

EXPLORING CIVICS THROUGH HISTORIC SPACES:

A MODEL FOR CIVIC LEARNING AT MUSEUMS,
HISTORIC SITES, AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

FIRST GRADE

60 minutes

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in first grade and is intended to take place in a museum setting.

How did community members create a home at the historic site/museum? Students will explore how community members established a sense of belonging at the historic site/museum.

They will examine the traditions and practices that contributed to this feeling of home and compare these aspects to their own experiences in their communities. Additionally, students will discuss the challenges of joining a new community and reflect on what elements make them feel at home in their own communities.

MATERIALS

■ PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS

Spaces and objects related to:

- Food (Dining areas, cooking areas, recipes, cooking or eating utensils)
- A shared space for community (Parlor, dining area, musical instrument or card table)
- Various jobs or roles for community members connected to the historic site. (Clothing, tools of the trade etc.)

- Paper
- Coloring materials
- “What would you bring?” objects printed on cardstock and cut into separate cards

LEAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Civic Participation

HDQ1.1

- How do people describe who they are?
- How do I describe who I am?
- How have people made our community better?

Our Changing Landscape

HDQ2.1

- What is a community?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Ask students to define “community.”

- Community is a group of people living or working together. What communities are you a part of?
- Communities may include families, schools, neighborhoods, religious institutions, towns, etc.
- Encourage students to think about how they contribute to their community, either at home, school or other community spaces.

2. INVESTIGATION (40 MIN)

Introduce students to your historic site/museum using an object in your collection. If applicable, let students know how the historic site/museum was founded, how many people lived there and why people started to come together in that area. The community members had many needs, just like the people who live in our communities.

- What things might you need to live in a community?
- What would you want to have with you if you were moving to a new place?
- Who might make food? Who might help if you get sick? What forms of entertainment are important to you?

Bring students to a space or object connected to food (dining areas, cooking areas, recipes, cooking or eating utensils).

Share the context about the space or object, **asking students:**

- What do you see? What does this make you think? What does that make you wonder?

Discuss the type of food that was eaten at the historic site/museum. What food traditions came from other community members’ original communities or cultures?

Ask the following:

- What recipes are important to your family?
- If you lived here, what food could be cooked here to reflect your community?

Bring students to a space or object connected to a shared space for community (eg. parlor, dining area, musical instrument or card table).

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators used a model of the aircraft carrier *Intrepid* on the initial deck of the ship to illustrate it’s size. We call it a ship instead of a boat due to how large it is.

Educators asked students to point out what they see on the top of the model (planes/aircraft). The ship they were inside, *Intrepid*, carried aircraft from one place to another, which is why we call it an aircraft carrier.

Sailors nicknamed *Intrepid* a “city at sea” because it carried 3,000 men for 6-9 months at a time - that is almost a school year!

Educators asked:

- What things might you need in a community of 3,000 people?
- What would you want with you if you were going away from home for that long?
- Who might make food?
- Who might help if you get sick?
- What forms of entertainment are important to you?

Ask the following:

- How might this area have helped those who lived here become closer as members of a community?
- What activities do you like to do outside of school?
Does the activity make you feel like part of a community?
- Who in your community do you enjoy spending time with outside of school?

Bring students to a space or object connected to various jobs or roles for community members connected to the historic site/museum.

Identify the tools and clothing connected to one or two of these jobs. Have students explore the aspects of one of these jobs.

Ask the following:

- What uniforms do people wear in your community which show what jobs they have?

3. ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

Use “What would you bring?” cards to facilitate a conversation about how students would feel at home if they were to join the community connected to the historic site/museum.

This can be done during the program or at the end. Make connections to the limitations new community members may have had when considering what they might have brought with them.

Spread out cards on the floor or a bench. Ask students which of the items they would take with them if they could only bring three.

Ask students:

- If you were coming to live in this community for an entire school year, what three things would you bring with you to make you feel at home?
- What if you could only choose two objects? What if you could only choose one? Why?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators brought students down to the galley, or kitchens, of the aircraft carrier *Intrepid* and shared that 3,000 sailors lived and worked on *Intrepid* at one time.

Feeding that many men was a huge undertaking, but food was a major way that the Navy made sailors feel at home on board. Navy cooks chose recipes from around the country to cater to the wants and needs of sailors.

The enlisted mess could be decorated to reflect an area of the country or a significant culture.

Educators asked:

- What recipes are important to your family?
- How would you decorate the mess hall to reflect your community?

Museum Educators brought students to an enlisted berthing, or sleeping area, for general sailors. Many enlisted men would share one room on bunk beds. Only the most important officers had their own rooms.

Educators asked:

- How might sailors have formed a sense of community in their berthing areas?

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Before the group leaves the historic site/museum space, ask students:

- What is a community?
- What is one community you are a part of?
- What might be a challenge of joining a new community?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared that everyone on *Intrepid* had a job. Some sailors worked on the flight deck and wore special colored shirts so everyone knew what job they did.

Educators also asked the following and discussed answers with students:

- Who steers the ship?
- Who flies aircraft?

Educators then brought students to the anchor chain room and shared that sailors would be responsible for raising and lowering the ship's anchor when it was time to dock or set sail again. Educators asked students to attempt to lift the chain and had students explore the space to determine how the chain was lifted.

Museum Educators shared that *Intrepid's* community worked to make sailors feel at home even when they were out to sea for up to 9 months at a time.

Educators asked:

- If you were coming aboard *Intrepid* for an entire school year, what three things would you bring with you to make you feel at home?



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APPENDIX:
WHAT WOULD YOU BRING?

RADIO



BOOKS



VIDEO GAMES



TSHIRTS



FAMILY PHOTO

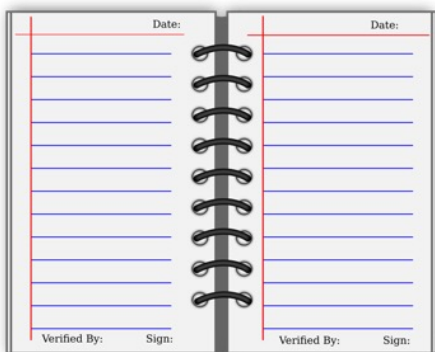


HATS



APPENDIX:
WHAT WOULD YOU BRING?

NOTEBOOK



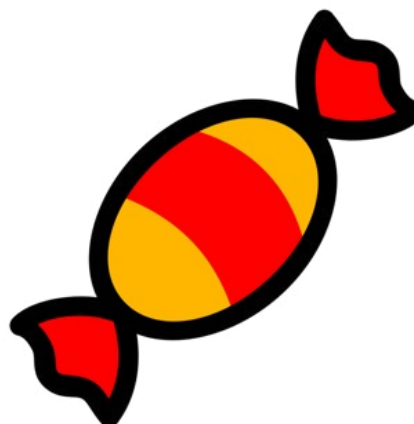
UNIFORM, SHIRT AND PANTS



DRESSES



CANDY



MUSICAL INSTRUMENT



STUFFED ANIMAL



APPENDIX:
WHAT WOULD YOU BRING?

TOOTHBRUSH



TOYS



PAJAMAS



SHOES



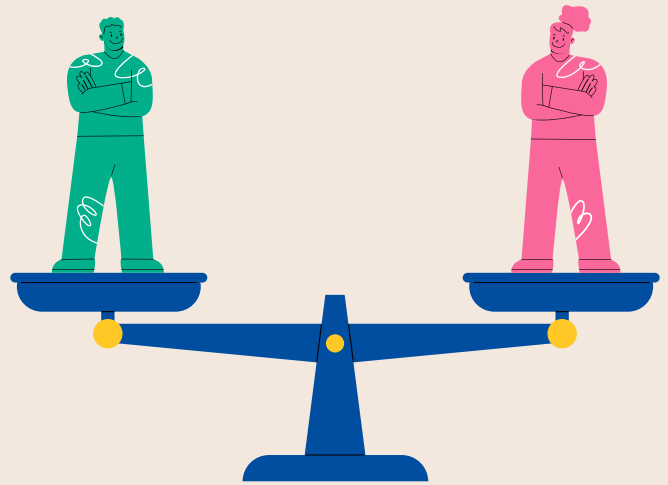
EXPLORING CIVICS THROUGH HISTORIC SPACES:

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FIRST GRADE

50 minutes

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in first grade and is intended to take place in a school setting.

A community is made up of individuals who have their own individual story which allows them to bring something special to the group.

In this activity, students will learn about where some of the community members at the historic site/museum came from and share information about their own families. Participants will discuss similarities and differences and share how they are part of a community even if they might come from different backgrounds than others.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be able to identify three ways they are similar to and different from their classmates.

MATERIALS

■ PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS

Spaces and objects related to:

- Image or document sharing origins of community members or arrival to community

■ Optional: signs to signal each option in “This or That”

LEAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Civic Participation

HDQ1.1

- How do people describe who they are?
- How do I describe who I am?
- How have people made our community better?

CDQ1.1

- What does it mean to be a part of a group?

We the People

CDQ 3.1

Our Changing Landscape

CDQ2.1

- How do communities change?
- How and why do people live together?
- How am I part of a community?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Review the definition of “community” and significant communities in students’ lives.

- What communities are you a part of?
- What people are in your family? Your school?
Your neighborhood?
- Which people can you find in the community connected to the historic site?

2. INVESTIGATION (40 MIN)

Share a primary source with students that shares the origins of community members or community members arriving at the historic site/museum for the first time.

Ask:

- What places are these community members coming from?
- Were all of the community members from the same place?
- Are any of your family members from a different state?
A different country? If so, who and where?

Discuss where members of the school community may have come from. Students may have moved from a different school, city, state or country.

Share that the community connected to the historic site/museum was made up of people of different backgrounds, interests, and beliefs.

- How is your school community like the community at the historic site/museum?

Specify that students are sharing what is “similar” between their communities and the historic site/museum. When people share what is similar, they are sharing how things are the same. This vocabulary may be new for students.

Share the different times community members came to the historic site/museum and, if known, the ages they arrived.

- Did everyone in your school or class community arrive at the same time?
- Has everyone in your class lived in the same neighborhood community their entire life?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators had students watch a video sharing origin stories of crew members of the USS *Growler* and USS *Intrepid*.

Educators asked students to remember two places that the sailors mention in the video and recorded these on the board.

Educators asked:

- What places did you hear mentioned in the video?
- Were all of *Intrepid*’s sailors from the same place?
- Are any of your family members from a different state? A different country?

At PS 51, many students recently immigrated from Latin America, specifically Venezuela, Ecuador and Colombia. This was an opportunity to point out that not all of the school community came from the same place.

Museum Educators shared how members of *Intrepid*’s community joined at different times. Some when they were 17-years old, some when they were 30-years old.

3. ACTIVITY (15 MIN)

Play “This or That.” If there is physical space, assign a choice to each side of the classroom/hallway. Students will move themselves to the side they associate most with. If there is no physical space, students can raise their hands.

- Dogs vs Cats
- Summer vs Winter
- Candy vs Ice Cream
- Read a book vs Watch a Movie
- Vanilla vs Chocolate
- Dark hair vs light hair
- 6 vs 7 years old (or other ages)
- Only child vs Siblings
- First grade vs Second grade
- Live in _____ vs Live in _____

Did everyone in the class choose the same side for every category?

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Have students return to their seats and **ask**:

- What similarities have you noticed between members of your community? What differences?

Tell students that a community is made up of many different people with similarities and differences.

Everyone in your class, for example, is in first grade. But, you do not have all the same identities or preferences (likes and dislikes).

This is the same with any community, including the one connected to the historic site/museum. It is wonderful to have things in common with people, but you can learn many new things by talking about differences too.



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APPENDIX:

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

PAIRS ACTIVITY

Ask students to talk to someone next to them for one minute and find one thing that is the same between them.

Avoid language like “have in common” or “similar to” without defining first. The terms “same” and “different” are familiar and a Common Core Kindergarten standard.

Prompt students to think about the clothing they are wearing, their favorites (food, color, etc) and if they stood on the same side of the room during the earlier game. Ask students to share the thing they have in common with their partner.

Ask students to talk to their partner again and find one thing that is different between them. Prompt students to think about what part of the city they live in, the activities they do outside school and if they stood on opposite sides of the room during the game.

After sharing, ask students:

- What did you learn about your partner?
- How are members of your classroom community the same? Different?

SAME & DIFFERENT

One way my partner and I are the same is . . .

One way my partner and I are different is. . .

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FIRST GRADE

50 minutes

LEADERS AND DECISION MAKERS



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in first grade and is intended to take place in a school setting.

Who leads a community? In this activity, students discuss who is in charge in school, in the U.S. and historically in the community at the site/museum.

Participants will discuss how they can be leaders in their own community. This culminates in an activity where students illustrate a situation in which they are leaders in their own lives.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be able to describe the important traits in a leader and the roles of leaders in their communities.

MATERIALS

- **PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS**
 - Images depicting leaders in the community connected to the historic site/museum
- Board or chart paper
- Map of city, state, and country
- Photos of current mayor, governor, and president or other leaders in community
- Paper
- Drawing materials
- *Optional: Concentric Circles printed on cardstock*

LEAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Civic Participation

HDQ1.1

- How do people describe who they are?
- How do I describe who I am?
- How have people made our community better?

CDQ1.1

- How have people made our community better?

We the People

CDQ 3.1

- How do people become a community?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Review which people make up a community: their families, their schools, their neighborhoods, etc.

Tell students that today you will be discussing community leaders.

- What is a leader?
- What are some examples of leaders in your community?
- Can you (students) be leaders? If so, how?

Display images of leaders connected to the historic site/museum. Students will turn and talk about who might be the leader in each photo.

- Why did you choose this person?
- What do the people in charge often have in common?
- Why do you think these people were chosen to have authority?

2. INVESTIGATION (40 MIN)

Optional: distribute attached cards, with three leaders from the historic site/museum filled in. Ask students to stack them, with the most powerful leader on the top and least on the bottom.

Share information about how leaders were selected in the community connected to the historic site/museum. If students learned about any leaders at the site/museum visit, ask what they remember.

Use a piece of chart paper to draw concentric circles. Use the circles to identify leadership hierarchies that might be present in that community: the most senior leadership in the innermost circle and the most junior in the outermost. See example below.

The concentric circles should resemble students' stacked cards.

Every community has a system of leaders put in place, including a school. Students will stack the three school leadership cards (Principal/AP, Teachers, Students), most powerful on the top, least on the bottom.

Ask students to share. As they do, write these in concentric

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared that the Navy chooses leaders based on education, age and experience. The Navy has a system of leaders who work together.

They then asked students to remember:

- Who is the leader on a ship like *Intrepid*?

Intrepid was led by a captain. However, a community as large as *Intrepid* has many leaders.

The other people in charge were called officers. Officers had more experience than the average sailor and could command their own groups.

Enlisted Sailors did not have leadership roles but could still be leaders in their own ways!

Museum Educators made a graphic organizer using concentric shapes: Captain in the center, Officers in the next ring, and Sailors in the outer ring.

circles: Principal/Assistant Principal in the center, Teachers in the next ring and Students in the outer ring. Ask students to share any other school community members that may fit in these categories.

- How do principals act as leaders in your school?
- How do teachers or school staff act as leaders in your school?
- How do students act as leaders in your school?

Both the historic site/museum and your school are within communities that also have leaders. Students will stack the three government leadership cards (President/Country, Governor/State, Mayor/City). Ask students to share their order.

As students share, write the three leadership categories in concentric circles. It may be helpful to show the city, state and country on a map as you discuss each area.

First is our **CITY** community.

- What city do we live/go to school in?

A city is led by a mayor. Show an image of the mayor in your city or town.

Our city is part of a larger community that we call a **STATE**.

- What state do we live/go to school in?

A state is led by a governor. Show an image of the governor in your state.

Each state is part of the huge community we call our **COUNTRY**.

- What is the name of the country we live in?

Our country is led by a president. Show an image of the president.

3. ACTIVITY (15 MIN)

Ask students to think about a time when they acted as a leader. Record responses on a piece of chart paper.

- How do leaders act towards other people?
- What do leaders do for their communities?
- Has there been a time you saw one of your classmates act like a leader?

- When was a time you were a leader in your community?

Students will draw a picture of themselves being a leader in their community. They can choose the community that makes the most sense to their scenario.

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

At the partner school Museum Educators staff worked with, many migrant students - about 40% of the recent migrant population - have come from Venezuela.

Museum educators provided space for possible discussion of leaders in USA/NYC communities versus communities where recent migrants have come from.

Most nations in Latin America have a President and Vice President, but their municipal governments vary.

Ex. Ecuador has provincial prefects rather than governors.

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Students will share their drawings and ways they can be a leader in their community.

Ask students:

- Who are the leaders in your school community?
- Who are the leaders in your city, state and country?
- How can you be a leader in your own community?



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EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

READ ALOUD

Read a book centered on a child or adult showing leadership and reflect on how the characters solve problems and lead others.

Ask students:

- How is the main character a leader in the situation?
- What traits does the main character show?

READ ALOUD SUGGESTIONS:

The Girl with a Mind for Math: The Story of Raye Montague by Julia Finley Mosca

Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13 by Helaine Becker

Aaron Slater, Illustrator by Andrea Beaty

Spanish Language:

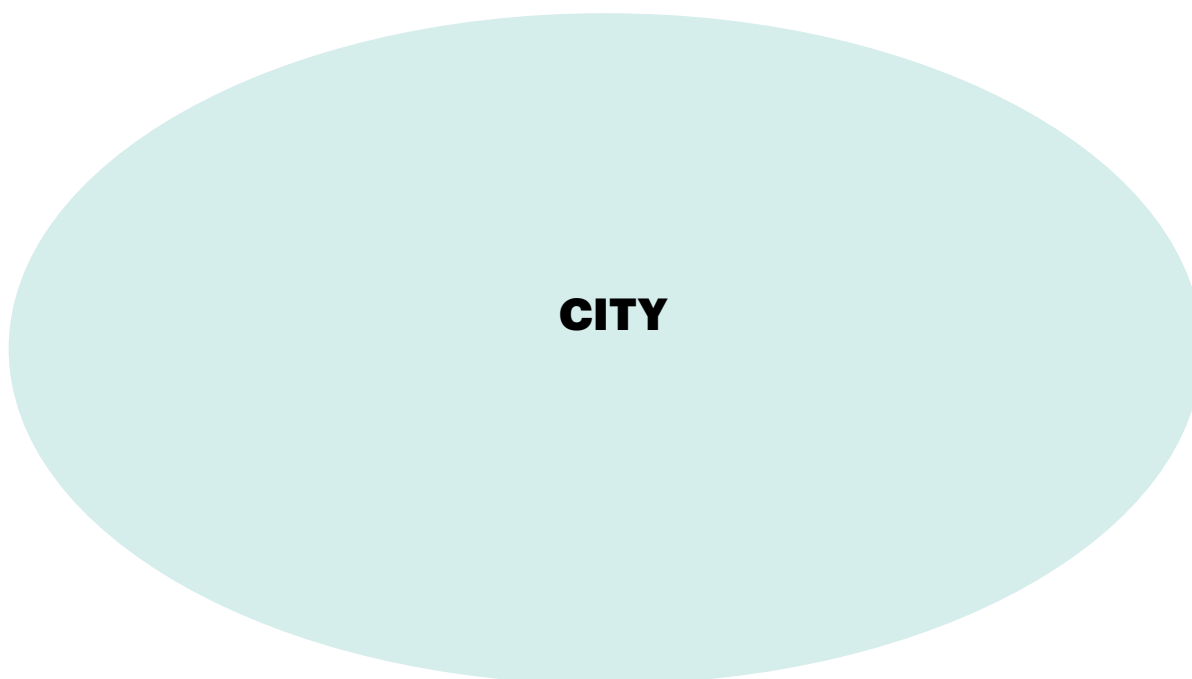
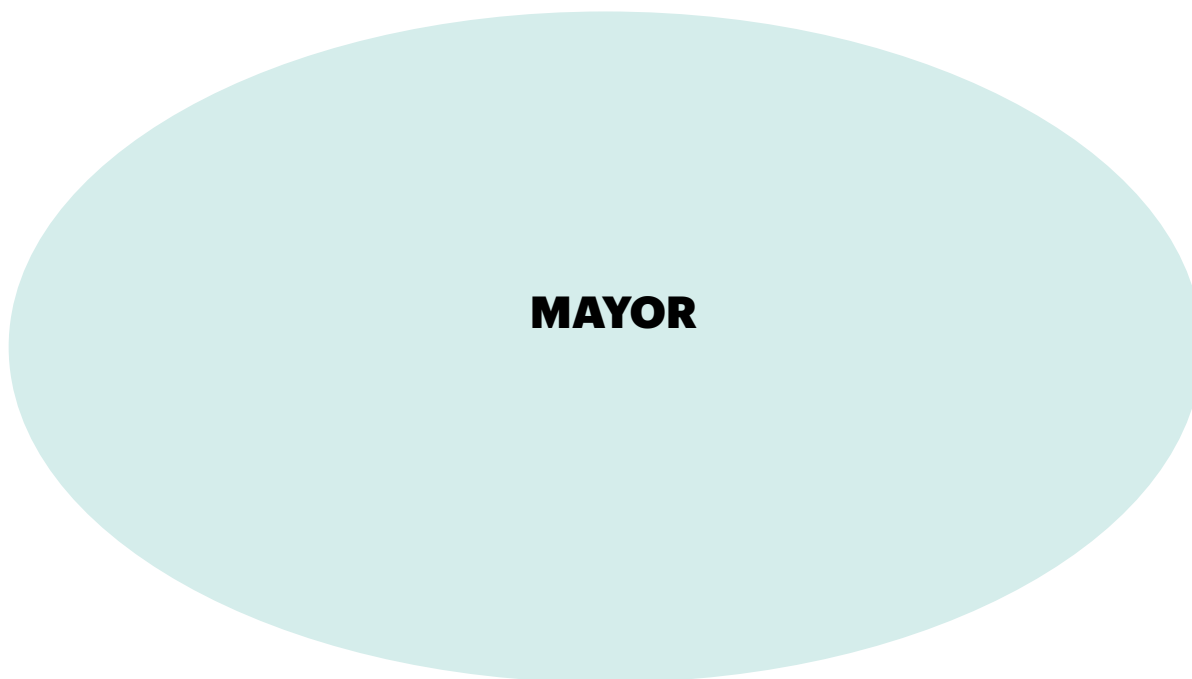
Tejedora del Arcoiris (Rainbow Weaver) by Linda Elovitz Marshall

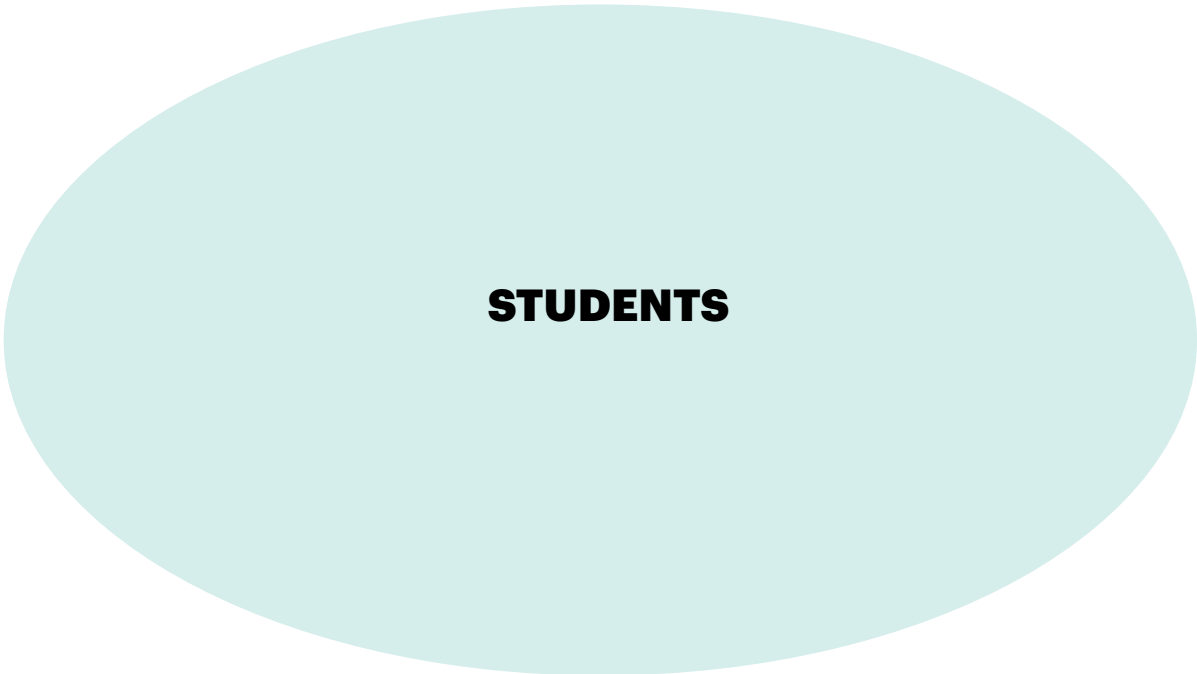
Viva la Tortuga! (Long Live the Turtle!) by Georgina Lazaro Leon

APPENDIX:
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

Cut the following shapes out and have students stack them to determine the order of who might be in charge:





APPENDIX:
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



GOVERNOR

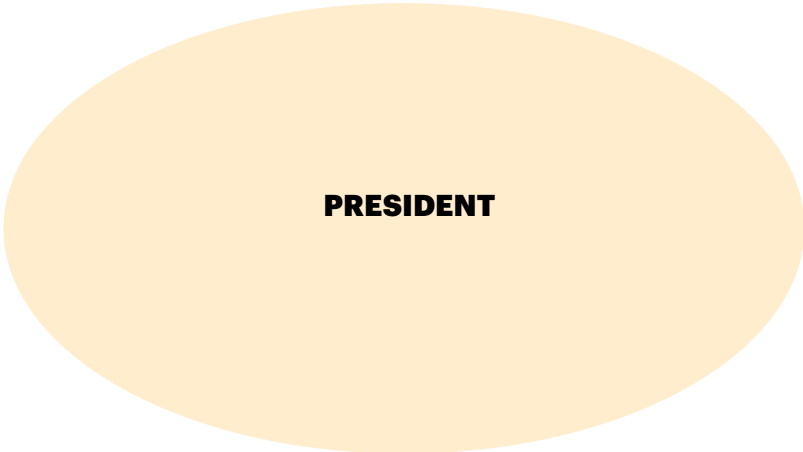
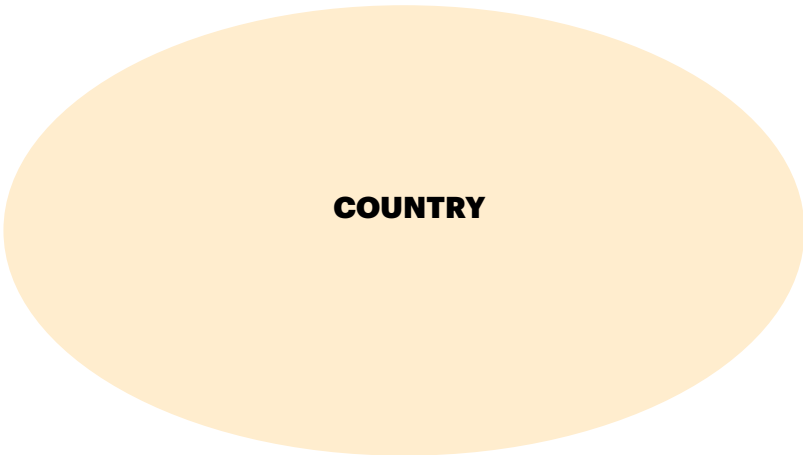


STATE



TEACHER

APPENDIX:
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**PRINCIPAL/
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

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FIRST GRADE

50 minutes

THE FABRIC OF A COMMUNITY



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in first grade and is intended to take place in a school setting.

A community is made of individuals who each have their own story and bring something special to the group. Students will discuss how individuals contribute to a larger community.

Each student will partake in a collaborative class quilt, making one individual piece and putting them together as a class to make an entire quilt.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be able to describe positive contributions they make to their communities.

MATERIALS

■ PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS

Images of community members working in or helping the community in various ways

■ 5 inch cotton squares

■ Felt squares 1 inch larger (6x6")

■ Nylon string

■ Fabric Markers

■ Glue Gun

■ Hole puncher

■ *Optional: Pencils/crayons/sketch paper*

■ *Optional: Example of quilt connected to historic site/museum*

EAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Civic Participation

HDQ1.1

- How have I helped my class or family?
- How do people describe who they are?
- How do I describe who I am?
- How have people made our community better?

CDQ1.1

- What does it mean to be a part of a group?

SET UP

Use a glue gun to attach cotton to felt. Super/gorilla glue would work as well. A hole puncher (electric or standard) works to punch holes in the corners of the felt squares.

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Review the objectives from the previous three sessions with students.

- What is a community? Who belongs in a community?
- Who leads a community?
- What communities are you a part of?

Everyone in this classroom is part of the same school community, and brings their own unique characteristics to it, just like the community members at the historic site/museum.

2. INVESTIGATION (10 MIN)

Share how community members used their special skills and knowledge to help the community as a whole. Show images of community members connected to the historic site/museum working a variety of jobs and have students identify what jobs and roles they see.

Students will turn and talk with a partner about something that makes them special.

We will make a quilt to represent our community and all of the individuals in it who make it wonderful. Use a document camera or screen to introduce students to quilts and their patterns.

Ask students what they see. Several fabric pieces combined together can form a quilt, just like how several individuals can come together to form a community. Show students the square they will be working with, including the design they will be asked to make and what the final product will look like.

3. ACTIVITY (30 MIN)

Each student will receive a felt square inlaid with a 5x5" piece of cotton fabric. Each table will receive an assortment of fabric markers.

EAD DRIVING QUESTIONS CONT.

We the People

CDQ3.1

- How do people become a community?

HDQ3.1

- What kinds of stories (including non-European perspectives) tell us who we are and where we are from?
- How have these stories helped individuals and families create, influence or change institutions (e.g., political, media, faith communities etc.)?

CDQ1.1

Make holes in each corner of the felt squares before activity begins. In the center of the white cotton square, students will draw a picture of themselves doing something they love.

Ask students to give examples and brainstorm before they begin. They may want to sketch/draft their design on a separate piece of paper before beginning if time allows.

Educators will thread squares together using nylon string and corner holes. The squares will go together in a grid formation. If the grid is uneven, educators can add extra or ask students who are finished to decorate an extra square or teachers can decorate one.

Note: Tying the squares together can be time consuming. Students who finish early can share their designs with others at their table.

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Once all students are finished, the quilt should have a grid of everyone's faces and interests.

Ask students:

- What do you notice about our classroom quilt?
- What positive contributions to our community does our classroom quilt represent?
- How is the quilt similar to our communities?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared how *Intrepid* sailors brought their special skills and knowledge to help the ship run smoothly.

They showed photos of sailors working a variety of jobs and had students identify what roles they saw.



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