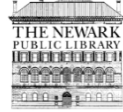




5 Washington Street
PO Box 630
Newark, NJ 07101-630



Developed by [Amanda Klein](#),
Education Outreach Specialist

Lesson Plan for Grade K-8 (with upper grade level extensions) *Summer Lesson Plan #5*

How do Communities Define “Us” & “Them?”

Overview

Communities, like Newark, are made up of distinct groups of people

- students
- business people
- musicians
- city employees

At the same time, the community of Newark is part of a larger network of places such as other cities in New Jersey or the United States.

This lesson focuses on how we categorize people within our communities as well as how we place labels on members of other communities. Individuals make choices about who belongs and who does not belong.

Throughout history, communities have classified people into groups in order to establish boundaries on membership. Understanding these communities (or societies) demands an awareness of who is included and who is excluded, as well as what factors are used to make the decisions about who belongs. Membership has been based on family, tribe, nationality, race, class, religion, gender, and even skills; and organizing people into categories has served many functions (e.g., political, economic, and social).

Learning Goals

1. Students will understand the relationship between membership and community and will be able to identify ways in which communities define membership.
2. Students will be able to define the word perspective.
3. Students will consider how membership in a particular group can influence how people view those outside of that group.
4. Students will be able to identify examples of *we* and *they* distinctions in their own lives.

Materials

1. "We and They" worksheet
2. Community member interview
3. Images of Newark npl.org/mynewarkstory/ there is a link to the digital archive in the center of the page.
4. Rudyard Kipling's poem "We and They"
5. Labels

Activity #1

1. Individually, allow students to find (5-7) images of individuals or groups they believe to be part of the Newark community.
 - a. Images from Newark npl.org/mynewarkstory/ can be used.
 - b. A digital scavenger hunt can also be conducted for this activity.
2. Ask students to meet in small groups to discuss why they chose those images.
3. Each group will label the individual pictures with a short phrase as to why these individuals or groups belong to the community.

Activity #2

Begin class by having students share what they learned about the history of Newark from interviewing someone in their community (can be a classmate). As students share information about the history of Newark, record the events they describe at the appropriate place on the timeline, noting whether an event represents a moment of unity or division in Newark. The concept that communities change over time is a theme students will explore.

Activity #3

This is an opportunity for students to talk about how communities can break down. Allow students to answer the following questions as a group or to find photographic evidence to answer the question.

Questions:

1. Who belongs to the Community of Newark?
2. Does the Newark Community have rules of membership?
3. Have these rules changed over time? Why have they changed?
4. What do you think will happen next? Will the present rules stay the same or change?

Ask students to meet in small groups to discuss what they understand about membership and belonging. Each group can be responsible for responding to particular questions:

1. Define: communities, membership, and belonging
2. The media always depicts kids as forming cliques or groups. How do members of these groups treat each other? Within the group? How do they treat other groups?
3. Whom do you respect more, members of the Newark Community or a school clique? Explain why.

Activity #4

When students understand how communities make choices regarding membership, they are ready to think about how belonging to a community shapes the way people view the world, especially how they view people who live outside of their community.

Rudyard Kipling's poem "We and They" reinforces the idea of in-groups and out-groups.

1. Distribute the poem to students.
2. Read it aloud or ask students to volunteer to read a stanza.
3. After you read the poem, have students create a list of the words Kipling uses to describe we as well as the words he uses to describe they.
4. Encourage students to notice verbs as well as nouns and adjectives. Students can use their lists to help answer the question, "What is the difference between *we* and *they*, according to the poet?" The "We and They" worksheet included with this lesson is designed to guide students' analysis of the poem.
5. Write the word perspective on the board.
 - a. See if any students can define this term, or you can give them the following definition: Perspective is your point of view. Perspective is how you see and understand the world and the people around you.
 - b. Explain that we each have a perspective influenced by our unique identity as well as the communities to which we belong.
 - c. Have students apply the concept of perspective to Kipling's poem.
 - d. Tell half of the class to imagine that they are members of the *we* community described in the poem and the other half to imagine that they are members of the *they* community.
 - e. Have students answer the following questions:
 - i. Whose practices are proper?
 - ii. Whose practices are disgusting?
 - f. After students representing the *we* group and the *they* group share their responses, as a class you can discuss the meaning of the final stanza of the poem:

*But if you cross over the sea,
Instead of over the way,
You may end by (think of it!) looking on We
As only a sort of They!*

Activity #5

1. In small groups or as an individual activity, have students identify a group or a community.
 - a. It could be:
 - b. a sports team
 - c. a school
 - d. a family
 - e. a neighborhood
 - f. a religion
 - g. a nation
2. Ask students to select an object or event that represents this group's experience.
3. Have students create a list describing this object or event from the perspective of a member of that group (the *we* perspective).
4. Have students write another list in which they describe the same object or event from the perspective of someone who is not a member of that group (the *they* perspective).

Activity #6

1. Have students identify, individually, a community to which they belong and answer the following questions:
 - a. How might your ideas be different from those of people who are not part of this community?
 - b. How does being a member of this community shape the way you view those outside of your community?
 - c. How do you think people from other communities view the ideas or practices of your community?

Rudyard Kipling's poem "We and They"

Father and Mother, and Me,
Sister and Auntie say
All the people like us are We,
And every one else is They.
And They live over the sea,
While We live over the way,
But-would you believe it? --They look upon We
As only a sort of They!

We eat pork and beef
With cow-horn-handled knives.
They who gobble Their rice off a leaf,
Are horrified out of Their lives;
While they who live up a tree,
And feast on grubs and clay,
(Isn't it scandalous?) look upon We
As a simply disgusting They!

We shoot birds with a gun.
They stick lions with spears.
Their full-dress is un-.
We dress up to Our ears.
They like Their friends for tea.
We like Our friends to stay;
And, after all that, They look upon We
As an utterly ignorant They!

We eat kitcheny food.
We have doors that latch.
They drink milk or blood,
Under an open thatch.
We have Doctors to fee.
They have Wizards to pay.
And (impudent heathen!) They look upon We
As a quite impossible They!

All good people agree,
And all good people say,
All nice people, like Us, are We
And every one else is They:
But if you cross over the sea,
Instead of over the way,
You may end by (think of it!) looking on We

As only a sort of They!

Record the words Kipling used in the poem to describe "We and They"

We	They

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