



CLASSROOM VIDEO • VIEWING GUIDE

TEACHING STRATEGY: IDENTITY CHARTS FOR HISTORICAL FIGURES

Overview

In this classroom video, social studies teacher Elena Maker uses the Identity Charts teaching strategy with her students to prepare them for their upcoming Socratic seminar. Identity charts are a graphic tool that can help students review the many factors that shape who we are as individuals and as communities. Here Ms. Maker uses identity charts to deepen students' understanding of historical figures as

they consider the personal stories of civil rights activists Yuri Kochiyama and Angela Davis. These students are focused on an essential question: How do our personal stories influence how we fight for justice? Drawing on prior lessons the students have explored in the My Part of the Story unit, this class is considering how identity shapes people's choices and actions.

Questions to Consider

1. At **3:35**, a student states erroneously that Yuri Kochiyama spent time in a concentration camp instead of in an internment camp. How can putting together an identity chart as a whole group be more helpful to students than creating these charts independently? What are the potential drawbacks?
 2. In this video, Ms. Maker and her students create two identity charts and compare and contrast them. What other variations can you imagine using with this strategy? Why?
 3. At **4:35**, Ms. Maker says of her students, “They’re very used to talking about issues around identity at Blackstone. Our social studies curriculum in general really focuses on that.” Why do you think this social studies department has made the choice to focus on identity? How does this compare to how your school addresses (or does not address) issues of identity?
-

Featured

Elena Maker

Teacher

10th Grade

Blackstone Academy

Charter School

Pawtucket, RI

Video Goals

- **Learn** how identity charts can help students identify the various elements that shape one’s identity.
- **Witness** how the teacher guides her students in the use of identity charts.
- **Observe** students determining what information is most relevant when creating an identity chart.

Lesson Resources

- [My Part of the Story: Exploring Identity in the United States](#)
- [Teaching Strategy: Identity Charts](#)
- [Black Is. . . Black Ain’t](#) (video)