



## Celebrating the Diversity of Community (High School Version)

### OVERVIEW

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What different types of communities exist, and how do the people in our communities impact us?

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What is a community? We use the word often, but how often do we pause to consider what the word means? According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, a community is a unified body of individuals. Communities can be formed around physical spaces like schools and churches, or virtual spaces like internet groups and online gaming squads. Communities can also be built around mutual interests, from sports to music to TV shows; they can be built around identities, like race and sexuality; or they can be built around beliefs. And, of course, communities can be built between family, friends, and neighbors. But whatever way communities are built, they thrive in the diversity of individuals within them. Communities give us the opportunity to learn new things and think in new perspectives.



Photo: Amanda Brinton

Chicago, the third largest city in the United States, is home to many kinds of communities. Different neighborhoods have been centers of ethnic and national culture, whether Jewish, African American, Polish American, or Puerto Rican. Aside from being a hub for identity-based communities, Chicago is also known for its arts community—specifically for music, poetry, and spoken word which has produced some notable voices such as Chicago natives Chance the Rapper, Jamila Woods, and Nico Segal.

Listen to a mixtape or an album by these artists and you'll most likely hear a shout out to the diverse Windy City. "I got my city doing front flips/When every father, mayor, rapper, jump ship..." raps Chance in his song "Angels," boasting about supporting his city when others in power have overlooked its needs. Jamila Woods' takes a protective stance towards Chicago in her song "LSD" where she sings, "I won't let you criticize/My city like my skin, it's so pretty/ If you don't like it, just leave it alone." But these artists' support of the Chicago community go beyond song lyrics. Chance the Rapper, for example, has become known for his activism and philanthropy. His organization, Social Works, has hosted "OpenMike" events, festivals for teens, summer day camps for kids, projects to help Chicago's homeless population during the winter, an initiative to provide mental health services, and a fundraising campaign that raised over \$4 million for Chicago Public Schools.



In 2014, Chance and poet/singer-songwriter Jamila Woods collaborated with Chicago native trumpeter Nico Segal (formerly known as Donnie Trumpet) and the band Social Experiment to release the single “Sunday Candy” off of the joint album Surf. The song serves as an ode to a very special member of Chance’s community—his grandmother—and how the church community reminds him of her love, safety, and support.

In this lesson, students will consider the many kinds of communities that exist, and reflect on their own special ties to a community they are a part of. After watching the video for “Sunday Candy,” and hearing the poetry of Chicago-based Kevin Coval, students will hold their own poetry slam featuring poems about community.

## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will:

### 1. KNOW (KNOWLEDGE):

- About creatives such as Chance the Rapper, Jamila Woods, Nico Segal, and the band The Social Experiment, who developed within the arts community in Chicago
- The work of poet Kevin Coval
- How communities differ in organization, and how communities impact people as individuals

### 2. MASTERY OBJECTIVE:

- Students will be able to consider different perspectives on what a community might consist of by creating and sharing their own poems that celebrate community.

## ACTIVITIES

### MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITY

1. Tell students that for this lesson, they will be investigating the idea of community. Pass out **Handout 1 - Community Worksheet**, to each student. Tell students to complete the upper left hand quadrant as it applies to their family. Then, using that quadrant as a guide, list three additional communities they feel a part of in the blank quadrants. (*If needed, encourage students to think about their neighborhood, extra curricular activities or sports teams, religious organizations, or online groups they are a part of as communities.*)
2. Ask students to share some of the communities they described in the handout. Have them discuss each circle in the worksheet: where this community meets, who it includes, the values the community promotes, and so on.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Play “Sunday Candy,” a short film collaboration between Chance the Rapper, Jamila Woods, Nico Segal, and the Social Experiment. (*Note: The video can be found on Youtube, which may also feature advertising. We suggest loading the video before class.*) Ask students to pay attention to the actions of the performers while watching the video. After the video, ask students:
  - What are some representations of community featured in the video? How does the video illustrate the ideas of community?
  - What are some themes in the song? How would this theme contribute to a positive community?
2. Display **Image 1, “Sunday Candy” Lyrics**. Ask students:
  - Who might Chance be talking about in these lyrics? (*Note to teacher: Chance is singing about his Grandmother.*)
  - What characteristics might this person represent to Chance?
  - What might church represent to Chance?
  - Based on these lyrics, what could you say about Chance’s relationship with the church community?
3. Explain to students that the video was a collaboration between a variety of artists based in Chicago, Illinois. Show **Image 2, Chicago Connections**. Ask students:
  - Do you recognize any of the people featured in this image? Who? Do you recognize them from the video, or from somewhere else?
  - Would you say the people on this image are part of a community? What type of community?
  - How might this community work together?
4. Play for students a video of Chicago poet and activist Kevin Coval performing “Chicago Has My Heart.” (*The video can be found on Youtube, which may also feature advertising. We suggest loading the video before class. The video also contains one instance of an obscenity.*) Before playing the video, encourage students to pay attention to how Coval recites his poem, his words, and the subject of the poem. Allow them to take notes while watching the video if they wish. Ask students:
  - What about the performance stood out to you? Did you notice anything about Coval’s gestures, rhythm, diction, or emotion that stood out when he recited the poem?
  - What are some things Coval praises about Chicago? What are some things he criticizes about his hometown? How does he establish this difference when performing the poem?
  - How do you think Coval might establish community in “Chicago Has My Heart”? Why does he feel the need to recite his poem to an audience? How might that be different than just writing it in a book or magazine? Does this poem speak to the idea of a community?
5. Tell students that they will be holding their own poetry slam in the classroom. Ask students to create a poem that pays homage to their own community, or an aspect of it (a person, place, thing, etc.) Remind students how a community can vary: it can be their



family (biological or chosen), their friends, their school, an extracurricular social activity, their neighborhood, or their identity (race, sexual orientation, disability, etc.) Display **Image 3, Poem Prompts**, and tell students to use the following prompts if they need as inspiration for their poem.

6. Hold a classroom “Poetry Slam,” where students get a chance to read their poems to the class.

### SUMMARY ACTIVITY

1. Ask students:

- How do you define community? Has your definition of community changed at all after exploring the idea of community in this lesson?
- How has your community helped you?
- What do you think you contribute to your community? In what ways might you help your community?
- How might communities help people? How might they hold them back?
- How might art and music fit into the community?

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

1. Using “Sunday Candy” as inspiration, write a song about a community of which you are a part, or a particular person within that community you feel a close connection with. Present the song to class.



## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

### *College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading (K-12)*

Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Reading 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Craft and Structure 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Craft and Structure 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

### *College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Language(K-12)*

Language 1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

### *College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening (K-12)*

Comprehension & Collaboration 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Comprehension & Collaboration 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. and orally.

Comprehension & Collaboration 3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.



## **NATIONAL CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES – NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS)**

Theme 1: Culture

Theme 3: People, Place, and Environments

Theme 4: Individual Development and Identity

Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

## **NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION – NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSIC EDUCATION (NAFME)**

### *Core Music Standard: Creating*

Plan and Make: Select and develop musical ideas for defined purposes and contexts.

Evaluate and Refine: Evaluate and refine selected musical ideas to create musical work(s) that meet appropriate criteria.

Present: Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.

### *Core Music Standard: Responding*

Interpret: Support interpretations of musical works that reflect creators' and/or performers' expressive intent.

Evaluate: Support evaluations of musical works and performances based on analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.

### *Core Music Standard: Connecting*

Connecting 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make music.

Connecting 11: Relate musical ideas and works to varied contexts and daily life to deepen understanding.