

The Importance of Community

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you belong to a community outside of your family and workplace?
2. What types of groups do you rely on for support?
3. What types of communities exist in your hometown?
4. When have you experienced loneliness? Think about the different stages of your life.



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| ___ 1. community | a) a very close group that doesn't welcome outsiders |
| ___ 2. necessary | b) usually do or have |
| ___ 3. involvement | c) the taking part in an activity or group |
| ___ 4. tend to | d) making a person feel wanted and comfortable |
| ___ 5. run out of | e) to rely or depend on |
| ___ 6. count on | f) to break open and gain access to |
| ___ 7. supportive | g) to be useful |
| ___ 8. come in handy | h) to no longer have any |
| ___ 9. retire | i) helpful and caring |
| ___ 10. crack | j) required |
| ___ 11. welcoming | k) to stop working (usually due to age) |
| ___ 12. clique | l) a group with a common interest or location |

Reading

COMMUNITY

A sense of belonging

1. Getting involved in **community** is important. A sense of belonging is **necessary** for a happy life. Joining a sports team is one example of **involvement**. Adults and children enjoy playing and watching sports in groups. A book club or a theater group can also provide community. People with common interests **tend to** get along well. They never **run out of** things to talk about.
2. There are times in life when you feel more isolated than others. New parents rely on community to get through the early years of raising children. College and university students need a **supportive** community too. These are the times in life when a substitute family **comes in handy**.
3. Some people find a community in the workplace. When older people **retire**, they need to build up their support network. Many retired people move to a new town or city away from family and friends.
4. Some communities are easier to **crack** than others. Instead of **welcoming** newcomers, these groups seem to form a **clique**. Happiness experts suggest having a third place outside of your home and workplace to belong to. You can **count on** this community for support through life's many ups and downs. Your health may depend on it.

“A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.”

—Henrik Ibsen, playwright

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What is the reading mainly about?
2. According to the reading, what do people need in order to be happy in life?
3. Name at least three examples of communities from the reading.
4. What stages in life are mentioned as times when people need community most?
5. According to the reading, what can a community be a substitute for?
6. What does the author mean in the final sentence?

Vocabulary Review

A. Matching

Match the words on the left to the correct examples on the right.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| _____ 1. tend to | a) The bowling team has been together for ten years and doesn't accept new members. |
| _____ 2. clique | b) I need a cup of milk, but I only have half a cup. |
| _____ 3. supportive | c) New people usually feel a bit shy. |
| _____ 4. run out of | d) The parent group offered advice to the new mom with twins. |
| _____ 5. community | e) When Mary turns 65, she will stop working at the office. |
| _____ 6. retire | f) It is a small town where everyone knows your name. |

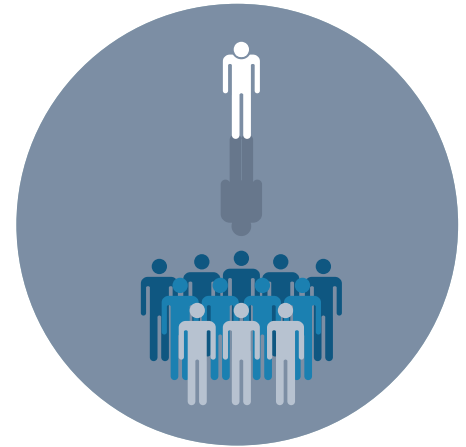
B. Odd One Out

Choose the word or phrase that does not belong in each group.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. a) cracked
b) necessary
c) required
d) needed | 3. a) useful
b) handy
c) welcoming
d) practical | 5. a) participation
b) involvement
c) tending
d) action |
| 2. a) depend on
b) catch on
c) rely on
d) count on | 4. a) crack
b) access
c) break into
d) retire | 6. a) welcoming
b) friendly
c) supportive
d) clique |

Discussion

1. Why is it more difficult for some people to find a community to belong to than others?
2. Which types of communities are the most difficult to crack? Why do you think so?
3. Is belonging to a community one of your top priorities in life? Why or why not?
4. Should the importance of community be taught as a subject in school? Explain your opinion.



Class Survey

Walk around the class and ask your classmates questions. Write their answers in the chart below.

Classmate	Is happiness possible without community?	Is family the most important form of community?	Do you think a sense of community can cure health problems?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

COMMUNITY

A sense of belonging

1. Getting involved in community is important. A sense of belonging is _____ for a happy life. Joining a sports team is one example of involvement. Adults and children enjoy playing and watching sports in groups. A book club or a theater group can also provide community. People with common interests tend to get along well. They never _____ things to talk about.
2. There are times in life when you feel more _____ than others. New parents rely on community to get through the early years of raising children. College and university students need a _____ community too. These are the times in life when a substitute family _____.
3. Some people find a _____ in the workplace. When older people _____, they need to build up their support network. Many retired people move to a new town or city away from family and friends.
4. Some communities are easier to crack than others. Instead of _____ newcomers, these groups seem to form a _____. Happiness experts suggest having a third place outside of your home and workplace to belong to. You can count on this community for support through life's many _____. Your health may depend on it.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students read about the importance of community. They learn new vocabulary and discuss why it can be difficult to become part of a community.

TEACHING TIPS:

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, community, health, life, social life, friends, support

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. l | 3. c | 5. h | 7. i | 9. k | 11. d |
| 2. j | 4. b | 6. e | 8. g | 10. f | 12. a |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

- The reading is mainly about the importance of community.
- Happy people require a sense of belonging to something.
- Examples of communities in the reading include sports teams, book clubs, theater groups, parenting groups, college dorms, workplaces, and retirement groups.
- The reading states that having children, going to college and university, and retiring are stages in life when people require community the most.
- A community can be a substitute for a family.
- The author ends by saying that having a sense of community is important to one's health. This implies that you may live longer if you make the effort to become part of your community.

Vocabulary Review

A. MATCHING

1. c 2. a 3. d 4. b 5. f 6. e

B. ODD ONE OUT

1. a 2. b 3. c 4. d 5. c 6. d

Discussion

Answers will vary.

Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Class Survey

Have students walk around the class and ask their classmates questions. They should record their answers in the chart.

Listening

- necessary, run out of
- isolated, supportive, comes in handy
- community, retire
- welcoming, clique, ups and downs

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Theater*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Theatre*. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.