

# Defining Identity

**Defining** is explaining the meaning of a word or concept.

**You define when you**

- answer a child's questions about what a word means
- explain what you mean by out of bounds when you play a game
- learn a technical term like *photosynthesis* by stating its meaning in your own words
- discuss whether your idea of identity is the same as someone else's

What are some other situations where you might use the skill of defining?

## Defining Identity

**Cluster Question:** How do I find out who I am?

**Directions:** The excerpt in **Organizer A** on the following screen is from “Remember Me” by Vivian Vande Velde. It conveys a young prince’s feelings when he realizes he has lost his memory and, therefore, his identity. Look for the ways the prince searches to define, and thus rediscover, who he is.

# Defining Identity

## Organizer A

### Excerpt

My clothes are satin and brocade. I have two rings, one on each hand—one is set with two emeralds; the other is simple gold, in the form of a dragon eating its own tail. I also have a gold clasp for my cloak. *So, I reason, I'm a wealthy man.* And, it takes no memory but only common sense to know, wealth means power. But I don't feel powerful, without even having a name.

*from "Remember Me," by Vivian Vande Velde*

### Examples of What Identity Is:

knowing who you are; knowing why you possess certain things; feeling powerful and in control of yourself

### Examples of What Identity Is Not:

having money or expensive things when you don't know what they mean or why you have them; having wealth when you do not know yourself

## Defining Identity

**Directions:** Using **Organizer A** as your model, develop your own definition of identity by jotting down examples of what *you* think identity is and is not in **Organizer B**. Then combine the most important elements in a short, well-structured sentence or two.

# Defining Identity

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## Organizer B

Examples of What Identity Is:	Examples of What Identity Is Not:
My Definition of Identity:	

After reading the selections in the book, you may wish to expand or alter your definition.