



EduTrend Contents

P4C · IDENTITY AND SELF-UNDERSTANDING · HIGH SCHOOL

Body, Memory or Story?

Comparing theories of what makes a person the same person

Ages 15–18

Level: Advanced

60 minutes

Circle and pairs · up to 30

Activity 05

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 05 · AT A GLANCE

Body, Memory or Story?

Students learn three views. The body view says you are the same person if you have the same body. The memory view, associated with John Locke, says you are the same person if you remember being that person. The narrative view says you are the story you tell about your life. Teams test each view with puzzle cases, such as memory loss and body transplants, and enquire into which works best.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- explain three theories of identity;
- test theories with cases;
- identify strengths and weaknesses;
- construct a position.

KEY WORDS

personal identity · body · memory · narrative · continuity · Locke

CURRICULUM LINKS

Philosophy: metaphysics.
Psychology: memory. English: autobiography.

1

STIMULUS

Share something to think about

2

THINK

Quiet thinking time

3

QUESTION

Create and choose a question

4

ENQUIRE

Reason together

5

BUILD

Agree, disagree, add

6

REFLECT

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Theory cards
- Puzzle case cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people, and use the story or invented examples rather than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 05 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Stimulus	Introduce the three views and puzzle cases.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
10–22 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
22–52 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"What makes you the same person over time?"</i>
52–60 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Defend one view against the strongest puzzle case.

ACTIVITY 05 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

John Locke argued in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that personal identity depends on consciousness and memory.

Narrative views suggest that the story we tell about our lives helps make us who we are.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Memory loss means you are someone else.” Few accept this in real cases.
- “Your body is all you are.” Many disagree.
- “Stories can be anything we like.” They must fit our lives.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use two views.

Stretch

Invent a case that defeats one view.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

Test the views

Apply cases.

Test the views

Case	Body view	Memory view	Story view

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

**Can you be the author of your own identity? Before the enquiry I thought...
Now I think... because...**

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Body, Memory or Story? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Identity and Self-Understanding programme (high school, level: advanced). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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