

Who Am I?

PRO TIP
Download other grades for alternate activities!

CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

282-294
355-357
362-366
358-360
1716-1724

MATERIALS

- ▶ [Who Am I? Chart](#)
- ▶ [Teacher and Parent Resource: The Human Person in Brief](#)
- ▶ [Teacher and Parent Resource: The Culture Says/The Truth Is](#)

SUGGESTED TIME

20 minutes

Teacher Background

Each human being is created in God's image and likeness, and deeply loved by Him. We are each a unity of body and immortal soul. It may be easier in some ways to believe that we are purely material beings and that after we die, we simply cease to exist. But the truth is that what we do in this life matters for eternity. Our bodies will die one day, but our souls live forever, either in Heaven or in hell. Christ is our hope as we strive to grow in holiness and fulfill the true meaning of our lives.

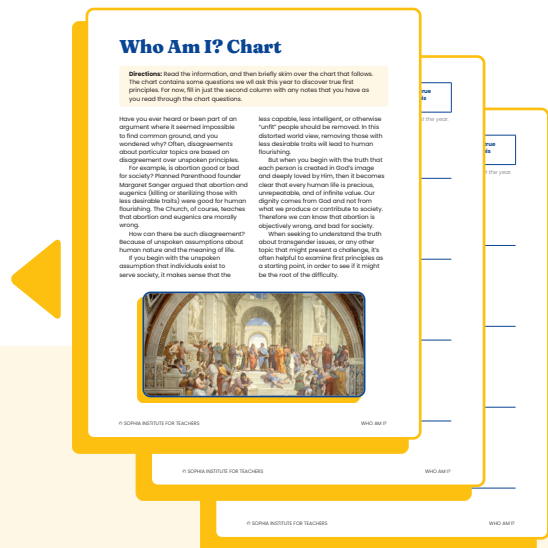


HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

This lesson begins a year-long process of confronting the errors of gender ideology. Students will learn that we are made to come to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world so that we might fulfill our intended purpose to be happy with Him for all eternity in Heaven. This can only happen if we are aware of our natures, our intended purposes, and the call to self-giving love.

Activity

- Explain to this class that over the course of this year we will be looking at the age-old question "Who Am I?" Since the dawn of humanity, people have sought the answers to questions like who we are, why we are here, and what the meaning of life is.
- Distribute [Who Am I? Chart](#) and read aloud the information.
- Note that for each question on this chart, there is a real answer that is good, true, and beautiful. That answer is taught by the Catholic Church. But there are other forces in the culture that seek to provide answers to these questions. Which answer we choose to accept and internalize will have massive consequences in our lives and the lives of those around us.



- D. Finally, explain that we will do a quick run-through of the real answers to the questions in the chart before we begin filling it out, and we will continue to complete it throughout the year.
- E. Use [Teacher and Parent Resource: The Human Person in Brief](#) to present a mini-lecture about the chart content. Encourage students to simply listen for now; they can listen for familiar ideas and jot down any questions they have, and you will answer each question fully as the year progresses.
- F. You may wish to send this resource home for parents, along with [Teacher and Parent Resource: The Culture Says/The Truth Is Chart](#).

Note: If possible, make a large copy of the Who Am I? chart and post it somewhere in your classroom so that students can see and be reminded of it all year long. Fill it in together as you complete the following lessons in this series.

Who Am I? Chart

Directions: Read the information, and then briefly skim over the chart that follows. The chart contains some questions we will ask this year to discover true first principles. For now, fill in just the second column with any notes that you have as you read through the chart questions.

Have you ever heard or been part of an argument where it seemed impossible to find common ground, and you wondered why? Often, disagreements about particular topics are based on disagreement over unspoken principles.

For example, is abortion good or bad for society? Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger argued that abortion and eugenics (killing or sterilizing those with less desirable traits) were good for human flourishing. The Church, of course, teaches that abortion and eugenics are morally wrong.

How can there be such disagreement? Because of unspoken assumptions about human nature and the meaning of life.

If you begin with the unspoken assumption that individuals exist to serve society, it makes sense that the

less capable, less intelligent, or otherwise “unfit” people should be removed. In this distorted world view, removing those with less desirable traits will lead to human flourishing.

But when you begin with the truth that each person is created in God’s image and deeply loved by Him, then it becomes clear that every human life is precious, unrepeatable, and of infinite value. Our dignity comes from God and not from what we produce or contribute to society. Therefore we can know that abortion is objectively wrong, and bad for society.

When seeking to understand the truth about transgender issues, or any other topic that might present a challenge, it’s often helpful to examine first principles as a starting point, in order to see if it might be the root of the difficulty.



STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

Brief answers provided below; topics will be explored fully throughout the year.

Who am I?	My notes about this question	How does gender ideology try to answer this question?	What is the true answer to this question?
What is my identity , and how can I know it for sure?	Student notes and questions will vary.	<p><i>We will fill these columns out throughout the year.</i></p> <p>Identity is self-determined.</p>	Son or daughter of God.
Do I have dignity ? Where does it come from?	Student notes and questions will vary.	Affirmation from others.	From God; from being made in His image and deeply loved by Him.
What is human nature ?	Student notes and questions will vary.	There is no such thing.	A unity of body and soul, created for communion with God.
What is the meaning of my body ?	Student notes and questions will vary.	A tool, or canvas for self-expression.	The soul made manifest.

STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

Brief answers provided below; topics will be explored fully throughout the year. Students not need to fill out these columns for this activity

Who am I?	My notes about this question	How does gender ideology try to answer this question?	What is the true answer to this question?
What is marriage , and why should people get married?	Student notes and questions will vary.	<p><i>We will fill these columns out throughout the year.</i></p> <p>Temporary arrangement for benefit of adults.</p>	Lifelong union of one man and one woman ordered primarily toward procreation
What is the purpose of human sexuality ?	Student notes and questions will vary.	Pleasure, self-expression.	Life-giving self-gift.
Who is a family made up of?	Student notes and questions will vary.	Whoever individuals choose.	Husband, wife, and children.
Why is there suffering ?	Student notes and questions will vary.	Suffering is caused by oppression.	Suffering can be caused by sin, and can be redemptive.

The Human Person in Brief

Directions: Use the notes below to present a mini-lecture.



For centuries, the Catholic church has taught the truth of the human person. These basic truths are summed up here.

First and most important — we are created, male or female, by a loving God. Because He loves us and created us in His image and likeness for eternal life with Him, we have inherent dignity. We can't lose our human dignity no matter how much we stray from Him or how others treat us. Because we have dignity, every person must be treated with love and respect,

and never used as an object for another's pleasure or gain.

We are a unity of body and soul. You are your body; it is not something other or less than your "real self."

The body has meaning. Our bodies reveal the truth that males and females are made for one another. We are equal in dignity, but different and complementary in design. The body allows us to make a total gift of self to another person in marriage.

And from this gift of self, we have the tremendous privilege to cooperate with God in creating a new human being — a child. Sex, by design, has two purposes — **it is life-giving and love-giving.**

This sexual difference between male and female, the Church teaches, is the anthropological basis for the family. In the family — a husband, wife, and child — our love is called to mirror the Trinity.

We also know that all of us are broken, afflicted by sin, with our own weaknesses. Everyone has them. These sins don't make any one person better or worse than any other. But God doesn't leave us in our weakness and sin — He sent Jesus to die for us and to rise again, conquering sin. **Jesus promises us His grace and mercy to help us bear the burdens of human life, to persevere in virtue, and to overcome sin.**

This is who we are — the human person, in brief.

The Culture Says/The Truth Is

This resource presents mistaken ideas or statements popular in the current culture, alongside true statements that flow from Catholic teaching. The first section on definitions and first principles is important to understand before beginning any conversations on Section II.

Section I: Definitions and First Principles

	What the culture says	What the Truth is
HUMAN NATURE	The meaning of life is to maximize happiness.	The meaning of life is to get to Heaven.
	Our value comes from our talents or achievements.	Our value is infinite as persons made in the image and likeness of God.
	The individual exists to serve the economy.	The economy exists to serve individuals.
	People are naturally good.	People are inclined to sin but capable of virtue, and need God’s grace to live as we should.

THE ROLE OF FEELINGS

What the culture says	What the Truth is
<p>Our feelings should guide our choices.</p>	<p>Our intellect should guide our choices; feelings are subordinate to our intellect and will.</p>
<p>Love is a feeling.</p>	<p>Love is an act of the will. It is the free choice to will the good of another.</p>
<p>Good things are those which feel pleasant, or bring feelings of happiness.</p>	<p>Good things are those which help us be what God created us to be.</p>
<p>If it feels good, it must be right.</p>	<p>Our feelings can lead us in the wrong direction, and to sin. It's important to keep our feelings in check, under our intellect and will.</p>

What the culture says	What the Truth is
<p>Our physical body isn't really who we are. It's more like a "shell" for our true self, which is who we are "inside."</p>	<p>Every human being is a unity of body and soul. Our body, male or female, is a fundamental part of who we are.</p>
<p>Our bodies are ours to do with whatever we want.</p>	<p>We should care for our bodies in light of the reality that they are gifts from God, and Temples of the Holy Spirit. God's creation is to be cared for lovingly, not dominated or controlled.</p>
<p>We should use whatever medical technology is available to make our body do what we want.</p>	<p>We should use medicine and medical technology to restore the body to how it was designed to function.</p>
<p>If something occurs in a lot of people, it is natural and therefore good.</p>	<p>The fact that something is common does not make it natural or good. Natural things are those which help us achieve our purpose: bodies to function as designed, and souls growing closer to God.</p>

Section 2: Transgenderism

What the culture says	What the Truth is
<p>Those who identify as the opposite sex should be affirmed in that decision.</p>	<p>Manhood and womanhood are realities. They are not feelings, no matter how sincerely those feelings are experienced.</p>
<p>Trans people should be celebrated in a special way.</p>	<p>Those who struggle with a confused sense of sexual identity must be lovingly accepted as persons created in God's image with the same dignity as any other person. Further, as Christians, we must pray for peace in their unique struggles and support them with Christian charity, all the while upholding the truth of God's plan for life and love.</p>
<p>Someone who believes they are the opposite sex should be encouraged to have surgery or take hormones to change their body.</p>	<p>We should treat those experiencing identity- and body-related distress with compassion, and it is never compassionate to lie to someone. Just as we would not withhold food from someone with a body image disorder, we should not encourage someone to take drugs or mutilate their body to align with a mistaken belief about gender. We should lovingly encourage and help them to accept their body including their identity as male or female.</p>

What the culture says	What the Truth is
<p>Men who identify as women should be able to compete in women's sports (and vice-versa).</p>	<p>The reason we have separate sports for girls and boys is because of the inherent differences between males and females, and the physical advantages most boys have over most girls. It is true that some of the strongest women are stronger than the weakest men. But on average, men are bigger, stronger, and faster than women, making meaningful competition between them unrealistic in most sports. Girls deserve teams of their own to fairly compete</p>
<p>But on average, men are bigger, stronger, and faster than women, making meaningful competition between them unrealistic in most sports. Girls deserve teams of their own to fairly compete.</p>	<p>Every human being is a unity of body and soul. Our body, male or female, is a fundamental part of who we are.</p>
<p>Boys who identify as girls should be able to use girls' bathrooms and showers (and vice-versa).</p>	<p>Girls need private spaces of their own. Boys who identify as transgender deserve to be treated with compassion, and so do girls. They deserve places of privacy where they can be free of the gaze of boys/men while they are showering or changing clothes.</p>
<p>We should use peoples' preferred pronouns, even if it requires us to call a biological female a male and vice-versa.</p>	<p>To affirm someone in an identity at odds with their sex or to affirm a person's desired "transition" is to mislead that person. Further, saying a male is female or vice versa is a lie. God calls us to tell the truth, but we must always tell it with charity. We must find charitable ways to express ourselves that do not require us to break the Eighth Commandment.</p>

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