



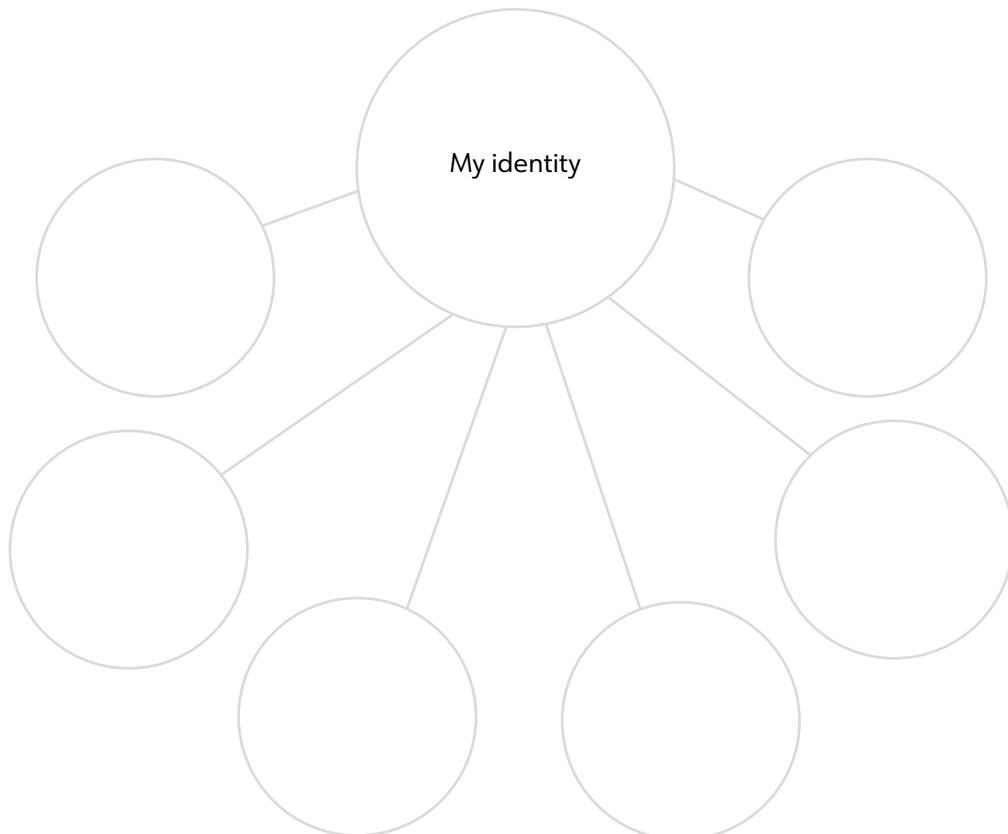
Power Relationships

Part 1

A. Read Ana's social media profile. Underline words that represent her personal identity.

My name is Ana, and I'm a middle school student in Merida, Mexico. My family is Mayan, so I love things that represent that part of my culture, like art and foods. At home we also speak Maya, one of the Mayan languages still spoken today. I guess I'm a pretty typical Mexican teenager; I love dancing, shopping, and hanging out with friends. I'm also a gamer, and I want to study computer programming. I'm in a club with other girls who are interested in math and technology. I feel math connects many parts of my identity. Did you know the ancient Mayas were excellent mathematicians? I think it's important to have more and more women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields.

B. Complete the mind map with words or phrases that represent your personal identity. If you want to, share your identity with some classmates.





Part 2

A. Match the words with their definitions.

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------|--|
| 1. power (n) | _____ | a. a special benefit that only a certain group or person has |
| 2. privilege (n) | _____ | b. unfair and bad treatment by a powerful person, group, or government |
| 3. oppression (n) | _____ | c. the ability to make decisions or control or influence what people do or think |

B. Label the examples PO (power), PR (privilege), or O (oppression). Then give other examples of each category.

- In a company, female and minority group employees get fewer promotions than white male employees. _____
- In a city, wealthy businesspeople convince the city government to pass laws that favor their businesses. _____
- You can go to movies for free because your dad owns the movie theater. _____
- Your friend can fly to Europe on vacation because his family has a lot of money. _____
- In a school, immigrant children are not allowed to speak their native languages. _____
- A famous star convinces her fans to buy a certain product. _____

C. Work in groups. Look at the photo of a business woman addressing a global business conference. What examples of power, privilege, or oppression does the photo suggest to you? Use the words in the box to help you with ideas.

age nationality gender appearance money social status language



Four horizontal lines for writing answers.



Part 3

A. Choose T (true) or F (false) for the statements about ageism.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Ageism is when a group of people is discriminated against because of their age. | T | F |
| 2. Only senior citizens suffer from ageism. | T | F |
| 3. "You're too young to make decisions about your education" is an example of ageism. | T | F |
| 4. "You look pretty good for your age" is an example of ageism. | T | F |
| 5. In the USA, there are laws to protect older people and young people from ageism. | T | F |

B. Read the text and check your answers to A. Then work in groups and discuss the questions.

The Oppression of Ageism

In the past, the term *ageism* almost always referred to prejudices and stereotypes about older people. Some of the most common stereotypes include the following: *Older people shouldn't make their own decisions about money or where they live; older people in companies shouldn't get promotions because they don't have enough energy or new ideas; older people shouldn't wear certain clothes or use 'young' expressions; older people can't learn new technology.* In many companies, people over 50 were asked to retire so that younger employees could take over.

The language used to and about older people showed that many societies did not value them. For example, people often made statements like "Wow, you used to be really pretty, Grandma," "Uncle Joe, you won't be able to understand computer games," or "Mr. Jones was a brilliant director, but he's getting older now." In the USA, there are now laws to protect older people from discrimination at work and from people who want to take away their social or economic independence. An employer cannot fire people just because they are over a certain age. However, ageism is still a problem for senior citizens and many older people feel that younger people do not respect them or recognize that they still have many important abilities.

There is another side to ageism, and that is discrimination against children, teenagers, and young adults. Language like "He's too young to decide he's going to study art," "She thinks she's smart, but she doesn't know much about the world yet," or "He's too young to get an important promotion," are all examples of ageism against young people. So far, there are no laws to protect young people against this type of discrimination, and sometimes young people are treated very unfairly. In stores, employees often think that teens will steal or break things. At work, older employees sometimes think that younger employees do not have good ideas or do not want to work hard to advance in the company. It seems that you have to wait a long time to be old enough to be respected, and then suddenly you're too old to be respected!

1. Do you think ageism against older people exists in your society? Give some examples. What about ageism against young people?
2. How do you think older people and younger people can work together against ageism?
3. Some other kinds of oppression are sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and cyber bullying. Discuss what these are and give examples.
4. Have you, or has someone you know, experienced any kind of oppression?



Extension

- A. Work in groups. Read about ways that teenagers can help fight against different types of oppression. Then discuss what types of oppression you think exist in your country or community and choose one to focus on.**

Teens against oppression

You may think that young people, especially teenagers, do not have the power to make important changes in society, but when young people organize and work together, they can make enormous differences in their communities, their countries, and the world.

Meet Christoph Alberts from Germany. Christoph believes that racism is a big problem in Germany and across the world, and he is organizing other young people to be more aware of what actions might be considered "racist" by people from different ethnicities and what they can do to prevent them so we can have a better future.

In Japan, Miho Kawamoto is working to educate her society about human rights and especially tolerance for immigrants. She wants her country to allow more immigrants from around the world to live and work in Japan, and she is organizing teenagers to help her with her message.



Christoph Alberts, Germany



Miho Kawamoto, Japan

Here are some ways that young people can work against different forms of oppression.

1. Choose a form of oppression that exists in your community or your country. Learn as much as you can about it. What is the history of the oppressed group? Who are the oppressors? How do similar groups fight oppression in other countries or communities?
2. Educate other people. Talk to your family, your friends, and your classmates about the problem. Often, people do not know or understand that there is oppression of certain groups or types of people. You can organize school assemblies or community meetings to teach people about the problem and to ask for volunteers to help.
3. Create a social media campaign to support your cause. Social media is the fastest way to send a message to a large number of people, and it is the best way to contact other teenagers in your area who want to help with your project.
4. Young people can try to get new laws against oppression. Write to your government representatives. Contact news organizations and offer to give interviews about what you and your organization are doing. Encourage older family members and friends to vote for candidates who will make changes. Volunteer to help candidates who support your cause with their campaigns.
5. Organize protests. Of course, all marches or public meetings have to be peaceful and you have to get permission to have them, but the sight of many young people marching or speaking for a cause, with colorful signs or T-shirts, can have a very positive effect on societies and governments.

- B. With your group, make a plan to organize against a type of oppression. Present your plan to your class.**