

Unit 1: Personal development

In this unit you will find out 

Who am I? A unique individual

- Each person is a unique individual.
- Heredity and the environment both contribute to make us who we are.
- We all have five different aspects of ourselves: physical, social, ethical, intellectual and emotional.

Where do I belong?

- We each belong to a different type of family.
- There are different unions and relationships that make up each family.
- All families have different customs and traditions.
- Families perform important functions – biological, economic, socialisation cultural and educational.

My role/responsibilities

- Each person has their own roles and responsibilities within the family.

How do I deal with conflict?

- What are conflict, conflict resolution and causes of conflict?
- Resolving conflicts at home, school and in the neighbourhood
- Different strategies for dealing with conflict

Appreciating and developing myself and my self-esteem

- The characteristics of high and low self-esteem
- Factors that contribute to self-esteem

Life cycle and adolescence

- The stages of human development
- How to deal with emotional and physical changes during adolescence

Who am I? A unique individual

We are learning to:

- define and use correctly the terms unique, individuality, characteristic, and individual differences
- recognise ourselves and others as unique individuals.

Each person is a unique individual

No two **individuals** are exactly alike. Even twins have **individual differences**. Your **identity** is who you are and the **characteristics** that define you.

Each person is **unique**, meaning we are special and different from everyone else. **Individuality** is what makes you different from others. Yet we all have similarities that relate us to other people, such as the colour of our eyes or being funny.

Your individuality comes from your personal characteristics. These may be characteristics on the outside of your body like your size and shape, your appearance and your physical abilities. On the inside, each person has their own thoughts and ideas, interests, hopes and fears. These are your actions, attitudes and behaviours.

We also have our own values (what we believe is important in life) and **ethics** (what we consider to be the right and wrong things to do).

You may look and sound similar to other people in your family and in your community, but no one is exactly like you. Our shared characteristics help us to belong and fit in.



We each have characteristics that make us similar to and different from others.

Exercise

1. Trace the outline of your hand. Fill in the outline with characteristics that make you unique. Write one characteristic in each finger.
2. Compare your hand with a friend's. What is similar? What is different?
3. Look at the photograph above. In pairs, list characteristics about each person:
 - a) Two similar characteristics
 - b) Two different characteristics

Did you know...?

No two people have the same fingerprint. Just like your fingerprint, your identity is unique. There is no one exactly like you.

Recognising ourselves as unique individuals

1.1

Look at the picture on page 8. You can see the differences between them. However, the picture only shows their physical characteristics. It cannot tell us what they like doing, how they treat others or what their interests are.

Each person has their own personal characteristics that determine their **personality**. Your personality is the combination of personal characteristics that make up your character. These characteristics determine how people behave in different situations.

To recognise people as unique individuals, we need to notice their:

- actions – what kinds of things they do
- attitudes – how they approach their actions, and how they view themselves and others
- behaviours – patterns in what they do and how they do it.



Discussion

What would happen if everyone were identical? What problems might we face? How does it benefit the community and the country to be made up of people with so many different talents and skills?

Project

Brainstorm words that describe who you are – your interests, beliefs, values and personal qualities.

Cut out words from magazines and newspapers to make your own 'word cloud'.

Exercise

- a)** Choose five words from the word cloud above to describe yourself.
b) Why did you choose those words?
- a)** Which words do you think your family and friends would use to describe you?
b) How accurate do you think are other people's descriptions of you?
- What three words would you like to use to describe yourself in 10 years' time?
- Draw a picture of yourself. Divide the area around the picture into five areas. Fill each area with words describing your personality.

Key vocabulary

individual
individual differences
identity
characteristic
unique
individuality
ethics
personality
personal qualities

Heredity and the environment

We are learning to:

- define and use correctly the terms heredity, environment and genes
- explain the impact of heredity and environment on us.

Have you ever wondered why we share characteristics with our **parents** and siblings? What you look like depends a lot on what your parents look like and the genes you inherit from them.

The characteristics that **children** inherit through **genes** from their parents is called **heredity**. Genes are like a set of instructions for your body and are the reason that you probably bear a resemblance to others in your family. You might inherit the same colour eyes, hair and so on.

The environment

How we interact with the **environment** – the world around us – helps to produce our personal characteristics. A person's environment is more than just their physical location. Your environment includes:

- your family
- your peers
- society
- culture and media
- your school
- your home.

All of these help to shape your physical appearance, personality, behaviour, attitudes and beliefs.

Exercise

1. Draw mind maps to illustrate what you understand by:
 - a) heredity
 - b) environment.
2. Give one characteristic of yourself that is only determined by heredity and one characteristic that is only determined by environment. Explain your choices.
3. True or false: every characteristic is the result of either heredity or environment. Give a reason for your answer.
4. Describe characteristics that make you similar to or different from other members of your family.

How does the environment and what we inherit from our parents affect us? It can affect our physical appearance, personality, behaviour, attitudes and beliefs.



What you look like depends on what your parents, or other members of your family, look like.

Research

Use the internet to research the words 'feral child'. See if you can find some stories of feral children and read them to your partner.

Physical appearance

Heredity determines physical **traits**, such as eye colour or blood type. The environment can affect physical appearance. For example, a light-skinned person who lives in a sunny environment may develop freckles from the sun.

Personality

The **social environment** has a strong impact on your personality. This is the world made up of the people around you: home, family love, siblings, neighbours, peers, teachers and other people. Moving to a new country or school, the loss of a parent, a divorce or conflict in the family home can also determine how a child's personality forms.

Behaviour

Some behaviours come naturally and do not require any teaching. For example, a newborn baby knows how to suckle milk from its mother. However, a lot of our behaviour is learned from our social environment, especially from our family and peers.

Attitudes and beliefs

Your **attitude** is the way you approach people and events in your life. Someone with a positive attitude may be optimistic and expect things to go well. Someone with a negative attitude may be pessimistic and expect things to go badly. In general, attitudes and beliefs come from their environment.

Exercise

5. For each of the following characteristics, say whether it is determined by genes, the environment or both. Give reasons for your answers.
- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a) The colour of your eyes | c) The language you speak |
| b) The sound of your voice | d) The music you like listening to |
6. In groups create dramatised stories of two characters that grew up in different environments. Show the impact of each environment on their characteristics.
- Here are some ideas of different environments: wartime; a loving family home; a family-run hotel. Or you can choose your own.



Identical twins have all the same genes, so their physical characteristics are very similar. However, they may have very different personalities.

Activity

In groups, write a story about a child who grew up in a particular environment (you choose) and the impact the environment had on the child's characteristics.

Key vocabulary

parents
children
genes
heredity
environment
trait
social environment
attitude