Handout: Sequence 1 (requires large sheets of paper and pens)

Your identity, your heritage

1. In groups of four, list the cultural events that you and your families have participated in.

Identity—Who we are often changes with whom we are with

2. In your group discuss how your behavior, language, presentation (for example: clothes, makeup, jewelry, choice of music) may change depending on the people you are with.

Consider the following people:
- your closest friend(s)
- parents
- grandparents
- the people you admire or look up to at school
- community group (church, sports, dance or music, neighbours)
- your school principal or teachers

3. Discuss: Why do we put on a different hat for different people?

Writing activity

4. On a separate piece of paper, in two or three paragraphs write a description of who you are when you are alone? Do not include your name.

5. Now try writing another description of yourself from someone else’s point of view. Select one person from the list above. Do not include your name.

Place these descriptions into the centre and take it in turns to read some one else’s paragraphs. Is it clear who the person being described is?

Sometimes we think other people have expectations of us that we have to live up to. Sometimes this can be challenging if we do not feel that this expectation is who we really are. This can often cause conflict between family members and within yourself.

6. Think of some examples where you have felt uncomfortable? It may be with a friend who you look up to; it may be with your grandmother or another family member.

At times we are asked to participate in cultural events that may seem insignificant or irrelevant, but there are expectations that you will participate. How do we cope in these situations? Discuss the ideas above as a class.

Discussion topic:
‘Often the less we understand about something the more irrelevant it seems to us.’