



## THE U.S. CONSTITUTION PT.1: WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY? (4-8)

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to identify what makes up a community and how it functions properly through reflective activities.

### STANDARDS:

- **4.C2.1** Use primary and secondary sources to generate questions about the concepts and ideas such as liberty, justice, equality, and individual rights.
- **5.C4.2** Use a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions about and act on issues and civic problems in their classrooms and schools.
- **6.C4.2** Describe and apply civic virtues including deliberative processes that contribute to the common good and democratic principles in school, community, and government.
- **7.C4.4** Explain challenges people face and opportunities they create in addressing local, regional, and global problems at various times and places. Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in local, regional, and global communities.
- **8.C1.2** Demonstrate civic virtues that contribute to the common good and democratic principles within a variety of deliberative processes and settings.

### CIVICS EXAM QUESTION:

- Which of the following includes two rights of everyone living in the United States? A: Freedom of speech and freedom of assembly

**TIMELINE:** This lesson may take place near the beginning of the SPB process, during the Design the Process phase, to build a sense of community and teamwork with your steering committee.

**APPROXIMATE LESSON LENGTH:** 30 minutes

### SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- [Communities Handout](#)
- Sticky Notes

**VOCABULARY:** Community, Constitution

## INSTRUCTIONS:

### 1. Engage

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- Introduce your students with a simple question, “What is a community?”
  - Have students share answers until a consensus is reached that a community is “any group of people that come together to learn and help each other.”

### 2. Explore

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- Have students identify the different communities they belong to, starting with the “Steering Committee”.
  - Depending on the group size, or situation, students may use the *Communities Handout*, or one drawn on the board.
  - Have the students continue identifying communities they belong to, with the final ring being the “United States”.

### 3. Explain

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- Now that students have identified all the communities they belong to, have the students understand that members of communities can also come with different ideas or preferences.
  - Give the students the following scenario: “Kevin, Lisa, and Shannon want to go out and play sports, but Jenny and Steve want to stay in and watch tv. What are some ways this group can work out their differences?”
  - Some of the students’ answers could be voting, coming up with a compromise, etc.

### 4. Elaborate

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- Have the students then understand that for communities to function properly and help limit conflict, rules are necessary.
  - Ask the students the following questions: “What rules do we have here in our community?” and “Why do we have these rules?”
  - Then ask the students to re-identify the biggest community we belong to, “The United States”.
- Now that the students understand communities need rules to function, have them focus on the United States.
  - Depending on the group, you may either ask or tell the students that the name of the laws in the United States is “The Constitution”.
  - Ask the students to then individually think about “What is a law we follow from the Constitution?”

## 5. Evaluate

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- Write “The Constitution” on the board, and have students write down one law they can think of, on a sticky note.
  - Have students put their sticky notes on the Constitution and reflect on a few of the responses to see if they are correct or need redirections.
  - Finally, let the students know that next time we come together, we will decide on the rules of our community, by making our own “Constitution”.

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT OR ARTIFACT:** The formative assessment students will participate in for this activity will be the sticky notes used to identify laws present in the Constitution (i.e. Amendments).

**EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:** If time permits, you can move onto “The Constitution, Pt.2” lesson and further explore opportunities to build a community through your Steering Committee.

# Communities

