

Draw Your Community

Overview

In this lesson, students begin to define community and explore their first impressions of it.

First, students brainstorm elements common to every community. Next, working in small groups, they create drawings to illustrate important elements of their own community. Finally, using their drawings, they discuss impressions of their community with the whole class.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify elements common to all communities.
- Cooperate with other group members in making a collective drawing.
- Define and compare impressions of their own community.

Materials and Preparation

Chalk and chalkboard

Chart paper and markers

Handout A–Drawing Your Community–1 per student

Handout B– How Would You Describe Your Community –1 per group

Time Needed

One class period

Procedure

A. Brainstorm and Discussion–What’s a Community?

1. Explain that today students are going to find out how they picture and think about their community. Distribute a copy of **Handout A–Drawing Your Community** to each student and have students read “Drawing Your Community.”
2. Write “community” on the board. Ask students to brainstorm what makes up a community (people, buildings, streets, schools, stores, offices, radio and television stations, recreation facilities, hospitals, etc.). List responses on the board.
3. Ask students: What is *your* community made up of? (Answers might include their school, their neighborhood, the people they know, the places they go, the things they do.) List community elements on the board.

B. Small-Group Activity–Drawing Your Community

1. Have students read “How Would You Describe Your Community?” on the reverse side of **Handout A**.

2. Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students and distribute chart paper and markers to each group. Have each group draw a picture that illustrates important elements of their community. (Refer them to the lists on the board.)
3. When students have completed the activity, have each group explain its drawing to the class. Debrief the activity by asking:
 - How was each drawing different from the others?
 - What does that say about the ways people think and feel about their community? (People have different impressions about this community.)

C. Reflection–Reflection Ideas

Choose from the following suggestions for student reflection:

1. Hold a group discussion using these questions: What was the most important thing you discovered while drawing your community? Do you have anything to add now?
2. Have students write a journal entry about how they see their community.
3. Have them create a time capsule featuring items that they believe best describe your community. Present the time capsule to your school and place it on display.

Drawing Your Community

The word “community” comes from the Latin word *communitas*, which means fellowship. Today, community has many meanings. You’ve probably heard of the business community, the law-enforcement community, and the Asian community. There are even “virtual communities,” people linked to each other via the Internet. You might belong to a special group of people who share your interests. This can be a community. Dictionaries list about 15 different meanings for “community.”



We’re talking here about community in a physical sense—the community where you live. But if you talk to people about the community they live in, they still give different answers. Even neighbors might disagree on what their community is. One might feel it means the immediate neighborhood. Another might think it includes several neighborhoods. A third might believe it means the whole city. It depends on their experience.

How Would You Describe Your Community?

Get with a group and do the following:

Make a list. List all the things that make up your community (people, schools, stores, fire houses, etc.).

Gather materials for drawing. Get some markers and a large piece of paper—about three feet by four feet.

Start drawing. Draw your version of your community on the paper. You don't have to be able to draw well. Use symbols and words. Include everything on your list and other things you see, hear, and feel about your community.



Describe your drawing. When you are done, prepare to present your drawing to the rest of the class and describe what it is about.