**Subject: Social Studies**

**Grade: 1st Grade**

**Unit 1: Civics- Experience 1: Community**

(5 lessons)

**Background Information:**The idea of community is an important foundation of our society. We can start helping our students to understand this at the beginning of the year. Use the example of your own classroom as a model throughout the experience.  To prepare, make sure you pick books representing a variety of communities (see list in Additional Resources). It is important to make sure students can see themselves in what we read and teach. This allows them to make connections to their learning, gain a sense of belonging and build a strong sense of self.

\*Consider using extend/elaborate text during your read aloud.

**Essential Question:** How do communities help individuals and groups?

**Main Ideas:**

1. Communities that are unique and common
2. Leaders and members create rules for community safety
3. Impact and contributions of community leaders
4. Celebrations shared by members of the school community
5. Benefits of being part of a community

**Assessment Ideas:**

* Draw and label an example of a community they belong to.
* Others assessments are embedded in the lessons below.

**(See the 5 lessons below)**

**Lesson #1: What is a community?**

**Engage:**

Divide students into three groups. Give each group one of the pictures from the opening activity. Have each group look at their picture and discuss the following questions:

1.      What do we see in the picture?

2.      Where are the people in the picture?

3.      What are they doing? Do you think the people have anything in common?

Gather all groups together and have them share. After sharing, explain that we are going to be learning about groups of people over the next few weeks and how they work together to succeed.

**Explore:**

Define Community: a group of people who live in the same area and/or share the same interests, race, religion, etc.

Discuss how we are a part of more communities than we even realize. Create a list or web with class that can be displayed throughout experience. (Ex: Family, School, Classroom, Neighborhood/Town, Country you live in).  Some communities can be common and some are unique.

Students will be sorting communities into two categories, unique communities, and common communities. Define both words-

Common:belonging to or shared by two or more people or groups; regular, not special

Unique: something special and unlike anything else

Provide students with pictures of both unique and common things and have them sort. This can be done individually or in a small group. After they have had time to sort all pictures, gather as a whole group and discuss their choices, having students refer to the definitions while explaining.

**Explain:**

Share that just like the pictures they sorted, we can refer to communities as common or unique. Give an example: School is a common community that we all share. Everyone in the building belongs to it. Astronauts are in a unique community. There are not many people who have gone into space, so it is very special. Share example of unique community in Alaska where almost everyone lives in one building.

**Extend/Elaborate:**

Take some time to discuss three major types of communities: rural, suburban, and urban. Display the web with pictures displayed of each type. Have students list common characteristics of each group and then share which is rural (lots of land, buildings spread out, farms found here), urban (big cities, everything close together with easy access), and suburban (in the middle). Which of these common communities do we all belong to?

Read a book about communities aloud and discuss what the people in the communities have in common. Possible books:

The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister

A Chair for my Mother by V.B. Williams

There are a variety of nonfiction books about communities on Epic! To choose from (must have an account).

**Evaluate:**

Give students a small piece of paper and have them draw and label an example of a community they belong to. Have students add pictures and words to show things that are common in that community.  You can display the pictures with the matching headings on the list or web the class created.

**Lesson #2: Leaders in a Community**

**Engage:**

Share that today we are going to focus on the common community we all share, our school community. Review the definition of community: *a group of people who live in the same area and/or share the same interests, race, religion, etc.* Each school has its own group of students who live in the same area and share an interest in learning.  In a community there are rules: *a statement that tells you what is and is not allowed*. These rules are meant to keep us safe so we can learn and have fun.

Display pictures of the following people: your school’s principal, assistant principal(s), yourself, and your students. Have students think about what community all of these people are a part of. Then lead a brief discussion about what role all of these people could play in the community (think: what are their job roles).

**Explore:**

Define leaders: people who help a group plan what to do; someone who guides and influences. Ask, do you think the people in the pictures are leaders in the school community? Go through each picture-students can give a thumbs up or down, or you could have students move to certain spots in the room, one spot for yes- they are a leader and another spot for no- they are not a leader. Some students may think that they are not leaders in their school and that’s ok at this time.

**Explain:**

Create a chart with the headings of principal/assistant principal, teachers, students (you can add other school leaders as well if you want). Create a list under each heading of ways those people lead. This would be a good time to tie in how school/classroom rules are used to help lead and guide us. Discuss how each of them is a leader and how they can be a good leader.

Define fair: something that does not favor one thing over another and safe: not causing harm; not dangerous.  Ask: Is it important for citizens in a community to feel that it is safe and fair? How do we as leaders make sure that this happens? (By creating and following rules).

Go through your classroom rules. Have students decide if the rules make your classroom community safe and fair. (Can use thumbs up/down or have them hold up a smiley or frowny face to show understanding). Have them brainstorm other ways to make the school community a fair and safe place

**Extend/Elaborate:**

Take this time to really focus on your classroom rules. While they have already been introduced to students throughout the first two days of school, now is the time to set out your expectations for things such as lining up, unpacking in the morning, and getting ready to go home in the afternoon, following directions, raising hands, etc. This will set the foundation for the school year.

Next, gather students together and read the book Sofia Valdez, Future Prez by Andrea Beaty. Discuss how even though Sofia was “just a kid”, she could still be a leader and what evidence in the book showed/told she was a leader in her community.

You can invite your principal and/or assistant principal to your room to talk about how they are a leader of your school.

**Evaluate:**

Have each student share one way that they can be a leader in their classroom or in the school. This can be done orally, or you can have them write/draw their answer.

**Lesson #3: Why be a part of a community?**

**Engage:**

State that we have spent the past several lessons looking at communities and ones that we are a part of. Pose the questions: Whyshould I be part of a community? Is being a part of a community a good thing?  Have students’ brainstorm. You can jot down their ideas and save for the end of the lesson.

**Explore:**

Share that today we will explore if there are benefits to being a part of a community. Define benefit: a good or helpful result or effect. Read The Lemon Tree: by Katherine Graham. As you read, ask students questions about the type of community they believe the story is set in (urban? rural?) Is it like their community? What is the same? What is different?

**Explain:**

After reading the story, discuss what happened (The main characters would go to different people in their community and ask for an ingredient. In return, they would share their lemons). Ask: How could this be thought of as a benefit? (Everyone got something that they need; working together to achieve a goal, etc.)

**Extend/Elaborate:**

Say, “Now that we have explored the benefits of being a part of a community in “The Lemon Tree”, we are going to explore the benefits of being a part of our school community.” Break students into pairs or small groups. Read through the scenarios and then have students discuss what the benefits are. Gather whole group back together and reiterate that when everyone in a community works together and follows the rules, everyone can feel included and safe. This makes the community a better place to be a part of.

**Evaluate:**

Each student will draw and label one benefit to being a part of a school community.

**Lesson #4: Community Impact**

**Engage:**Give each student some playdough and have them roll it into a ball. Then have everyone, at the same time, smash their ball of playdough with either their hand or a book. Ask: What happened? (The playdough became flat). Explain that what they did is called an impact. They did something (smashed the ball) and changed it (made it flat). Share that when we are a part of a community, things that we do have an impact on the community and the other people in it.

**Explore:** Define impact: a powerful or major influence or effect. Go through some cause-and-effect scenarios with the students in order to dive deeper into community impact. You can do this as a whole group or break them into small groups and have each group work on one cause and have them explain the effect to the rest of the class.

**Explain:**Next, define contributions: something that is given or done to help. Explain that the contributions we make to our communities can have a positive or negative impact. Give examples, such as if someone shares a toy with another friend outside (contribution), this creates a positive impact, because it will make the other friend feel happy and included.

Next, demonstrate by using a balloon. Have the students pretend that they are a deflated balloon. Each time someone gives them a compliment or does something nice for them (contribution-breathe into balloon) it is like filling up a balloon. The balloon gets bigger and fuller with each breathe. But when someone says unkind words, it causes a negative impact (let out a little air). Eventually, if we are not providing positive contributions, the effect is an empty balloon. Make sure to state that this is true for all communities, whether school, home, sports, church, etc.

**Extend/Elaborate:** This would be a good time for teaching Bucket Filling. This is a nice compliment to creating a positive classroom culture and ties in nicely with this lesson and the Experience as a whole. There are many good books to use, such as Have you Filled a Bucket Today? By Carol McCloud, as well as resources on Teachers pay Teachers (for free!).

**Evaluate:**Complete Claims-Evidence-Response Assessment as a whole group verbally. This is the students first introduction to this type of assessment and will be used throughout the year. Reveal each part of the Assessment one at a time, explaining as you go. There are great visuals you can use that can be found for free on Teachers Pay Teachers. You may want to print the visuals out and have on hand throughout the year.

**Lesson #5: Community Celebrations**

**Engage:**

Share the different symbols representing celebrations with your students. Don’t use the word celebration yet. Ask where they have seen them before. Then ask what you think we might be learning about today.

**Explore:**

Define celebration: doing something special or enjoyable, such as for an occasion or achievement. All of the symbols represent some type of celebration. When people celebrate, they often gather with friends and family and do fun activities. Have students brainstorm different activities that could been done during various celebrations (thinking back to the examples from earlier in the lesson). Discuss how different communities may not share the same celebrations.

**Explain:**

Ask students to think about everything we have learned in this Experience. Pose the following questions: Why would a community get together to celebrate? Does having rules that make a community safe and fair make it easier to have a celebration? What kinds of celebrations have you had with the communities that you are a part of? Students can work in small groups, sharing their thoughts while you circulate the room.

**Extend/Elaborate:**

Place books about a variety of celebrations around the classroom.  Have students rotate through them, looking through each and jotting down on a blank piece of paper or on their dry erase boards the types of activities/celebrations they see. Gather as a whole group to share observations.

Books suggestions:

Let’s Celebrate! Special Days Around the World by Kate DePalma

Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto

Daddy Christmas and Hanukkah Mama by Selina Alko

All are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold

The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg

**Evaluate:**

Students will draw themselves having a celebration with one of their communities.