



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

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

Does Community Truly Bring Unity?

Guide for Curriculum Unit 14.02.11
by Patricia Marie Sorrentino

What is a community? Does community bring unity? Or do communities create separation? Can different communities ever exist within a bigger society without causing conflict? How do communities compare, even when they seem vastly different? These are all the questions this unit will attempt to answer within a high-school English class. This unit combines works from Spike Lee (*Do the Right Thing*), VH1 (*Basketball Wives*), Notorious BIG (*Juicy*), and Steve Stoute (*The Tanning of America*) to help frame what the qualities of a community are and how communities compare and contrast. Through the analysis of these texts, students will focus on a specific set of questions, which will help guide them to evaluate each community. Throughout the unit, students will journal and reflect upon their learning as well as their own communities. To conclude the unit, students will perform an ethnographic study of one community.

This unit will challenge students to think about their role in their community, how communities function, and work in groups to consider the beliefs they may have about community. This unit is designed for a mature high-school audience.

(Recommended for English and Social Studies, grades 11 and 12)

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