



## **Ages in Stages: An Exploration of the Life Cycle based on Erik Erikson's Eight Stages of Human Development**

Curriculum Unit 80.01.04  
by Margaret Krebs-Carter

When I was in the midst of the “who am I”/“what am I going to do with my life” muddle, I began to read Erik Erikson’s book, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. It was a huge relief to learn that I was not experiencing something atypical.

I discovered that Erikson’s own life history led him to examine the issues involved in “coming of age”. His personal background is unusual: he was born to Danish parents and lived in Germany. His father died when he was a baby and his mother remarried a German physician. Rather than going to the university as his stepfather wished, he drifted—spending some time with friends walking in the Black Forest and spending the rest of the time in Florence and Vienna studying art. He never did enroll in a formal university program but received training in Montessori education and eventually started a school using its methods. While in Vienna he also became an accepted and well respected member of a group of lay analysts, educators, and physicians—the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society.

Erikson’s unusual choices did not handicap him; he became known as a gifted and sensitive analyst with an unconventional approach and perspective due to his background with children. Like many others in this psychoanalytic community he emigrated to America upon the rise of Hitler. He was invited to develop new programs focusing on children in this country. In the 30’s anthropologists asked him to join them to do field work with the Sioux Indians.

These experiences coupled with his own history led him to create a model for human development different from the Freudian psycho-sexual one with which we are all familiar. He identified eight life stages from birth to death. Each stage is characterized by the social as well as the physical and mental developmental hurdles that arise during the particular age. Adolescence, for example, involves the emotional crisis of “Identity and Role Confusion.” Physically, the body is changing or has changed so that the child becomes an adult—able to reproduce. Mentally, the adolescent’s brain can function on a more complex level than can a child’s. Ambivalence and in-betweens become a possibility. Socially, the adolescent is preparing to leave home in order to embark upon a career and create a new home. New responsibilities as well as new freedoms must be coped with. Emotional issues stem from the mounting pressures and create, according to Erikson, a feeling of confusion that is normal and healthy, not neurotic, or evidence of personality breakdown. Each emotional crisis has a positive and negative component, a polarity, which must be experienced in order for growth or a resolution of the life stage to occur.

For anyone unfamiliar with the eight stages I have listed them below along with the approximate ages and the changes in social relationships that take place during each stage.

#### STAGE AGE CHANGES IN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Trust and Mistrust 0-18 months Relationship to mother  
Autonomy and Doubt 18mths.-3yrs. father, family, relatives  
Initiative and Guilt 3-5 peers, community members  
Industry and Inferiority 6-12 teachers, classroom, clubs  
Identity and Role-Confusion 13-18 . . adventures beyond home/school  
Intimacy and Isolation 18-30 selection of “significant other”  
Generativity and Self- 30-55 giving to the next generation  
Absorption  
Integrity and Despair 55 . . . . decreasing social contacts—  
returning to family

As I stated earlier I, personally, was drawn to the Erikson stages. Throughout my teaching career, I have designed curricular materials for many different skill levels based on these stages. My reasons for teaching Erikson go beyond my own enthusiasm. Adolescence is a time of introspection, a time to examine values, goals, political and religious beliefs, and attitudes towards one’s own family. It is, therefore, a personal time. To dwell on this introspection, however, is not my aim. Rather, I believe it is important to acknowledge the students’ focus on themselves and channel that interest and energy in two directions: reading literature that explores various life crises and observing, interviewing, and interacting with people at different points in the life cycle. I have noticed that adolescents’ extreme egocentricity causes them to believe that everyone feels as they do. Our culture further isolates teenagers by providing them with their own music, clothes, and fads. Schools keep kids together. Young people spend the bulk of each day with people of their own age, thus reinforcing each others’ beliefs and values.

I feel it is crucial to provide students with an understanding of age differences as a way to confront this egocentricity. Erikson’s eight stages provide the structure to achieve that goal. By presenting all eight stages, a teacher can expose students to new concepts, vocabulary, and literature that help explain the life crises. The contact with people offers students a chance to hear other points of view: listening to a Gray Panther discuss the inequities of our culture may prompt a student to question, act on his/her beliefs, or think differently about a grandparent. Watching children and discovering that one has the ability to teach and form a relationship may provide a sense of confidence and self-respect.

Since many students are also parents, looking at issues that small children encounter may clarify the behavior of their own children. By studying the Erikson stage, “Trust and Mistrust,” students may realize the importance of building a warm, loving, relationship with an infant. Similarly when students see that a toddler is developing independence they may be able to identify with that struggle and have more empathy.

Finally, I chose to write up this unit because teaching Erikson’s eight stages of human development has been a successful vehicle for pulling a class together to read, discuss, write, imagine, and observe. Many types of students—mature, young, articulate, average, and below average—have been attracted to the course and have worked toward meeting the expectations of the course: attendance, writing, and group participation.

In preparing this unit I have thought of it as an eight week unit for juniors or seniors, capable of reading intermediate to advanced level material. Equally important is my assumption that students will be encouraged

to participate in group discussions, role-play, student-led interviews, and small group work. Room flexibility is also recommended so that the furniture does not inhibit activity and student interaction.

### ***How To Begin***

In a class where so much can be gained by having students feel comfortable with each other so that they will relate their own experiences, taking time to establish or re-establish relationships is a must. In the first meeting of the class, after introductions, I ask them to gather in a circle in order to get to know one another. (for more information see Appendix 1 “Guidelines on Running a Sharing Circle”.) I ask the group to think about the street or one of the streets where they lived as a child. I then describe the street where I lived, setting the tone by being brief and direct. “It was a gravel, dead-end road that got very dusty.” Each student then gets a turn as the teacher makes sure that the circle moves quickly. Allow students to pass, but give them a second chance at the end of the round.

The second round should be more specific and personal. Have each student name one thing that he or she did on that street while still a child. This gives students the opportunity to talk about one activity they used to enjoy. Again, give each person a turn so that you can encourage participation.

The third and fourth rounds can be open discussion, as opposed to giving each student a turn. Ask students to think about what they imagined themselves to be as they played. For example: “I always wanted to be Dale Evans and play ‘Cowboys/girls and Indians.’” Students will usually talk about playing Superman, Batman and other “superheroes” as well as doctor, nurse, teacher, secretary, etc. finally ask them to think ahead in time and share what they imagine they will be doing in ten years. Encourage each person to talk.

Journal writing is a good follow-up to the “sharing circle”. Ask students to write down the similarities and/or differences between how they saw themselves at five and how they see themselves in the future. How do they account for the changes? lack of change? This exercise does several things: 1) it gives every student a chance to articulate his/her ideas even if he/she did not participate previously; 2) it introduces the idea that all ages do not think alike; and 3) it gets kids writing right away.

The final activity should make clear that skill development is also a function of the class. Give out a list of 25-30 words that are associated with different age groups: bottle, prom, wedding, scouts, career, wheelchair, etc. Ask students to put these words together and label the groups however they wish. Usually some student will classify the words by age. That furnishes another way to introduce the broad topic of the course: the life cycle and human development.

A homework assignment can then be a paragraph of a description of themselves as they are now. On the first day, then, I have encouraged them to participate within a group, assigned two types of writing, and introduced the subject matter of the class.

The next class should reinforce the previous day’s expectations: student participation, the homework assignment, and the new concepts. Ask students to read over silently their own homework and think about what ideas they discussed. What was important enough to be included? After a brief discussion ask them to brainstorm a list of interview questions that would elicit similar information from any age group. Next ask students to choose someone that they do not know and interview them using the questions just listed.

As a follow-up ask them to answer these questions in their journals: Which questions did you avoid: Why? What type of questions gave you the most information? Which are the best ten? Then combine three pairs into

a group of six and have these new groups select the best ten. Finally as a whole group discuss which questions will facilitate finding out what different age groups feel about their age. Questions that have worked in the past are: “What do you like to do with your free time?” “What do you care about?” “What do you spend money on?” “Where do you spend the biggest part of your waking hours?”

The next homework assignment might be to have students interview at least two people from different age groups that are not family members. Assign each student to an age group and define the age boundaries: pre-schooler, elementary age, 20-30 year olds, 30-55, and retired or senior citizens.

As soon as students arrive the next day, team them up with others who have worked on the same age category and have the various teams prepare group reports on what pre-schoolers, elementary schoolers, young adults, middle-aged folks, and their elders thought/ felt/ believed. Finally, students should write an essay about the ways in which age can make a difference in how people act, think, and feel. At this point for less advanced students distribute a vocabulary list including important words that have been used such as: behavior, development, physical, emotional, social, mental, etc.

### ***Teaching the Eight Stages***

During the first week you have introduced the components of the class—small group discussions, interviewing, vocabulary, journals, and paragraph writing. You are now ready to introduce the Erikson stages. In a mini-lecture, talk about Erikson’s life and the development of his theory of life stages. Explain the idea of polarity. It may be important to stress the fact that Erikson’s theory is about normal folks, not abnormal mental patients. Sometimes students associate all psychiatrists with “crazies” and dismiss what Erikson has to say.

## **STAGE ONE: TRUST AND MISTRUST (Infancy)**

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If the class works well together, split it into triads and do a value clarification exercise called “Value focusing”. Each student completes these two sentences: I trust people in groups when . . . . I mistrust people in groups when . . . . While Student A is sharing her/his feelings and ideas, Student B is responsible for drawing her/him out. Student C acts as recorder. All three switch roles until each student has played each part. (Note: there are dozens of trust activities that would be appropriate to introduce the stage.)

After the initial warm-up students should read aloud the Erikson material (see bibliography for suggested readings). Talk about the importance of building a consistent, dependable relationship with a parent and the consequences for the infant if that is missing. Explain the development that occurs during the period of infancy—walking, talking, and the inherent separation fears that go hand-in-hand with each accomplishment. Show how important both sides of the polarity are so that the child resolves the conflict.

When students understand what Erikson is stating, invite several parents and infants (one-year olds) to class in order to give the kids a chance to see infants in action and to question parents about the behaviors they have learned about in order to more fully understand the parent-child relationship at this age. It never fails that at least one of the little kids will charm the big kids and break the ice between the parents and students. Students can then try several experiments with a child: What happens when a parent leaves the room? What captures a child’s interest? How long does a child relate to a stranger before returning to a parent?

Another important component of this course is literature. A short story, novella, or play can be used to illustrate the conflict within each stage. I have used Anais Nin’s “The Mouse” in connection with the “Trust-

Mistrust” stage. It shows the results of extreme mistrust by presenting a character who is helpless, passive, and fearful. Through her relationships with her employer, boyfriend and neighbors, the Mouse effectively demonstrates how easily mistrust can cripple a person.

In teaching this story have students outline the incidents that occur so that they can examine the relationships. Why does the Mouse end up where she does? What happens to the Mouse? Why do you think that? What social factors contribute to her situation? What evidence is there of the Mouse attempting to trust? An essay idea that integrates the story and the Erikson material is to have the students re-write one aspect of the story as if the Mouse had resolved her trust-mistrust conflict.

Having gone into some detail for the first stage I will give briefer accounts of how to teach the remaining seven stages. What I tried to do for each stage was to give students a variety of activities to illustrate the materials and then integrate it:

1. an opening warm-up that draws from their own experiences that introduces the concepts of the stage
2. a reading of Erikson identifying vocabulary and major points
3. an opportunity to interact with people of the age group connected to the stage
4. a reading that illustrates the emotional issues
5. an assignment that integrates all the material.

## **STAGE TWO: AUTONOMY AND DOUBT (Toddlerhood)**

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This stage, according to Erikson in Chapter II of *Identity: Youth and Crisis* , is characterized by the crisis that occurs due to an emerging autonomous will, more often referred to as the “terrible twos”. One of the issues, therefore, is what kinds of limits to put on a toddler without inhibiting his/her sense of autonomy. Stifling a child will lead to a restrained, uncomfortable person.

### *Activities*

Possible “sharing circles” topics that I can suggest are: “A time when you were punished and did not deserve it”; “A time when you were punished and should have been”; “A time when you were not punished and should have been . . . ”

Another way to get kids to think about autonomy and doubt is to talk about why we have rules. Give them the types of rules: traffic and safety laws, protection of moral standards, rituals and traditions, and taboos and then have them supply examples. Students can then discuss how rules protect and also inhibit their behavior. This could be done as a journal also.

Finally have students think about what rules they would set down for a 2 year old. What things would you insist upon? Would you spank and when? Have students put these ideas on newsprint so that students can exchange papers and write their reactions to each other's rules. Make sure they think about what kinds of rules would either be too strict or too loose. Keep the newsprint pages for the day that parents come in to talk about two year olds and discipline.

### *Readings*

*Trio for Three Gentle Voices* . Harold Brodkey

This story depicts two very different child-rearing styles and brings up the issues of limit-setting. It could easily lead to a discussion of spanking/beating.

*A&P*. John Updike

A clerk in a supermarket walks off his job in defense of a principle, sacrificing his job and his parents' approval without gaining any heroic rewards.

## **STAGE THREE: INITIATIVE AND GUILT (Pre-schooler)**

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The child has left the stage of imitation and can now explore, imagine, and initiate play. The social world encompasses more than his/her family; it also includes the community and possible nursery school. The pre-schooler sorts out the rules, expectations, and morals of this newly-discovered world through their play—pretending to be doctor, mother, Superman, etc. At times, however they lose sight of the line between fantasy and reality. To them if they can imagine something, they can do it. The fear of that power or impulse turns into guilt.

### *Activities*

Hand students a piece of newsprint and have them draw a room in their house at age 5. After drawing have them write down what they can remember about playing there. What were their fantasies?

Visit and observe a nursery school and look at the equipment. What types of imaginary play does it encourage? What roles do you see kids playing? What is their teacher's role?

Prepare a ditto about moral conflicts students might have as adolescents: Should I cheat on an exam? Should I drive and drink? Have them also distinguish between conflicts about: *Should* I do something and *Can* I do something (Autonomy and Doubt) . . . . Can I leave home, Am I ready to be responsible? Can I make it through basic training?

### *Readings*

*My Oedipus Complex* . Frank O'Connor.

A five year old boy is living in a blissful state with his mother's full attention while father is overseas at war. When Father returns life is hell and a new battleground occurs between Father and son for Mother's attention. The story and emotions resolve themselves when father and son align themselves after the birth of a new

daughter. (Should be used only if one is prepared to explain the Oedipal complex and the resolution of sex-roles, according to Freud.)

*Charles* . Shirley Jackson

When Laurie goes to nursery school he encounters a very bad child, Charles. Each day he brings home tales about this child. His parents listen intently. After a month Charles begins to reform and be the teacher's helper. When Laurie's parents attend the parents' meeting, they learn there is no Charles in this class.

## **STAGE FOUR: INDUSTRY AND INFERIORITY (Child)**

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At this stage the child learns the basic skills of her/his culture. The child needs to feel self-satisfaction through accomplishments and mastery. If this fails to happen, the result is a sense of inferiority.

### *Activities*

A bridging activity between Initiative and Guilt and Industry and Inferiority is to brainstorm with the group a list of games they played as kids. Cover the blackboard and then classify the games into sub-headings: Power, Skills, Sex, Aggression, Relationship. Have students interview kids from 5 to 12 years old and see if skill games become more important as they get older.

### *Readings*

*Through the Tunnel* . Doris Lessing.

A young English boy on vacation discovers that the native kids have a secret tunnel under water that they disappear through when he swims with them. The story reveals his personal struggle to go through the tunnel.

## **STAGE FIVE: IDENTITY AND ROLE-CONFUSION (Adolescent)**

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(Since this stage is of particular interest to high school students, I usually devote more time to it.)

Erikson sees identity as "the capacity to see oneself as having continuity and sameness." <sup>1</sup> People need to know that they can trust themselves to behave and feel as they expect to behave and feel in any situation. They need to feel they know themselves. It is equally important that others recognize this consistency. A sense of identity also includes the ability to adapt one's needs to the opportunities the environment offers. One may decide, for example, that one's true nature is that of a Victorian woman. One may dress, decorate one's surroundings, speak, and hold the values of that era. However, being a Victorian woman in the 1980s does not give back rewards or a sense of being a part of something. Rather, a person would feel isolated and alienated.

This identity crisis involves the decisions necessary to carry out an adult life: What will I do with my life? Whom will I live with? What religious persuasion, if any, shall I follow? What will my ideals, values, and political beliefs be? These questions involve a separation from parents and other authority figures. A distancing is

necessary in order to question and concomitant with this separation is an immersion into other life-styles and experiences.

### *Activities*

Probably over a thousand identity activities have been designed over the past decade, the “age of relevance.” I have selected one that I have used successfully with all types of students: Personality Wheels.

Have students individually draw a wheel with ten spokes. Each space between the spokes should be filled with an adjective that answers the question who are you or what are you. (For less advanced students, this activity also serves as a way of teaching/reinforcing adjectives.)

Next, ask the class to draw another wheel and fill in the spaces with nouns that explain why you are what you are. What people, places, and events have influenced who you are. There does not have to be a one-to-one correspondence between the adjectives and nouns.

Finally ask them to draw the wheel once more and fill in the spaces with verbs that answer the question how you are becoming what you will be. What words show how you behave? For example: I listen and respond to people; I joke around; I dance; I smoke marijuana when I am upset.

Students should then choose a person to share their wheels with and talk about what occurred to them as they worked on the wheels. A way to expand this is to have students in small groups choose one of the adjectives from each student’s wheel that describes them. For homework then each student has to try to be only that adjective. If the adjective was “positive,” the student would have to try to be only “positive” for an hour and then write up what happened and how it felt.

### *Reading*

After introducing and defining identity, then I usually read a novel or play. I have chosen to write here about *The Member of the Wedding* by Carson McCullers.

After the students have read Part I, have them write for fifteen minutes without putting down their pen, (a technique called “spontaneous monologue”) about how the first part of the book made them feel. If students cannot think of what to write, have them keep writing the same word over and over again.

Then, try a sharing circle with the handle: A time that I could identify with the feelings that Frankie had that spring and summer was . . . . or I felt “in-between” when . . . .

Certainly the first part explains the breaking away from childhood and immerses us in Frankie’s feeling of role-confusion. She is not a member of anything. Her best friend has moved away. The older girls will not accept her in their club. Her father has kicked her out of bed because she has grown so much. She is neither a child nor an adult.

She tries on several roles that spring and summer: Freak, Rebel, and Member of the Wedding. She describes herself as a Freak like the circus people because she has grown so much she won’t fit under the grape arbor. She has grown four inches and given herself a crew cut. She feels sad and doesn’t know why. In the spring she offered to donate blood but was turned down because she was too young.

As a Rebel, she commits a sin with Barney and then is disgusted. She has stolen a couple of times. She even



throws a knife at Berenice in a fit of rage after Berenice has teased her. These little outbreaks that keep re-occurring are bothersome to Frankie as she drags through the dog days.

Her resolve at the end of Part I is to be a Member of the Wedding. This will solve everything; she will live with her brother and sister-in-law and leave town. Her confidence and self-respect have returned. One can picture her glowing!

Yet beneath all of this role-experimentation is the clinging to John Henry and Berenice for comfort and company. What would she do without the card games? She needs someone to yell at and reject who will keep returning and love her as she is.

In the second part, *F. Jasmine's* trip to town represents a transition from child to adolescent. With her newly-found confidence and purpose she sets out on an adventure. In one day F. Jasmine drinks her first beer, buys a sexy dress, has her first conversation with Berenice about love, is initiated into adulthood by Berenice with a cigarette-smoking ritual, has her fortune told, and ends the day with a date! (This same image of an adventure is used by the Hubbleys in their animated film: *Everybody Rides the Carousel* . Showing the film at this point would be excellent since the identity stage is explained by using the image of a funhouse.)

Discuss this part of the book by listing in class all the events of that one day. Why is each event included? What do they mean as a whole.

In discussing the final part of the book guide students to see that the protagonist resolves her identity-role confusion conflict temporarily, but definitely reserves herself a place in adolescentdom. She has a friend. She is now a member of a group and has forgotten the turmoil of the wedding and the summer. She is moving into a new house with her father, aunt, and uncle (John Henry's parents) and will live a more "normal" life. Berenice is leaving the family to marry T. T. Williams. Both Berenice and John Henry, her pals from the summer, are being removed from her life—a real separation from childhood with the accompanying pain symbolized by John Henry's sudden death. Yet the tone of confidence in Frances is genuine and believable, far different from the far-fetched confidence of Frankie at the end of Part I.

As a final activity I would have the students repeat the personality wheels for "Frances" and compare their answers in small groups. At this point I have also staged a "coming-out party" and had students make their own calling cards. Only the right sense of frivolity can make this work!

The last three stages are usually covered quickly and with less intensity. For Intimacy and Isolation I have students talk about the differences between alone and lonely and try to act out the differences. For Generativity and Self-Absorption invite adults to come into class and react to what Erikson says about this stage. Ask them: Do they need to feel useful? Have there been periods of Self-absorption like this in their lives? Try having students read *Catch 30*, Gail Sheehy's work from *Passages* or read Tillie Olson's, *I Stand Here Ironing*. Finally the last stage: Integrity and Despair should involve students with the issue of aging. If there are Gray Panthers in the area, invite them to speak. Have students interact in some way with older people in the community. Try role-playing where students are handicapped in some way to simulate arthritis, blindness, or deafness. Have them carry out normal everyday routines: taking care of grandchildren, shopping, talking on the telephone. For a sophisticated group, "A Conversation with my Father," by Grace Paley, would make a challenging reading assignment. Focus on whether or not the relationship described by the story is one of tolerance, real love and devotion, or insensitivity.

As a way of concluding the unit, review all the stages for the students so that they see what all the conflicts

are. But, a traditional final exam never has seemed to make much sense to me. Since my main goal has been to see if they have gained insight about age differences and how people develop throughout the life cycle, I have asked them to re-write their original essay: How does age make a difference in terms of the way people think, feel, and act? They can then compare their original essays to the final one.

## Notes

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1. Education Development Center, Inc. "Coming of Age: Managing Transitions" *Exploring Human Nature* , p. 34.

## TEACHER'S BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Coles, Robert. *Erik Erikson: The Growth of His Work* . Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1970.

Chapters V, VI, and VII are especially helpful in teaching Erikson's theory.

Erikson, Erik. *Childhood and Society* . New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1964.

Since this book originally explained the development of his theory of the eight stages, it is excellent background reading for teachers. Some advanced students might be interested in reading "The Case of Jean" in conjunction with the "Trust-Mistrust" stage.

Erikson, Erik. *Identity: Youth and Crisis* . New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1968.

Chapter III will be the teacher's text for this course. It is a must! Erikson explains how all of the life crises relate to the growth of an identity.

## ADDITIONAL TEACHING MATERIALS

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Educational Development Center Staff ed. "Unit 3-Coming of Age: Managing Transitions—Student Guide" *Exploring Human Nature* . Cambridge, Massachusetts: EDC Inc., 1973.

A behavioral science curriculum focusing on adolescence that uses cross-cultural case studies to introduce concepts and methodology.

Hubley, John and Faith. *Everybody Rides the Carousel* . 1975. Available through the New Canaan High School Video-tape library.

An animated film of all eight stages depicting the conflicts in a form more understandable than any readings I have found. Occasionally it is shown at the York Square Cinema in New Haven also.

Sheehy, Gail. "Catch 30." *New York* . Date unknown. Available through the Teacher's Institute.

An excerpt from the book, *Passages* . Only for advanced students.

Wood, James. "On Aging." *Scholastic Teacher* Jr./Sr. High Teacher's Edition. September, 1973. pp. 37-43. Available through the Teacher's Institute.

An excellent article and description of teaching methods for dealing with the issue of aging and dying.

## STUDENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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*Readings: Novels, Plays, and Short Stories*

Hansberry, Lorraine. *To be Young, Gifted, and Black* . New York:. Signet Books, 1970.

An autobiography of Lorraine Hansberry, author of *A Raisin in the Sun* , that depicts the strength and energy of a young, black woman maturing into adulthood. Since she goes into detail about her family, value conflicts, and social-political issues of the late 50's and early 60s, it is an excellent way to discuss identity and role-confusion.

Howard, Daniel ed. *The Modern Tradition* . Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1979.

The following stories can be found in this anthology:

"A&P", John Updike

"A Conversation with my Father", Grace Paley

"I Stand Here Ironing", Tillie Olsen.

Landau, Epstein, Stone, eds. *Child Development through Literature* . New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972.

"Trio for Three Gentle Voices" by Harold Brodkey and "My Oedipus Complex" by Frank O'Connor can be found in this book.

McCullers, Carson. *The Member of the Wedding* . Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946.

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman* . New York: Viking Press, 1949.

Biff and Happy, the two main characters, are examples of grown men who have no identity. They cannot "take hold." Unmarried and jobless they return home to dream of the future. Selections from the play can be read

aloud to show role-confusion and/or unresolved intimacy conflicts.

Nin, Anais. *Under a Glass Bell* . New York: E.P. Dutton, 1948.

“The Mouse” can be found in this book of short stories. Copies are also on file at the Teacher’s Institute or High School in the Community.

*Readings: Erikson’s Theory*

Elkind, David. “Erik Erikson’s Eight Ages of Man” *New York Times Magazine* . April 5, 1970, pp. 25-7+.

Quite readable for intermediate to advanced students. I usually use this one and then switch if it is clearly too difficult or too easy.

“Erik Erikson: The Quest for Identity.” *Newsweek* . December 21, 1970. pp. 84-9.

This is a good article for background material on Erikson and also includes an interview with Erik Erikson.

Schaef, Anne Wilson. “Erikson’s Eight Stages.” Origin unknown.

This article defines the stages as they relate to the development of women. Copies are on file at the Teacher’s Institute office.

Xeroxed copies of the simplest explanation of the eight stages from the EDC curriculum: *Exploring Childhood* .

(On file at the Teacher’s Institute office)

## **APPENDIX 1 GUIDELINES FOR RUNNING A SHARING CIRCLE**

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1. Teacher sets the scene. This may mean setting some ground rules such as:
  - One person talks at a time.
  - Everyone looks at the person talking.
  - (Choose one) We will go around the circle. If you don’t want to talk, pass. Passing is fine.
  - or
  - We won’t go in order. When you want to speak and no one else is in the middle of a sentence, speak.
2. Teacher (or eventually student leader) provides a handle.
3. Teacher shares first (optional) to establish risk level and provide model.
4. Alert the group a couple of minutes before ending circle, so that people holding back will speak up.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SUCH THING AS A WRONG ANSWER, AND I MEAN IT.

People are expressing feelings. You must be accepting and nonevaluative. The circle is supposed to be a safe place. Do everything you can to make kids feel safe in it. Encourage listening. Listen to kids, nod, smile, look at them, lean forward, show caring. Only say things that help people feel heard and accepted or say nothing.

The kinds of things that might be fine to say are:

Would you like to tell us more about that?

How did that make you feel?

You felt that very deeply, didn't you?

I've experienced that too.

You mean . . .

Thank you, Ed.

For more information, see H. Bessell and V. Palomares, *Methods in Human Development*, Human Development Institute, El Cajon, California, 1970.

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