discussion to explore

2a. Present the images “Brides and Grooms” (**Worksheet 2**) (5 minutes)

2b. Brainstorm activity

Challenge students to think and share some ideas and their perspective about the images, following a set of questions: (15 minutes)

1. What is the focus of the images?
2. What do you think about the images?
3. What did the images make you feel?

Tips for the teacher:

- During the brainstorming activity, write down the main ideas on the board.
- Ask one of the students to write down in a notebook the ideas shared by students.
- It is important to guarantee that all students share, at least, one idea or opinion.

At the end of the activity, highlight the main conclusions of it.

BINARY OPPOSITIONS to be explored

1. Should we assume our sexual identity to feel good with ourselves or should we change our sexual identity just to be approved by others? Is it normal I feel uncertain or conflicted about my sexuality or this mean that I have a problem? Should I talk with someone in the case I am questioning my sexuality?

Binary opposition 1: Should we assume our sexual identity to feel good with ourselves or should we change our sexual identity just to be approved by others? Is it normal I feel uncertain or conflicted about my sexuality or this mean that I have a problem? Should I talk with someone in the case I am questioning my sexuality?

3. Using Theatre techniques

3a. Discussion

- Divide the class into 3 groups.
- Each group will discuss the binary opposition, based on key-questions previously prepared, however, teachers can adapt, add or change it. (**Worksheet 3**). The teacher will share some ideas about sexual identity and how students can know more about it. In the **worksheet 3** are identified some possible reasons that teachers can use as support. (15 minutes)

3b. Using theatre techniques

- Select a group of 5 students responsible for structuring a scene, using the forum theatre technique, about a daily day life of a teenager interacting with his/her family, friends and colleagues, discussing his/her sexual identity. In each interaction, the students need to define the oppressed and the oppressor (15 minutes).
- The group of students will represent the complete scene to the other elements of the class once. In the second round of the presentation of the scene, students can stop the scene, whenever they consider that something “wrong” is happening and show how it should be the interaction between the characters, in their perspective. After showing how the scene should be, the group can proceed with the original scene. The teacher will act as the moderator of the presentation (30 minutes).

3c. Debriefing

- During the activity, students are likely to feel strong emotions. It is important to have frequent debrief sessions and make sure that participants’ feelings are not repressed. It is important to start the debriefing by allowing people to describe what they feel or think. The teacher can let them speak freely or can guide them asking some questions, namely: (15 minutes)
 1. Think about the scene that you prepared:
 - a. what did you feel in your role?
 2. Imagine that you would witness or live a situation of sexual identity:
 - a. do you know what you could do?
 - b. would you tell it to someone?

4. Dialectical Discussion to reveal the meaning

4a. Dialectical discussion to explore

- The teacher guides a discussion based on questions fostering the development of critical thinking skills (**Worksheet 4**). (15 minutes)

4b. Personalization

- The teacher tries to make the whole topic and discussion personal to mobilize students more (**Worksheet 5**). (15 minutes)

5.Action Plan

- The teacher can create an action plan with the students to define how they can deal with this problem.

Conclusions

- To closure the topic is important to discuss:
 - a) Recall the conclusions of the full activity;
 - b) About what students can do in the case they are living or know someone struggling with sexual identity, providing contacts and identifying organisations that can support them. (10 minutes)

2.2 Worksheets & Resources

- Worksheet 1: Definition of “sexual identity”
- Worksheet 2: Images “Brides and Grooms”
- Worksheet 3: Questions to explore in small groups
- Worksheet 4: Questions for Dialectical Discussion
- Worksheet 5: Questions for Personalisation

2.3 Infrastructure & Materials needed

- Board
- Paper and pen

2.4 Versions-adaptations

2.5 Challenges

- Some students may not want to participate due to personal experiences that can be related to the topic. The teacher needs to be aware of and prepared to deal with this situation.
- The lack of knowledge of teachers related to theatre techniques.

2.6. Further reading

- Kids helpline – Anytime, Any Reason. Available [here](#).
- International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) website. Available [here](#).

3. Evaluation of the educational scenario

- **Evaluation** - At the end of the scenario, through a focus group, the teacher will ask students to write down about:
 - a) What they felt about the activity
 - b) the challenges of the activity
 - c) what they learn with the activity
- **Lessons learned – conclusions**

Worksheet 1
Definition of “sexual identity”
from the Kids Help Line (Australia)

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/sexual-identity>

“Sexuality is about how you see and express yourself sexually - like who you have a crush on, who you want to go out with, and who you want to have sexual experiences with.

It’s not really known why some people are straight while others are gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, or queer. But some researchers think that there might be things that happen in our bodies from very early in life that shape our sexuality. There are lots of ways that people describe their sexuality.

Gender identity and sexual identity are often confused, but it’s important to understand how they are different. Gender identity is about how we see ourselves in terms of gender: male or female. Whereas sexuality is about who we’re emotionally, physically and romantically attracted to.”

Source: Kidshelpline – Anytime, Any Reason. Available [here](#) and [here](#).

Worksheet 2

Image “Brides and Grooms”

2a. Present the following images:



Worksheet 3

Questions to explore in small groups

Binary opposition 1: Should we assume our sexual identity to feel good with ourselves or should we change our sexual identity just to be approved by others? Is it normal I feel uncertain or conflicted about my sexuality or this mean that I have a problem? Should I talk with someone in the case I am questioning my sexuality?

3a. Discussion

1. In your opinion, can we love and have a relationship with anyone we want? Why?
2. What do you think about a boy loving a girl, a boy loving a boy and a girl loving a girl?
3. Do you think that is common to teenagers questioning their sexual identity?
4. Should a teenager talk to someone when questioning their sexual identity?
5. What do you think a teenager should do when finding they have a different sexual identity? Should they tell their family and friends?

Sexual identity

The relevance of sexual identity

“Sexual identity is fundamental to a persons’ overall sense of well-being, it is an important part of how we interact with others. Identity formation, and specifically sexuality are of the most basic and essential aspects of being a human. In order to have a healthy process of this formation of the self, it is important to allow others to freely express themselves without discrimination.”

Source: Article from Psycalive published by Daniella Pavone, Clinic Psychologist. Article available [here](#).

Sexual identity: which one?

“Most people know from very young who they want to have relationships with. For others, it can take until they are adults or longer to make sense of their sexuality.

But remember, sexuality is NOT a choice! It is different for everyone and is a natural part of who you are. Everyone has the right to feel comfortable and to be accepted for who they are.

Just because you define your sexuality one way now, doesn’t mean you can’t change your mind later. This doesn’t mean you’re ‘confused’ or ‘choosing’, it just means you’re still learning about who you are and what attractions and relationships feel right to you.

Your sexuality can be the same all your life or you might define yourself differently as you learn more about yourself.”

Does questioning my sexuality mean I'm...?

“Understanding yourself is a lifelong process, so it’s normal to feel uncertain or conflicted about your sexuality.

For some people, trying to make sense of their sexual identity can be confronting, confusing and emotionally difficult. These feelings are common when the attractions and relationships you have are not commonly accepted in your community.

For others, understanding their sexual identity, being themselves, and being around others like them is usually liberating and exciting.

We all have the right to be ourselves without needing to explain or justify this to anyone. Feeling pressure to hide who you are attracted to can feel very stressful. Like anyone that feels unable to be themselves, this can be stressful and lead to mental and physical health problems.”

Source: Kidshelpline – Anytime, Any Reason. Available [here](#).

Worksheet 4

Questions for Dialectical Discussion

Binary opposition 1: Should we assume our sexual identity to feel good with ourselves or should we change our sexual identity just to be approved by others? Is it normal I feel uncertain or conflicted about my sexuality or this mean that I have a problem? Should I talk with someone in the case I am questioning my sexuality?

4a. Dialectical discussion to explore

1. Should we hide our sexual identity to guarantee that we are accepted by our friends and family?
2. In your perspective is it common for teenagers to hide their sexual identity? Why?
3. In your perspective, why is sexual identity so important? Why we should discuss it?
4. Can we lose our friends and family if we a different sexual identity?
5. Do you think we can change our sexual identity throughout our life?

Worksheet 5

Questions for Personalisation

Binary opposition 2: Should we hide our sexual identity to guarantee that we are accepted by our friends and family? Can we lose our friends and family if we a different sexual identity? Does sexual identity change along with life, can we try to have a different sexual identity?

4b. Personalization

1. Think about the scene that you prepared, what did you feel in your role?
2. Think about the scenes you saw:
 - a. what did they make you feel?
 - b. Are you able to imagine what a person struggling with her/his sexual identity can feel, which are his/her fears?