

Identity Unit: Socratic Circle Prep Sheet  
Group #1

Name
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**Calvin & Hobbes: Tarzan**  
**Calvin & Hobbes: Parent Teacher Interviews**

1. One line summary (what happened?) of each comic strip:

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2. Explain the connection between the two comic strips (re: identity). Hint: what is the moral of the story? What might Calvin want to work on?

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3. One interesting point (re: identity) to share during the Socratic Circle:

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4. One deep question (re: identity) to pose during the Socratic circle:

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**Should I Change My Name? by Matheyalagan Nagaranthu**

1. Overall point of the article - what's he getting at?

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Proof (minimum of one direct quotation):

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2. One interesting point about the article that you could share (re: identity) during the Socratic Circle:

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3. One deep question (re: identity) about the article that you could pose during the Socratic circle:

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**Jamaican Fragment by A. L. Hendricks**

1. Overall point of the story – what is the narrator getting at?

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Proof (direct quotation):

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2. One interesting idea from the story (re: identity) to share during the Socratic Circle:

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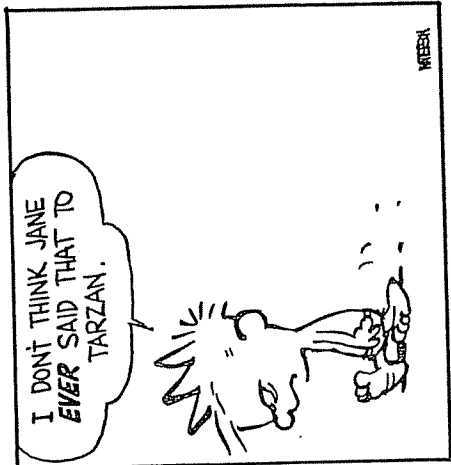
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3. One deep question that you had about the story (re: identity) to pose during the Socratic circle:

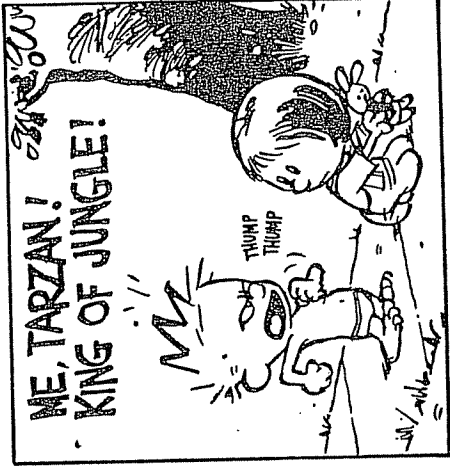
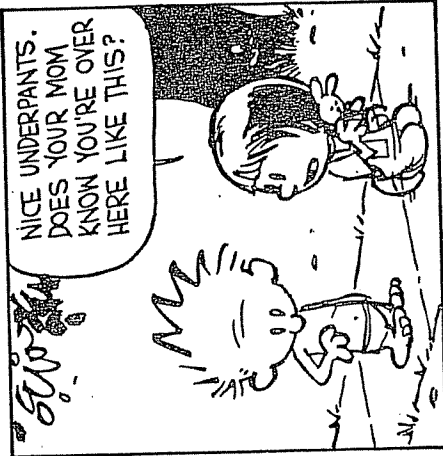
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WEBER



# Should I Change My Name?

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BY

**MATHEYALAGAN  
NAGARANTHY**



My parents tell me that when I was born, my father looked at me for about half an hour. My mother asked my father, "What's the matter with you? Why are you looking so puzzled?" My father did not hear what she was saying because he was thinking about what to call me. My father said, "My son...No, no, our son! He is very beautiful—like a moon! And very bright—like a sun!" So my parents decided to give me the name Matheyalagan—Mathey means "moon," "beauty," "sun," and "stars." Another meaning is "good," "intelligent," and "brave." Alagan means "beauty."

When I was old enough to learn the meaning of my name, I asked my parents, "Why did you choose this name? It embarrasses me. Could you please change it?"

My mom was angry with me. She said, "Don't ever be ashamed of your name. It will bring you good luck in your life." I remember my mother's advice now. When Canadians get impatient with my name because it is hard to say and it is too long, I remember what my name means, and I never consider changing it.

# Jamaican Fragment

BY A. L. HENDRICKS



Every day I walk a half-mile from my home to the tramcar lines in the morning, and from the lines to my home in the evening. The walk is pleasant. The road on either side is flanked by red-green-roofed bungalows, green lawns and gardens. The exercise is good for me and now and then I learn something from a little incident.

One morning, about half-way between my front gate and the tram track, I noticed two little boys playing in the garden of one of the more modest cottages. They were both very little boys, one was four years old perhaps, the other five. The bigger of the two was a sturdy youngster, very dark, with a mat of coarse hair on his head and coal-black eyes. He was definitely a little Jamaican — a strong little Jamaican. The other little fellow was smaller, but also sturdy — he was white, with hazel eyes and light-brown hair. Both were dressed in blue shirts and khaki pants: they wore no shoes and their feet were muddy. They were not conscious of my standing there watching them; they played on. The game, if it could be called a game, was not elaborate. The little white boy strode imperiously up and down and every now and then shouted imperiously at his bigger playmate. The little brown boy shuffled along quietly behind him and did what he was told.

"Pick up that stick!" The dark boy picked it up.

"Jump into the flowers!" The dark boy jumped.

"Get me some water!" The dark boy ran inside. The white boy sat down on the lawn.

I was amazed. Here before my eyes, a white baby, for they were little more than babies, was imposing his will upon a little black boy. And the little black boy submitted. I puzzled within myself as I went down the road. Could it be that the little dark boy was the son of a servant in the home and therefore had to do the white boy's bidding? No. They were obviously dressed alike, the little dark boy was of equal class with his playmate. No. They were playmates, the little dark boy was a neighbour's child. I was sure of that. Then how was it that he obeyed so faithfully the white boy's orders? Was it that even at his early age he sensed that in his own country he would be at the white man's beck and call? Could he in such youth divine a difference between himself and the white boy? And did the little white youngster so young, such a baby, realize that he would grow to dominate the black man? Was there an indefinable quality in the white man that enabled his baby, smaller and younger than his playmate, to make him his slave? Was there really some difference between a white man and a black man? Something that made the white superior? I could find no answer. I could not bring myself to believe such a thing, and yet, with my own eyes I had seen a little dark boy take orders from a little white boy — a little white boy obviously his social equal, and younger and smaller. Were we as a race really inferior? So inferior that even in our infancy we realized our deficiencies, and accept a position as the white man's servant?

For a whole day I puzzled over this problem. For a whole day my faith in my people was shaken. When I passed that afternoon the little boys were not there. That evening I thought deeply on the subject.

The next morning the boys were there again, and a man was standing at the gate watching them. I stopped and looked, just to see what the white boy was making his little servant do. To my utter astonishment the little dark boy was striding imperiously up and down the lawn, while the white youngster walked abjectly behind him.

"Get me a banana!" The little white boy ran into the house and reappeared shortly with a banana. "Peel it for me!" The little white boy skinned the banana and handed it to his dark master.

I saw it now. This was indeed a game, a game I had played as a child. Each boy took it in turn every alternate day to be the boss, the other the slave. It had been great fun to me as a youngster. I smiled as I remembered. I looked at the man standing by the gate. He was a

white man. I remembered what I had thought yesterday. He, no doubt, I thought to myself, was wondering if the black race is superior to the white. I laughed gently to myself. How silly grown-ups are, how clever we are, how wonderfully able we are to impute deep motives to childish actions! How suspicious we are when we have been warped by prejudice! This man, I said to myself, will puzzle all day on whether the blacks will eventually arise and rule the world because he thinks he sees a little black boy realizing at a tender age his superiority over the white. I will save him his puzzle. I will explain it to him. I went across to him.

"I know what you're thinking," I said. "You're thinking that maybe the black race is superior to the white, because you just saw the little dark youngster on the lawn ordering the little white boy around. Don't think that, it's a game they play. Alternate days one is boss, the other the servant. It's a grand game. I used to play it and maybe so did you. Yesterday I saw the little white boy bossing the dark one and I worried all day over the dark boy's realization of his inferiority so young in life! We are silly, we grown-ups, aren't we?"

The man was surprised at my outburst. He looked at me smiling.

"I know all about the game," he said. "The boys are brothers — my sons." He pointed to a handsome brown woman on the veranda who had just come out to call in the children. "That's my wife," he said.

I smiled. My spirit laughed within me. This is Jamaica, I said in my heart, this is my country — my people. I looked at the white man. He smiled at me. "We'll miss the tram if we don't hurry," he said.