

THE DOWSE  
EDUCATION TEAM

# Identity

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours

## Pre-Visit Activities

Photograph each child posing in a way to represent themselves. Print these out in black and white.

In another session, have students create an identity mind map on their images depicting all the components that make up their own identity. This could be writing, drawing or a mixture of both. Have them add colour to the areas they wish to highlight. This could also lend itself to being added to after their museum visit.

## Post-Visit Activities

The students have been looking at their own identity. Have them brainstorm how their school community projects itself and creates its own identity. For example, crests, logos, uniforms, behaviours, etc. Using symbols

and motifs students could design a new crest or badge for their school or one for a community group that they belong to.

Make a collaborative assemblage about identity.

Using the theme of how objects can help us define our identity have students bring a special item from home to represent themselves. If the object cannot be brought in they could draw it instead. Work collaboratively to assemble the artwork. In small groups have students discuss and respond to their installation. What did they learn about themselves and others?

If space is tight in your class, then photograph the final collaboration so that the photo becomes the final artwork.

## Further Web Resources

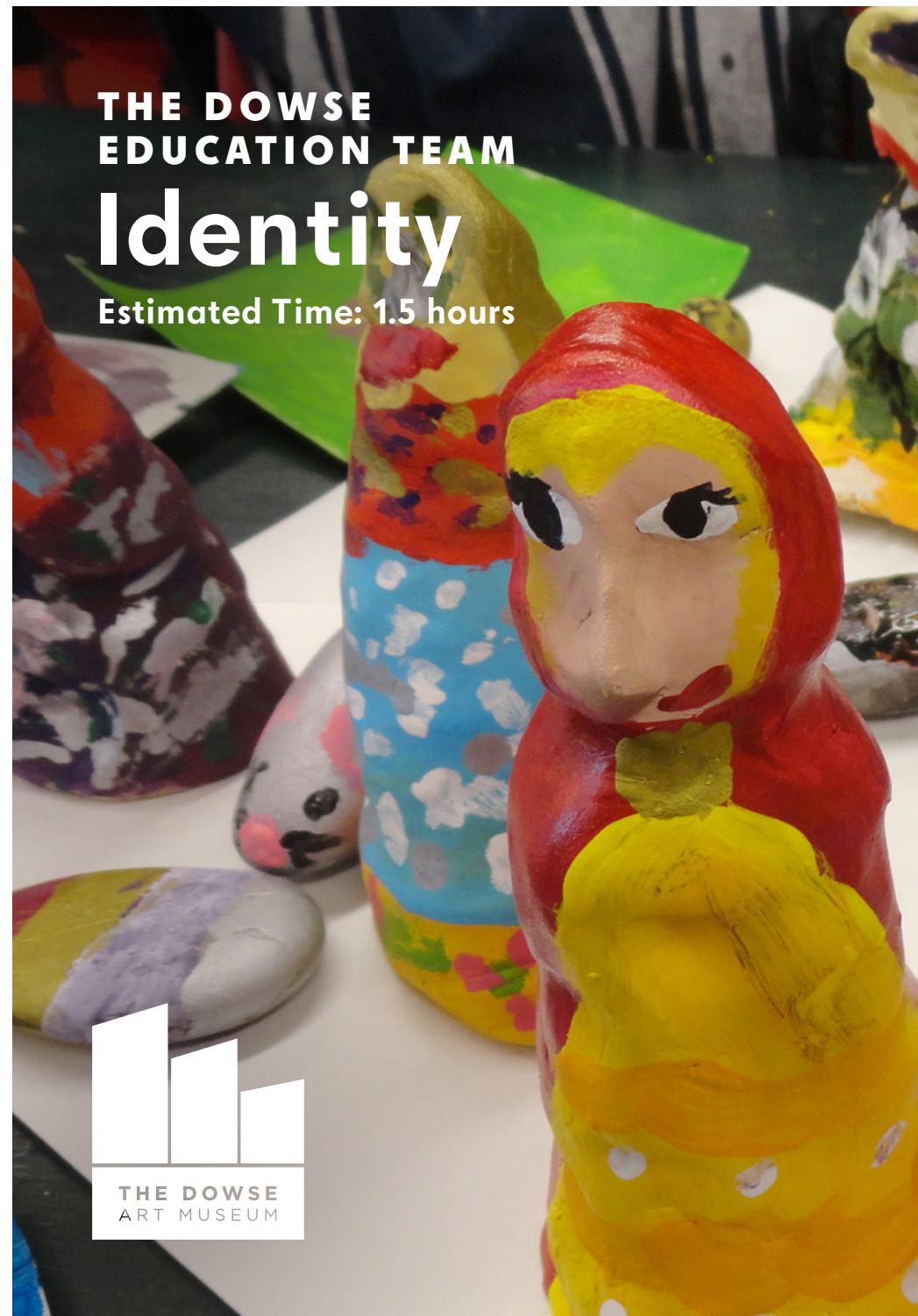
Watch "How Artists Explore Identity", on The Museum of Modern Art [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) channel



Contact our education team:  
T 04 560 1260 | [dowse.org.nz](https://dowse.org.nz)  
[education@dowse.org.nz](mailto:education@dowse.org.nz)



THE DOWSE  
ART MUSEUM



## **BACKGROUND INFO**

Identity is the way we perceive and express ourselves. Factors and conditions that an individual is born with—such as ethnic heritage—can be a part of forming that, as can friends, fashions, adornments, religious and political beliefs. Aspects of a person’s identity change throughout their lives. Our experiences can alter how we see ourselves or are perceived by others. It all helps shape us and give us a sense of belonging.

Many artists use their work to express, explore, and question ideas about identity, whether it is a portrait painter including symbols and objects to give us clues into the person’s character, or whether it is a badge designed to imply status and exclusiveness or political values.

Can a photograph capture the ‘real you’? Would it be an image of you or a series of objects instead? Maybe a landscape or a particular space? Would it include other people, or those events and experiences that shaped you most? Or maybe it would be abstract—a collection of sounds and colours, or perhaps words and text?”

## **THE SESSION**

### **Learning Experience**

Students will explore a range of artworks, identifying aspects that they relate to and discovering aspects about themselves, who they are and where they fit in to this world. They will complete their own work about identity to take away.

### **Curriculum Links**

#### **Visual Arts: Understanding the Arts in Context (Level 2)**

#### **Achievement Objective:**

Share the ideas, feelings and stories communicated by their own and others’, objects and images. Develop visual ideas in response to a variety of

motivations. Observation and imagination. Share ideas about how and why their own and other’s works are made and their purpose, value and context.

#### **Social Sciences: Identity and Change (Level 2)**

#### **Achievement Objective:**

Understand how people make significant contributions to New Zealand society.

#### **Key Competency**

Thinking / Using Language, Symbols and Texts

#### **Key Concepts**

We learn how artists share their ideas and feelings through their art.

We will begin to consider who we are and what we value.

We will make our own art expressing who we are in response to what we discover in the gallery.

### **Lesson Sequence**

- Welcome, overview of session and how we manage ourselves in the gallery.
- Seated upstairs, we will introduce the show.
- In pairs, students will find an artwork that speaks to them in some way; it could be a feeling it evokes, a colour, an object, a memory, the marks etc.
- As a group, students will share their responses and connections to the art.
- Discuss what makes them a unique and distinctive individual.
- Using gallery specific tools, students will explore artworks in small groups, discovering clues about the artist and discovering things about themselves.
- Group sharing and building on the question of ‘Who am I?’
- Workshop where students will get to make their own creations to take away.