

UNIT 1 WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

1 READING: for different purposes

1 FUTURE IDENTITIES: Changing identities in the next ten years

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Identity is changing. Over the next ten years, people's identities are likely to be significantly affected by hyper-connectivity (where people can be constantly connected online), the spread of social media and the increase in online personal information.

What does identity mean today?

- **PEOPLE HAVE MANY OVERLAPPING IDENTITIES**

This report considers several aspects of identities including country, religion, family background and social status. A person can have all of these identities at the same time. For example, at home a person may find their identity as a parent most important, while at work they might identify most as an employee. Online their sense of identity may be connected to a hobby.

- **PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR IDENTITIES IN DIFFERENT WAYS**

On the internet, it is easier for people to adopt an identity that is different from the way in which others stereotype them. Some people even feel that they have achieved their 'true' identity for the first time online. For example, some people may socialise more successfully, and express themselves more freely, online. This is one of the ways in which online identities can transform offline identities.

- **IDENTITIES HAVE VALUE**

People's identities have personal, social and commercial value. As more personal data is stored online, there is the potential for positive social interaction, but also for criminal exploitation or misuse.

Information source: <http://www.bis.gov.uk>

2 Expressing (and protecting!) your online identity – By Mark Mayes

MARK: Is it a good idea for young people to be on social media?

LIZ: Yes and no. You can find people who have similar interests, and you can express who you really are, with pictures, blogs and more.

MARK: Those are the good things. What is the downside?

LIZ: Well, we all change over time, but this is particularly true for young people; you're not the same person at 20 as you were at 15. That can be a problem because things you put online now may be embarrassing in a few years.

MARK: Are there other dangers?

LIZ: Yes. Young people need to remember that we have multiple identities. You may see yourself as a future pop star, for example, but you're also a student, an employee and a brother or sister or family member. It's very easy for the wrong person to see something. For example, if you complain about your teachers online, the college you want to go to might see that and it doesn't look good.

MARK: What about bullying?

LIZ: It's a real risk for young people. It's harder to control your identity online because anyone can post information about you. People can say hurtful and untrue things about you. But overall, I think social media is a great thing for young people if it's used carefully.

It's a real risk for young people.



A Look quickly at the two texts. Then answer the questions.

1 Where is each text from? Write the letter of the source next to each text number.

Text 1 ____ Text 2 ____

- a) a magazine article
- b) a textbook
- c) a novel
- d) a government report

2 Why would we read each text? Write the letter of the reason next to each text number. There may be more than one reason for each text.

Text 1 ____ Text 2 ____

- a) for pleasure
- b) for information
- c) to find out opinions
- d) to find out news



B Read the texts in Exercise A again. Choose T (true) or F (false) for each statement.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1 Technology hasn't changed identity in the last ten years. | T / F |
| 2 Most people have the same identity in all situations. | T / F |
| 3 Some people find it easier to express their true identity online. | T / F |
| 4 Your identity can be worth money to some people. | T / F |
| 5 Only you can change and control your online identity. | T / F |
| 6 People need to think about who might see their information online. | T / F |

2 VOCABULARY: personal identity

A Choose the correct options to complete the article.

We ask, you answer!

Today's question:
What influences your identity?



MATT, 41 | [click to listen](#)

Wow, that's a tough question! I think when I was younger, my friends really shaped who I was, so the **(1) social status / social group** I was part of was very important. Also I had a lot of big **(2) life goals / family values** back then. I wanted to be a musician, so music was my life and really influenced my identity. But things are different now. I'm a husband and a dad – that's how I see myself. So I guess **(3) family values / family background** are more important to my sense of identity now.



YASMIN, 20 | [click to listen](#)

Well, I've thought a lot about this since I came to study in the UK. In the Middle East, where I come from, a lot of people get a **(4) value / sense** of identity from their **(5) family background / life goals**. Not just your parents, but your grandparents and even great-grandparents show people who you are. If you come from a 'good' family, your **(6) social group / social status** is higher and people treat you better. Now, I still think family is a really important factor in your identity but it's not the only thing. The subject you study, your friends and interests are factors, too.

B 01 Listen and check your answers.

3 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: agreeing and disagreeing

A **02** Listen to a debate on a radio programme. Tick the person that makes each point.

- 1 It is good to buy cool clothes for children.
- 2 Children need to be part of a social group.
- 3 Children need comfortable clothes, not designer clothes.
- 4 Children should be allowed to look good if they want to.
- 5 Many parents can't afford to buy designer clothes for their children.
- 6 Personality, not clothes, helps develop a child's sense of identity.

Mark Owens Lisa Adams

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



B Listen again. Put the phrases for agreeing and disagreeing in the order that you hear them (1–6).

- I couldn't agree more.
- Yes and no.
- In a sense, you're right.
- Well, yes, to a certain extent, but ...
- I'm sorry, but I just don't think that's true.
- I'm afraid I can't agree.

4 GRAMMAR: review of past tenses

A Tick the sentences that refer to actions or states in progress in the past.

- 1 Kim was studying in Europe during the winter holidays.
- 2 Fareed had read the book before he saw the film.
- 3 Don't worry, Marisol. We weren't talking about you.
- 4 Mia did prepare for the interview, but it wasn't enough.

B Choose the correct options to complete the comments.

WHAT'S RIGHT?

- I was having to wear a uniform when I was at school.
- _____

LUISA POSTED A PHOTO



This was me at my big quinceañera (15th birthday party). Look at what I (1) *was wearing / had worn*! They say the quinceañera is when you become an adult. Ha ha!



JACOB:
I think you look nice! I (2) *wasn't having / didn't have* a big party for my 15th, but I (3) *did had / did have* a big one for my 16th. I (4) *didn't look like / wasn't looking like* an adult, either.



NATALIA:
Ha ha, you should see my quinceañera pictures. I (5) *was never wearing / had never worn* makeup before that day, so I (6) *put on / did put on* way too much. I really (7) *did feel / had felt* grown-up, though!

5 VOCABULARY: *sense*

A Look at the words and phrases in bold in the sentences. Write N (noun), V (verb) or A (adjective).

- ___ Maria said the book changed her life, but I found it confusing and couldn't **make sense** of it.
- ___ My friends always **sense** when I'm feeling low.
- ___ No one was surprised that Tom wore shorts when it was so cold. He doesn't have any **common sense**.
- ___ I've always been a **sensitive** person and try to understand how other people are feeling.
- ___ Instead of being **sensible** and studying business, Louise took classes in art and philosophy.
- ___ Don't ask Diego about his family. They don't get along, so it's a **sensitive** topic.
- ___ Sophia's best quality is her **sense of humour**. She can always make people laugh.

B Complete this magazine excerpt with the correct form of the words and phrases in bold from Exercise A.

My many identities

posted by Daniel
3 days ago



I've been reading a government report on the future of identity. It's fascinating, although some parts are a bit technical and it's difficult to (1) _____ them. According to the report, no one has just one identity. We all have different identities in different situations. Here are a few of mine!

- At university: I'm Daniel the class clown. People say I have a great (2) _____ and everyone loves my jokes – well, except for the teachers!
- At work: I'm an intern at a big company and I want a job there after I've graduated. People there see my (3) _____ side – I always find reasonable, practical solutions to problems. My boss says I'm the only one there who has any (4) _____.
- With my friends, I'm known as a (5) _____ person who listens well and gives good advice. I can (6) _____ when my friends are upset and I'm always there for them. My friends can talk to me about anything. No topic is too (7) _____!

6 GRAMMAR: *would, be + always, used to*

A Look at the structures. Write PP if the structure is used to talk about the present or past and P if it's used to talk about the past only.

- ___ *would (always/never) + base form*
- ___ *(always/never) used to + base form*
- ___ *be always + -ing form*

B Rewrite Nicole's comments using the structure in brackets.

'When I was young, (1) I tried to be part of the "cool" group. (2) I did what my friends told me to do, and (3) I often behaved irresponsibly. (4) I didn't have a strong sense of my own identity and, as a result, (5) I didn't feel confident.'

- (used to) *I used to try to be part of the 'cool' group.*
- (would/always) _____
- (be/always) _____
- (never/used to) _____
- (would/never) _____

C Complete the story with the correct form of the phrases from the box. You can use some phrases more than once and, in some cases, more than one answer is possible.

always do always make sure never help never take work

'It's funny how things change. I remember how, when I was really young, my father (1) _____ away from home a lot. Because of this, he (2) _____ my mum in the house or play with us. In contrast, my mum was the typical responsible wife and mother. She (3) _____ housework and she (4) _____ we had what we needed. She (5) _____ time off or relax. But nowadays, Dad works nearby, so he stays home while she goes out and has fun. It's great!'

WHAT'S RIGHT?

- I always was taking pictures to express myself.
- _____



A Read the text quickly. Then choose the correct options to complete the statements.

- 1 According to the text, *there is one* / *there are many* possible definitions of the word 'identity.'
- 2 The text says that a person can have *only one* / *more than one* identity, depending on the situation.
- 3 Everyone has *three* / *one of three* main types of identity, according to the text.

B Read the text again and choose the correct sentence for each gap. There is one extra sentence that you do not need to use.

- A These include identities such as family relationships, friendships, membership of communities and attachment to particular places.
- B There are several reasons why identities are important for policy makers in government.
- C They can also be *exclusive*, defined by *not* being a member of a particular group.
- D However, others have the potential to change over time, or may remain the same (such as national identity or attachment to places where people live or work).
- E These can be used to verify that people are who they say they are.
- F There is, therefore, no single definition of 'identity' that everyone agrees upon.

C Read the text again and answer these questions.

- 1 In the second paragraph, what is the main point about identities?
 - a) Your identity is created and controlled mostly by other people.
 - b) Every identity is unique and no two people have the same one.
 - c) The main way identities are formed is by rejection from a social group.
 - d) Identities have many parts and are formed in many different ways.
- 2 The word *rejection* in line 31 means ...
 - a) a feeling of sadness.
 - b) including.
 - c) refusal to accept.
 - d) the choice to quit something.
- 3 Which of the following is an example of social identity?
 - a) being in a football team
 - b) having blond hair and blue eyes
 - c) earning a good salary
 - d) having a university degree
- 4 The word *distinct* in line 58 means ...
 - a) obvious.
 - b) separate and different.
 - c) easily seen or heard.
 - d) excellent.
- 5 Having parents who are immigrants from another country is an example of ...
 - a) social identity.
 - b) biographical identity.
 - c) biometric identity.
 - d) none of these.
- 6 In the last paragraph, what is the main point about identities?
 - a) The parts of a person's identity can change over time.
 - b) Friendship groups change more easily than gender or ethnicity.
 - c) A person's family roles are not the same thing as his or her identity.
 - d) Hobbies are an important part of many people's identities.



D You are applying for a study-abroad programme. As part of the application process, write an essay of about 200 words on the following topic: 'My personal identity: past, present, and future.'

2.1 Definition of identity

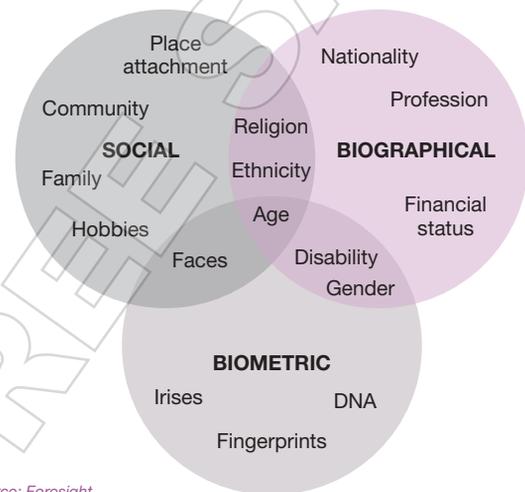
- 1 A person's 'identity' can be defined as those characteristics that determine who a person is. This includes a person's perception of themselves as similar to, or different from, other people, but identities can also be imposed by others.
- 5 Dictionary definitions of 'identity' are often based on a very simplistic notion of identity made popular during the 1950s by the developmental psychologist Erik Erikson. His concept suggested that identity is shaped by the interaction of three elements: a person's biological characteristics, their psychology and their cultural context. Since then, however, identity has become a key concept in a wide range of academic subjects, including political science, the social sciences and the humanities, and definitions of identity have expanded as a result. (1) —
- 15 These different interpretations have shown that identities are socially constructed and highly complex. Many different types of identity are now discussed, such as cultural identity, organisational identity and national identity. Even for an individual, there are many possible identities that overlap and can change over time or in different circumstances. People, therefore, each have an identity that combines many different aspects about themselves and together these give them a sense of meaning in their lives.

Identities can be *elective* or chosen by a person, such as by membership of a social group. They can also be *ascribed* or decided and controlled by others, for example, through data about a person collected by a supermarket. Identities can be *inclusive*, such as membership of a family, team, religion or other group. (2) — Again, these identities can be controlled by the individual or by others, for instance, through rejection from a group.

In general, there are three overlapping types of identities, social, biographical and biometric:

- **SOCIAL IDENTITIES** are generated through roles and relationships between people and wider culture and society. (3) —
- **BIOGRAPHICAL IDENTITIES** are identities that individuals might use to describe themselves to another or how they perceive themselves. These might include national identity, as well as ethnicity and religion – although these also have a strong social role. Identities such as a professional role or financial status might also be considered biographical identities.

Fig 2.1: Types of identities: social, biographical and biometric identities, and some examples of each type.



Source: Foresight

- **BIOMETRIC IDENTITIES** are those aspects of identity related to the body, including unique characteristics such as DNA, fingerprints, irises and faces. (4) —

A person therefore has a sense of self that is constructed from many elements and these could be considered as different 'identities'. Some aspects of an individual's identity are unlikely to change (gender, disability or ethnicity). Some types of identity change only very gradually over a person's lifetime (for example, age). (5) — Other social identities can change more easily, for example, when people belong to different communities (including online communities) or friendship groups. Some stages of life carry shifting family roles and responsibilities that create distinct identities, for example, being a child, being in a relationship, becoming a parent or grandparent, while professional and financial identities can change as jobs, status, careers and experiences alter. People can also have identities related to hobbies, leisure and consumption, which for some people can change rapidly, while others maintain their 'hobbies' as an important part of themselves over a long period of time.