AXE 1: IDENTITY & EXCHANGES FOOD FOR THOUGHT



IDENTITY? It is basically WHO YOU ARE (what you think about you, how people see you, the characteristics that define you).

It is mostly IMPOSED ON YOU BY VALUES, BY OUR SOCIETY.

Identity is who you are, the way you think about yourself, the way you are viewed by the world and the characteristics that define you. An identity can be given by your name and can be related to your values that dictate the choices you make. Most of the time, you do not choose your identity; instead, you simply **internalize** the values of your parents or the dominant culture.

Identity may be acquired indirectly from parents, **peers** and other role models. The way they see you may determine how you see yourself. Identity may also derive from the rules of society in which you live and which impose membership rules and expected behaviours. An identity can also be an individual reflection of how you want to be seen at any one time by choice: it may be socially distinguishing **features** that you take a special pride in and that you want people to **identify** you **with**.

However, your identity can also evolve with time, experience, work, life accidents, challenges, hobbies, trips and **encounters**. The others can change your way of seeing the world, thinking and acting, and can be changed in return. Whether it is marriage, work relationships, friendships, support networks or exchange networks, these personal interrelationships can result in similar traits.

Identity can also be larger than an individual and **encompass** a nation. National identity is a person's identity or sense of belonging to one state or to one nation, represented by distinctive traditions, history, culture, language, symbols and politics. Yet, national identities are sometimes challenged by external phenomena. As immigration increases, some countries face the challenge of constructing national identity and dealing with immigrants; some adopt an inclusive policy encouraging immigrants to build a sense of belonging, while others have a more exclusive **policy**, excluding immigrants from sharing the national identity.

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| Un sentiment d’appartenance |  | Assimiler, acquérir |  |
| inclure |  | évoluer |  |
| Des caractéristiques |  | Des rencontres |  |
| Une politique, une pratique |  | Des pairs |  |
| Une valeur |  | S’identifier à |  |

EXCHANGES? An exchange is the act of giving something to someone in return for something from another. It can be material or immaterial (**knowledge**, culture, …). Exchanges are often used to **characterize mobility**, as well.

Gap years are good examples of personally transformative experiences. During this time taken off between high school and university, a gapper can travel abroad and carry out international **internships** or volunteer in local communities. The experience helps participants discover who they are and identify their true passions. They become strong, proactive and civically engaged community members.

LISTENING TIME:

What does a gap year consist in? Listen to Josh’s video on the blog and learn more about his experience. Recap what you have understood.

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| To threaten |  | steady |  |
| A lifestyle |  | evolutionary |  |
| knowledge |  | A citizen |  |
| A gap year |  | A border |  |
| acculturation |  | To seek |  |
| A trend |  | To undermine |  |
| globalisation |  | proactive |  |
| multifaceted |  | An internship |  |

**CONCLUSION:**

**Therefore, identity results from a broad range of influences, both internal and external.**

**It is unique and multifaceted, but also both steady and evolutionary.**

The world also becomes increasingly globalised, with more developed international tourism, communication and business collaboration. People around the world cross national **borders** more frequently **to seek** cultural exchange, education, business and different **lifestyles.**

**Globalisation** promotes common values and experiences, and it also encourages the identification with the global community. Yet, this **trend** may **threaten** national identity because globalisation **undermines** the importance of being a **citizen** of a particular country and may lead to a form of acculturation.