

## ‘Community’ Concept Cards

---

### Concepts

Concepts are the building blocks of thinking. They help us to name and share our thoughts about abstract ideas. Things like love and fairness and community.

The important thing to know about concepts, such as community, is that we each have subtly different internal definitions of what they mean because we all have different lives, experiences and knowledge. That’s why it’s so important to take the time to talk about what we think things mean; to share and negotiate our understanding, so that when talk about these ideas, we are talking about the same things.

### Activity

This activity is designed for you to explore personal experiences and ideas about the notion of ‘community’ with a group of students. The cards illustrate possible parts of a community to discuss and share experiences about and hopefully reach a shared understanding of what community means to the group.

Undertaking this activity develops several core critical thinking skills with students, developing **criteria**, or characteristics, making **distinctions** between things, sharing appropriate **examples** to illustrate a point, giving **reasons** and ultimately developing a working **definition**.

When asking questions, it is important to stay **neutral** and **curious** about the responses. Students can often look to you for hints about what to say and it’s important that they are not influenced in their responses and that they share genuinely felt ideas. Always be sure to ask why students think something and gently ask follow up questions that elicit more thinking. Try to think about their responses from different perspectives and ask, “*what if ...?*” kinds of questions.

### Procedure 1

You can work with the whole class or a smaller group depending on your situation. It is useful to have a teacher facilitating this activity with a junior primary group.

1. Prepare the group by introducing the idea of a community and

asking students to engage in a pair-share to talk about what they think a ‘community’ is.

2. They then take turns sharing their ideas with the whole class.
3. Ensure you take big notes on the board, or on a large piece of paper that everyone can see.

Capture key ideas, such as any criteria or key concepts that are raised.

4. Then start to work through the cards.
5. You will ask a series of questions to get students to think deeply about them. Start by sharing a card and asking, “*Are \_\_\_\_\_ a part of your community?*”
6. Follow up with, “*Why is that?*”, if you are asking about cats you might ask, “*Are all cats a part of your community or just some?*” “*Why?*” “*What makes them different/similar?*”
7. Once you have done several cards you can also begin to use previous answers to compare criteria and distinctions they have already made, i.e. “*If your cat is community, why isn’t a cow?*” “*They are both animals, so how are they different?*”
8. Take time to continue to capture criteria and distinctions as the activity to proceeds.
9. When you have worked through the cards review the ideas you have come up with and discuss

## Reflection

After completing the activity, it is important to spend time helping students reflect on their experience. Metacognitive reflection is an important skill and starting to develop this early benefits students greatly. Students reflect on doing the activity and how well they engaged in their thinking skills.

Ask students to respond with thumbs up or thumbs down in response to your questions. Use these questions to get started:

*Did you find this activity easy? Was it tricky to work out some of the answers? Do you think you listened well to others? Did you come up with good ideas? Did you get a chance to share? Do you think you will share more next time? – final thoughts....*

possibilities for a more complete definition of ‘community’.

## Procedure 2

Another way to do this activity with an older group would be to put students in groups of about 4, each with their own set of cards.

1. Each group would have to work together to sort their cards into piles of ‘are community’, ‘not community’ and ‘not sure’.
2. They need to discuss and negotiate with each other to come to a consensus about where the cards will go.
3. They would then select someone in their group to share their findings with the class.
4. You would document their ideas visually on the board.
5. Where there are disagreements between groups or cards, they are unsure about take time to explore why this is.
6. When you have captured all the thinking spend some time working with the groups to pull the ideas into a meaningful definition of ‘community’.



cars



cats



chickens



trees



teddy



family



friends



neighbours



rabbits



dog



strangers



workers



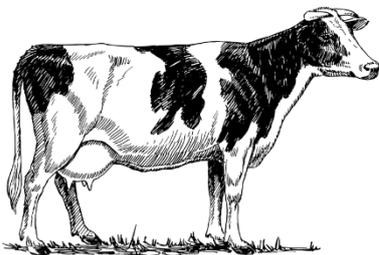
police



nurses



carers



cows



farmers



rocks