ME

WHO AM I REALLY?

Without knowing what I am and why I am here, life is impossible.

—Leo Tolstoy

Who am I really? People have been asking that question for thousands of years. Many artists and writers search for the answer in their self-portraits and autobiographies. For them, to know oneself does not simply mean to know one's name or physical appearance. Personality, temperament, past experiences or future hopes…are all parts of one's deeper self. Self-portraits and autobiographies give artists and writers a channel to exhibit their efforts to know themselves and present themselves to others. What are your methods to know and understand yourself? And how would you introduce yourself to others? In this unit, we will focus on describing our physical appearance, personality, and character, and, in doing so, learn more about ourselves.

Setting Goals
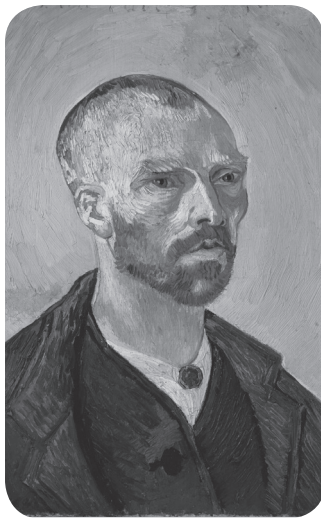
In this unit, you will learn to

1. describe a person's physical appearance and personality;
2. describe and introduce yourself to others;
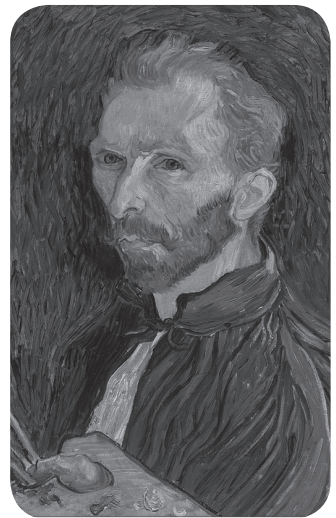3. discuss extensively how to build a healthy self-identity.

» WARM-UP

Look at the following self-portraits painted by Vincent van Gogh. In pairs, discuss the following questions.

Self-Portrait with Straw Hat, 1887

Self-Portrait Dedicated to Paul Gauguin, 1888

Self-Portrait, 1889

- From these self-portraits, what kind of person do you think Vincent van Gogh was?
- Why, in your opinion, do artists paint self-portraits? Can you name other artistic forms in which artists present themselves?
- Have you ever thought about the question "Who am I?" How would you go about finding the answer?
- If you were going to draw a self-portrait, what message would you want it to convey?

» **LISTENING**

1 **Listen to a girl's self-portrait introduction (*Text 1*).**

1) After listening the first time, answer the following questions.

- Can you briefly describe the girl's appearance? Is she happy with her looks? Why?
- According to the girl, how does the world define female beauty? Does she agree? What does she mean by being "just right"?
- How does the girl understand fashion? What kind of clothes does she like to wear? Based on what she says, can you describe her personality?

2) After listening a second time, discuss the following questions in pairs.

- Can you describe your appearance? Are you happy with your looks? Why?
- Do you like to follow fashion? How do you understand "it all depends on how you carry yourself"? Do you agree? Why?

2 **Listen to a speech titled "I'm Special" (*Text 2*).**

1) After listening the first time, answer the following questions.

- How does the speaker describe his specialness?
- What does the speaker mean by saying "I'm a symphony"?
- According to the speaker, what is the main purpose of being special?

2) After listening a second time, discuss the following questions in pairs.

- Do you think you are special? In what ways are you different from others?
- Do you want to be different? Why?

≫ GETTING READY TO TALK

1 Building Vocabulary

aquiline nose 鹰钩鼻
baby fat 婴儿肥
bobbed *adj.* 短发的
bow legs 弓形腿；罗圈腿
bushy eyebrows 浓眉
calculating *adj.* 工于心计的；精明的
carefree *adj.* 无忧无虑的
chubby *adj.* 胖乎乎的
coarse *adj.* 粗糙的
conservative *adj.* 保守的
cry-baby *n.* 爱哭的人
curation *n.* 内容筛选；策展
cynical *adj.* 愤世嫉俗的
dimple *n.* 酒窝
disheveled *adj.* 蓬头垢面的
drama queen 喜欢小题大做的人
duck lips 嘟嘟嘴
dyed *adj.* 染发的
easy-going *adj.* 随和的
fatalistic *adj.* 宿命论的
good-for-nothing *n.* 一无是处的人
grumpy *adj.* 脾气暴躁的
hedonic *adj.* 追求享乐的
hypocrite *n.* 虚伪的人
inner beauty 内在美

introverted *adj.* 内向的
medium build 中等身材
optimistic *adj.* 乐观的
outgoing *adj.* 好交际的；友善的
perm *v.* 烫（发）
persona *n.* 表象人格
pessimistic *adj.* 悲观的
petite *adj.* （女性）娇小的
placid *adj.* 文静的
plump *adj.* 丰满的
pragmatic *adj.* 务实的
robust *adj.* 强壮的；魁梧的
Roman nose 罗马鼻；高鼻梁
screenshot *n.* 截屏；屏幕截图
self-actualization *n.* 自我实现
selfie *n.* 自拍
shapely *adj.* 匀称的；身材好的
sincere *adj.* 真诚的
skeptical *adj.* 怀疑的
skinny *adj.* 皮包骨的；极瘦的
snub nose 塌鼻子
stingy *adj.* 吝啬的
stoical *adj.* 坚忍的
stout *adj.* 结实的；粗壮的
utilitarian *adj.* 功利主义的

Activity:

Work in pairs. Take turns to describe a person, using at least five words or phrases from the above vocabulary list.

2 **Pre-Class Research**

Task 1

Do you believe that human actions are motivated by the desire to fulfill certain needs? Do you agree that understanding human motivation involves recognizing a hierarchy of human needs? Read the first article (Reading 1) and interview at least five people about the following two questions: What is your most important need? What does self-actualization mean to you? Summarize your findings and prepare to discuss whether age and gender affect their answers.

Task 2

How would you define your online identity? Do you think your online persona differs from the one offline? Read the second article (Reading 2) and do some research on college students' online identity crises and possible solutions to this problem.

Reading 1

The Five Levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

What motivates behavior? According to humanist psychologist Abraham Maslow, our actions are motivated in order to achieve certain needs. Maslow first introduced his concept of a hierarchy of needs in his 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" and his subsequent book *Motivation and Personality*. This hierarchy suggests that people are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other, more advanced needs.

This hierarchy is most often displayed as a pyramid. At the lowest level of the pyramid are the most basic needs, while the more complex needs are located at the top of the pyramid. Needs at the bottom of the pyramid are basic physical requirements including the need for food, water, sleep, and warmth. Once these lower-level needs have been met, people can move on to the next level of needs, which are for safety and security.

As people progress up the pyramid, needs become increasingly psychological and social. Soon, the need for love, friendship, and intimacy becomes important. Further up the pyramid, the need for personal esteem and feelings of accomplishment takes priority. Maslow emphasized the importance of self-actualization, which is a process of growing and developing as a person in order to achieve individual potential.

Types of Needs

Abraham Maslow believed that these needs are similar to instincts and play a major role in motivating behavior. Physiological, security, social, and esteem needs are deficiency needs (also known as "D-needs"), meaning that these needs arise due to deprivation. Satisfying these lower-level needs is important in order to avoid unpleasant feelings or consequences.

Maslow termed the highest level of the pyramid growth needs (also known as "being needs" or "B-needs"). Growth needs do not stem from a lack of something, but rather from a desire to grow as a person.

The Five Levels of the Hierarchy of Needs

There are five different levels in Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

1. Physiological needs

These include the most basic needs that are vital to survival, such as the need for water, air, food, and sleep. Maslow believed that these needs are the most basic and instinctive needs in the hierarchy because all needs become secondary until these physiological needs are met.

2. Security needs

These include needs for safety and security. Security needs are important for survival, but they are not as imperative as physiological needs. Examples of security needs include shelter from the environment, steady employment, health care, and a safe neighborhood.

3. Social needs

These include needs for belonging, love, and affection. Maslow described these needs as less basic than physiological and security needs. Relationships such as friendships, romantic attachments, and families help fulfill this need for companionship and acceptance, as does involvement in social, community, or religious groups.

4. Esteem needs

After the first three needs have been satisfied, esteem needs become increasingly important. These include needs for things that reflect on self-esteem, personal worth, social recognition, and accomplishment.

5. Self-Actualizing needs

This is the highest level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Self-actualizing people

are self-aware, concerned with personal growth, less concerned about the opinions of others, and interested in fulfilling their potential.

What Is Self-Actualization?

What exactly is self-actualization? Maslow described this high-level need in the following way: "What a man can be, he must be. This need we may call self-actualization… It refers to the desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming."

While the theory is generally portrayed as a fairly rigid hierarchy, Maslow noted that the order in which these needs are fulfilled does not always follow this standard progression. For example, for some individuals, the need for self-esteem is more important than the need for love. For others, the need for creative fulfillment may even supersede the most basic needs.

Criticisms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

While research shows some support for Maslow's theory, most research has not been able to substantiate the idea of a needs hierarchy. Wahba and Bridwell reported that there was little evidence for Maslow's ranking of these needs and even less evidence that these needs are in a hierarchical order.

Other criticisms of Maslow's theory note that his definition of self-actualization is difficult to test scientifically. His research was based on a very limited sample of individuals, including people he knew as well as biographies of famous individuals that Maslow believed to be self-actualized, such as Albert Einstein and Eleanor Roosevelt. Regardless of these criticisms, Maslow's hierarchy of needs represents part of an important shift in psychology. Rather than focusing on abnormal behavior and development, Maslow's humanistic psychology is focused on the development of healthy individuals.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is well-known and popular both in and out of psychology. In a study published in 2011, researchers from the University of Illinois set out to test the hierarchy. What they discovered was that while fulfillment of the needs was strongly correlated with happiness, people from cultures all over the world reported that self-actualization and social needs were important even when many of the most basic needs were unfulfilled.

Online vs. Offline Self: Who Is the Real You?

"Our generation is stuck in this unique position of trying to create ourselves. As if growing up and making sense of the world weren't enough, we have this second space where we are forging our identities, one where no generation before us has set the rules."

You scroll through your WeChat Moments, taking in all the smiling faces, the gorgeous pictures of faraway travels, the food you'd like to steal through the screen, and, it must be said, the myriad of selfie-induced duck lips. As you scroll, you suddenly feel the grungy stickiness of inadequacy adhering to your skin. You have no photos to share, no new places to go, and your dinner is a bowl of fried rice.

Today, we have the opportunity to be more connected with the world than ever before. This is a beautiful thing, and an invitation to practice authenticity and mindfulness. Unfortunately, what we are not always aware of is that the portrait of humanity seen through selfies and screenshots is not real. It is a curation. This phenomenon of curating two dueling personas is what philosophers call: the Divided Self.

In a thought-provoking video, people discuss the challenges in foraging online vs. offline identities.

"While we can share more of ourselves online than ever previously possible, we choose not to. Instead, we curate."

Much like an upscale art gallery, we choose what pictures to post, what moments to snap and what statuses to share. We edit and filter. In a world where we're struggling to make our place, we want to—to borrow an old adage—put our best foot forward. There's nothing wrong with this so long as we are aware that what most people propagate online is merely a highlight reel. It has been rigged to appear perfect. As such, it should not be used as a measuring stick when we compare ourselves with others.

Many young people today find themselves creating two completely different personas: one for online, one for offline. This division of self splits the mind, creating a state of uneasiness, one where we never feel quite grounded in our own person. The more we see the carefully curated reel, the more we begin to believe that that is how

our life should be. It's similar to hearing the success stories of heroes without seeing the years of toil and failures it took to get there: We only see the instant success, and therefore, begin to believe that we, as mere mortals, could never achieve such greatness.

So how can we avoid this division of self? While some may choose to delete all social media apps from their phone, this is unrealistic for most of us. After all, we like connecting with people all around the world. It's amazing! The universe is online, and there is incredible beauty to be found at the click of a button. The solution is simple, although harder to achieve: You must simply become aware.

Heed the call to live an authentic life and embrace your inherent awesomeness. It is authenticity that most attracts us to others: When we see someone's true self, we connect to them in a way that is deeper than superficial admiration.

"We should be authentic online, but know that behind the highlight reel, we're all beautifully imperfect."

>> ACTIVITY 1

Developing Skills for Oral Communication

How to Build Vocabulary

The old-fashioned approach to vocabulary building was just to memorize lists of words and their meanings. But experts now agree that you can increase your word power faster and have a rich vocabulary by the inductive method—the modern way.

- First, look at the word in its context, guess its meaning, and then confirm or correct your guess by referring to a dictionary.
- Even if you have never seen a word before, you can usually get some idea of its meaning from the way it is used.
- Collecting lists of synonyms is a productive and often entertaining way to enlarge your vocabulary.
- Knowledge of the most important roots, prefixes, and suffixes from Latin and Greek is a splendid vocabulary stretcher.

In addition to the tips you've learned as regards building the vocabulary, it's also important to improve the use of vocabulary. Now, suppose you were the only eyewitness to a robbery. Describe the suspect to the policeman whose role your partner will play. Use at least one word from each of the following category.

Hair	Eyes	Face	Nose
long (short)	round	broad	long (short)
black	bright	oval	high-bridged
white	brown	round	sharp
brown	black	lean	big (small)
gray	blue	bony	nicely-shaped
blond	deep	long	fleshy
golden	dreamy	grave	up-turned
bobbed	eager	sunny	straight
coarse	keen	pale	broad
dark	observant	ashen	flat
soft	penetrating	rosy	snub
curly	sharp	proud	button-shaped
dyed	smiling	plain	aquiline
disheveled	sleepy	smooth	
wavy		clean-shaven	
bald		chubby	

Hands	Legs	Build	Character and Personality
long (short)	long (short)	tall (short)	humorous
big (small)	strong	big (small)	hot-tempered
thin	thin	strong (weak)	generous
bony	bony	fat (thin)	grumpy
skinny	skinny	petite	sly
beautiful	hairy	cute	calculating
delicate	beautiful	lean	sophisticated
rough	shapely	robust	simple-minded
soft	tanned	chubby	carefree
	muscular	stout	absent-minded
		heavily built	stubborn
		slender/slim	easy-going
		muscular	reserved
		bony	shy
		skinny	introverted

» ACTIVITY 2

Group Project

Nowadays, many people say that the Internet has greatly changed our life and even become the first need of the younger generation. Do you agree? Do you think that Maslow's theory of human needs should be updated due to the widespread use of the Internet? Discuss in groups of four and draw a hierarchy chart to describe the needs of modern college students. When you finish, report to the whole class your findings and conclusions.

» ACTIVITY 3

Impromptu Speech and Discussion

Work in pairs. Take turns to give a one-minute impromptu speech on self-actualization, using Maslow's theory for reference. Based on your pre-class interviews, discuss whether age and gender affect people's understanding of self-actualization.

» ACTIVITY 4

Talk Show

Work in groups of four and stage a talk show on the issue of online identity crisis. Each assumes one of the following roles:

- the talk show host who introduces the program and chairs the discussion
- a college student who spends more than two hours every day posting selfies on social media and waiting for friends' likes and comments
- the student's father/mother who is deeply worried because his/her child overindulges in the online world and is losing touch with reality
- a college professor who is now doing research on how to deal with online identity crisis

At the end of the talk show, give some suggestions on how to avoid or overcome online identity crisis.

» **ACTIVITY 5**

Self-Introduction

1) People make self-introductions for different purposes. The following article discusses self-introduction as it relates to employment. Read the article and prepare to make your own self-introduction.

Some Points to Remember About Self-Introduction

We all know that it is important to develop a very brief self-introduction that tells people what we want them to know about us. This brief introduction presents an opportunity to make a good first impression, so it warrants some careful attention.

- Make your introduction brief, focused, and hard-hitting.
- Remember who you are addressing. Try to select aspects that will be relevant to their interests.
- Be honest and truthful. If you oversell yourself, you are unlikely to sound convincing.
- Deliver your introduction with confidence. No company will hire a person who isn't sure of himself/herself.
- Look at your listeners to show that they really matter to you. Make sure that you maintain eye contact with the persons you are talking to.
- Know when to stop. Do not try to add more and more information as it only dilutes the effect. Keep your introduction succinct.

2) Work in groups of six. Three of each group act as human resources managers from different companies. Each manager writes a want ad, and then holds interviews to recruit for your company. The other three act as the applicants. Make a one-minute self-introduction to each "manager."

3) For the second round, reverse roles.

Probing for Answers—After-Class Activities

Knowing others is wisdom; knowing the self is enlightenment. Mastering others requires force; mastering the self needs strength. —Laozi

知人者智，自知者明；胜人者有力，自胜者强。 ——老子

1. Do you know yourself? Can you master yourself? List three ways to know the self and three ways to master the self.

2. Knowing others or knowing the self, which is harder for you? Why?

3. Do you agree that "Mastering others requires force; mastering the self needs strength"? Why?

🎧 Listening Scripts

Text 1

My Self-Portrait

I am quite satisfied with how I look physically. I am not slim. I am not petite. Neither am I fat nor gigantic. Let's just say I am somewhere in between. I am five feet six inches tall, and I weigh around 120 pounds. My hair is long and shiny. My eyes are somewhat doe-like, according to a friend of mine. My eyebrows are unfortunately short at the outer edges, and my lower jaw is prominent. I have a dimple in my right cheek, just like my dad. My nose is quite a bit smaller than it should be, and I always say it is "cute" (because it's small).

I am quite well endowed above and below, if you know what I mean. I can be really thin if I want to, and I can also be chubby if I want to—as I am in my mid-teenage years—but I choose to be "just right."

The world may define female physical beauty as "tall, thin, and white." I am tall, but I'm neither thin nor white. I am proud to be what I am.

As for my fashion sense, I should say that I prefer wearing comfortable clothes to signature labels/famous brands. Unlike other girls among my peers, I am most often to be found in department stores, or anywhere where there are inexpensive but really nice clothes, and I don't mind if they are mass-produced. I always say that it all depends on how you carry yourself.

Text 2

I'm Special

I'm special. In all the world, there's nobody like me.

Since the beginning of time, there has never been another person like me. Nobody has my smile. Nobody has my eyes, my nose, my hair, my hands, or my voice. I'm special.

No one can be found who has my handwriting. Nobody anywhere has my taste in food or music or art. No one else sees things exactly as I do. In all of time there's been no one who laughs like me, no one who cries like me, and what makes me laugh and cry will never provoke identical laughter and tears from anybody else, ever. No one reacts to any situation just as I would react. I'm special.

I'm the only one in all of creation who has my set of abilities. Oh, there will always be somebody who is better at one of the things I'm good at, but no one in the universe can reach the quality of my combinations of talents, ideas, abilities and feelings. Like a room full of musical instruments, some may excel alone, but none can match the symphony of sound when all are played together. I'm a symphony. Through all of eternity no one will ever look, talk, walk, think, or do like me. I'm special. I'm rare.

And, in all rarity there is great value. Because of my great value, I need not attempt to imitate others. I will accept—yes, celebrate—my differences.

I'm special. And I'm beginning to realize it's no accident that I'm special. I'm beginning to see that I was made special for a very special purpose. I was given a job that no one else can do as well as I. Out of all the billions of applicants, only one is qualified, only one has the right combination of what it takes.

That one is me. Because...I AM special.