

What Makes a Community?

Mini Lesson 2: Slate & Pencil

Colonial Williamsburg

What Makes a Community?

Introduction

Communities come in many shapes and sizes. A community is a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. It can also mean a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals. Often people form communities based on common religion, geography, language, or culture. Many communities are a combination of those shared traits.

Some examples of communities are your classroom, your school, your town or your city. If you have a particular interest like dance, sports or art, you may also think of yourself as part of a community that does those things. This lesson explores the various people and ideas that create a community, both in the 18th century and today.

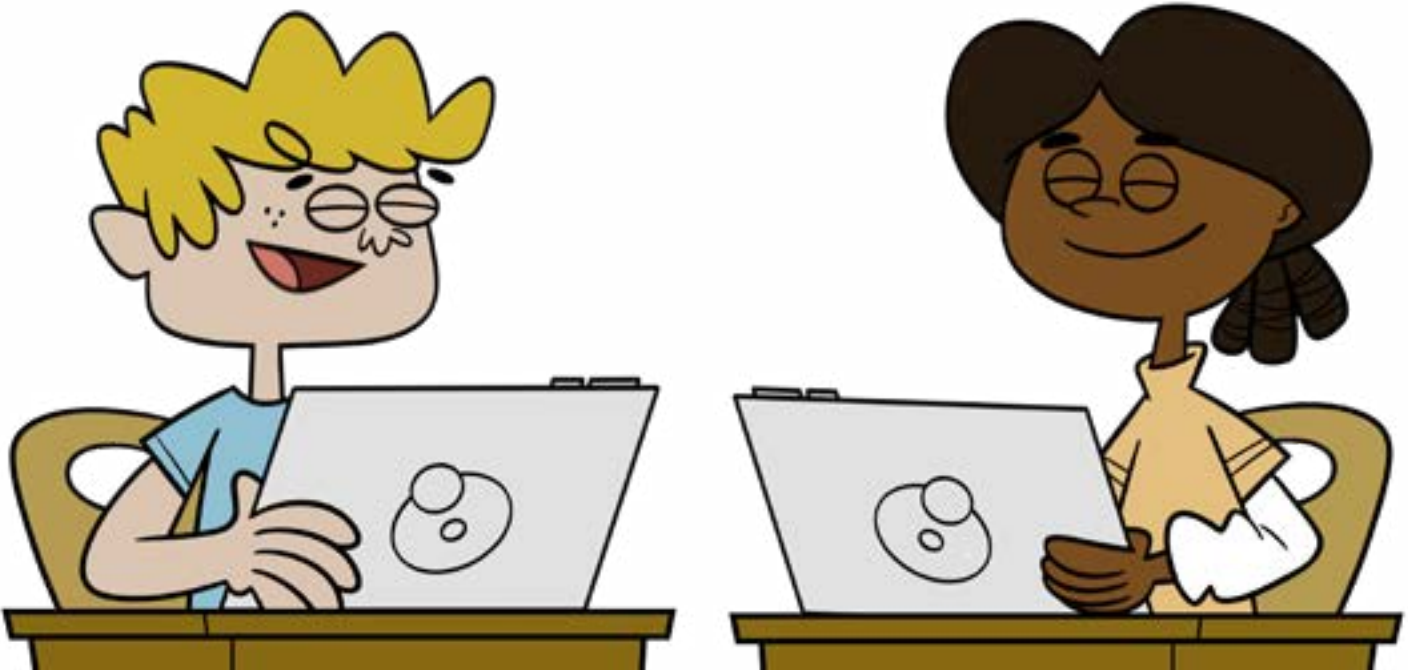
Objectives

After participating in this lesson, students will be able to

- Describe and interpret visual source material.
- Make connections between past and present.
- Identify what makes a community.
- Describe actions that can improve their community.

Strategy

This lesson is a multi-part examination of different facets of community. For each video, Ball, Hearth, Market House and Slate and Pencil, there is a mini lesson that incorporates an activity linking the videos and learning objectives. The lessons can be done in any order, and with a variety of classroom materials based on the level of students.



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Lesson 2: Slate Tablet & Pencil

Learning Objective: Education allows you to fully participate in your community and connect with other communities. For example, reading & writing are essential for written communication and basic math is required to buy and sell goods. But it's just as important to learn how to fix things, how to make things, and how to live in your community.

Guiding Questions

- What exciting things have you learned recently?

Grade History/Civics Standards Targeted

- 1st Grade: making connections between past and present;
- 2nd Grade: making connections between past and present; describing actions that can improve the school and community;

Materials

- Object: [Sampler by Polly Ann Smith](#)
- Sequoyah's Talking Leaves Lesson
- Slate Board Template
- White Chalk
- Black and Grey Construction Paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks or glue dots
- [Slate & Pencil Video](#)

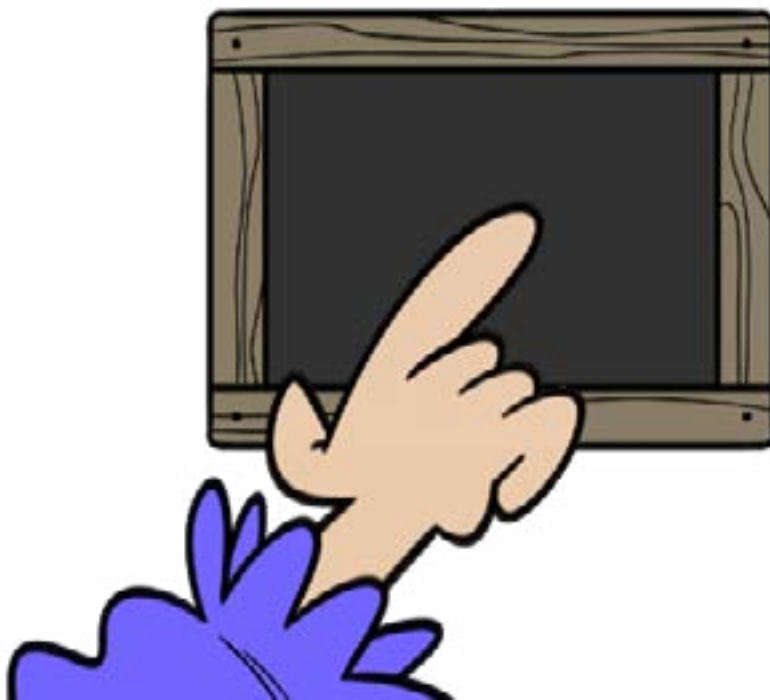
Background Information

Polly Ann Smith's alphabet sampler, which is dated 1781, descended in the Charleston family of origin. It is worked in reversible stitches, a characteristic found in other southern coastal schoolgirl needlework's. Samplers were a popular way for young women to practice various stitching skills as well as their letters and numbers. This sampler shows an English alphabet, however English was not the only language spoken in the 18th c in the colonies. People living in Williamsburg would have heard English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, African languages such as Swahili, Zulu, or Igbo, and Indigenous languages such as those spoken by the Powhatan, Saponi, and Cherokee, just to name a few.

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Strategy

1. Introduce the topic by using the guiding question. We're going to learn about 18th century education and languages. What exciting things have you learned recently?
2. Watch the short video, Slate Tablet and Pencil.
3. Ask, based on the video, what did people in the past use slate boards for?
4. Project the image of the Sampler.
 - a. What do you think this is? How could it help you learn?
 - b. Brainstorm other tools that help us learn, such as books, rulers, calculators, etc.
5. This sampler shows the English alphabet. Did everyone in the 18th c speak the same language? Does everyone in the world speak the same languages now?
6. Use the Sequoyah's Talking Leaves Lesson, attached, to learn about an Indigenous language.
7. Hand out the black construction paper, scissors, glue sticks and chalk
8. Each student can create their own slate board using the template and write or draw about what they are most excited to learn about this year or use the lesson extension from the Sequoyah's Talking Leaves lesson to try writing their name in Cherokee.



What Makes a Community?

A large, empty rounded rectangular frame with a double-line border, intended for a drawing or response. The frame is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower two-thirds of the page. It consists of two concentric rounded rectangles, with the space between them being uniform. The corners are smoothly rounded.