Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2014 Volume II: Exploring Community through Ethnographic Nonfiction, Fiction, and Film

Discovering Community, Discovering Ourselves

Guide for Curriculum Unit 14.02.06
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Outside of the family unit, the school environment is the first community young children become a part of as individuals and group members. It is during this time that children begin to cultivate a sense of identity of who they are and how they fit in the world as learners, friends, and individual citizens. It is my goal with this unit to engage my second-grade students in the exploration and the analysis of the many communities encountered in our discovery within our classroom, our city, and our world. Students will be exposed to various kinds of communities in order to engage them on their quest in discovering how their unique qualities enrich and meld our classroom environment, which will move beyond the school to the community of New Haven. Students will observe that community in order to identify where they feel they belong now and in the future. Finally, students will dabble in the global world to search for a community on the World Wide Web in which they share common interests such as ideas, hobbies, native countries, beliefs, language, etc., to bring about change through collaboration for the benefit of others. I am designing this unit specifically in order to engage my Latino students in a discovery of the many possible communities they are part of and can be engaged in order to widen their possibilities for the future college and professional careers. While this unit is designed for my predominantly Latino second-grade students at my dual language school, it is also appropriate for any classroom – urban, suburban, or rural, at any primary or intermediate grade level.

(Recommended for English Language Arts and Social Studies, grades 2-6)