

Lever 2 – Community

A Community of Poets



**Reset: Recovery
Curriculum
Resource Pack**



**A NEW
DIRECTION**
We create opportunity



These free resources are delivered as part of **Reset** – our programme of support in response to the pandemic.

Though COVID-19 has caused huge disruption to our lives, our professions, and our learning, it is important to remember that we are resilient, strong and good at what we do.

We know that we can adapt and work differently, move quickly and innovate. Let's take this chance to reset and move forward with what we know works, leave behind what doesn't, and introduce new ways of working, together.

For the full set of resources go to

www.anewdirection.org.uk/reset

Writer Pop Up Projects

Aims

- I understand that I am part of different communities
- I can explain how my community was affected by lockdown
- I understand what it means to be a part of my school community
- I can write a poem about what I want for my community

Cross Curricular Links

Poetry, Citizenship and PSHE, SEMH

This sequence of four activities is designed to give children an understanding of the different communities that they are a part of, give them space to think about and share what life in their communities has been like during lockdown, and to reaffirm their place within the school community by considering what they value and what they would like to improve.

Throughout this resource, we will refer to a poetry collection by Cheryl Moskowitz called [*The Corona Collection: A Conversation*](#) which is available for free online.

This resource was produced with the kind permission of Cheryl Moskowitz. *The Corona Collection: A Conversation* will be published in the Spring. Pop Up and Cheryl are conducting research on the effects of literature in helping children to process the lockdown experience. If you are interested in taking part, please [get in touch](#).

Time Required

3-4 hours (we suggest breaking it up into shorter sessions)

Preparation Time

1 hour

Resources

- Drawing materials
- Small squares or thought bubbles
- Poems (available online)
- Flipchart/whiteboard

Introduction

1. Explain that throughout lockdown Cheryl Moskowitz, a children's poet, interviewed children to find out what their thoughts and feelings were during lockdown. She also asked them about the world they would like to live in. She turned these conversations into a poetry collection to help herself and others to understand their feelings, to think positively about the future and to understand that they are not alone.
- Listen to Cheryl Moskowitz's poem *Just Supposing*, or [read it here](#).

Part 1:

I understand that I am part of different communities

1. Write the word 'community' on the board. Discuss the children's understanding of the word and add their ideas around the outside. Arrive at a definition such as 'a group of people who have things in common'.
2. Discuss different types of communities (such as schools, neighbourhoods, religious communities, teams/clubs etc.) and list them. You might want to start with a picture of a child and add some of the communities they are a part of around the outside.
3. Encourage the children to think about and explain the communities they are part of, find the communities that they have in common with their friends and those that are different.

Make it more student-led

- Students could interview one another and collect data on which communities different members of the class belong to.
- Students could represent their communities using a Venn diagram.

Make it more guided

- For younger pupils, or those with SEND, a picture book such as *Abracazebra* by Helen Docherty or *Monty and the Poodles* by Katie Harnett could be used to introduce the idea of community.
- Initial activities to help pupils understand their communities could include games where children stand up or sit down when you call out a specific group or place.



Part 2:

I can explain how my community was affected by lockdown

Possible Stimuli:

- From The Corona Collection: *School Rules* (p.6), *School Trip* (p.7), *Boredom* (p.12), *In These Coronavirus Times* (p.14), *Key Worker* (p.26), *What is the best thing about coming to school during lockdown?* (p.46)
 - *Good Days and Bad Days in Lockdown* by Beyond Words – this wordless picture book may be more accessible to students with language and literacy barriers.
1. Explain that everybody's community was affected by lockdown – in positive and negative ways. Discuss some of these with the children. You might want to use a stimulus to get the conversation going – you could provide these to read independently.
 2. Explain that when Cheryl was talking to children during lockdown, the same words kept coming up: Kindness, Wishes, Hope, Worry, Sad, Angry, Happy, Travel, Home, Family, Friends, School.
 3. Ask the children to choose 2 or 3 of these words and draw pictures (one for each) of something from lockdown that that word reminds them of. You might want to give them small thought bubbles to draw their pictures in for display.
 4. Set a peaceful atmosphere in the classroom for this activity – you might want to put some calming music on and explain that this is a time to think and reflect. They can have some time to chat about their pictures/experiences afterwards. Pay attention to children who find this difficult. Be aware that there may be children who have experienced bereavement, trauma or abuse during this time and be sensitive to this.



Make it more student-led

- Let students read through a selection of the poems independently and suggest key themes that they notice across the poems, list them and compare them with Cheryl's list (see point 2).

Make it more guided

- Choose a smaller selection of words to discuss in a guided group. Focusing on one word at a time, model drawing some of the children's ideas, then let the children draw.

Part 3:

I understand what it means to be a part of my school community

Possible Stimuli:

- Poems about other members of the school community: *Ahoy There, A Word From Your Captain* (p.64), *Care Taker* (p.38), *From Your Librarian During Lockdown* (pp.20-21)
1. Explain that we have thought a lot about our individual communities, but there is one community that we all have in common – the school community. Establish that this includes all the pupils, parents, carers and staff.
 2. Reaffirm for the children that everyone is part of the school community – and that they always are, even when they cannot come into the school building. Now that we are all back together, let's think about what the school community means to us.
 3. Ask the children to think about aspects of school (e.g. lessons, subjects, playtime, friends, learning, teachers, lunchtime staff, school values etc.) and list their ideas – include all ideas. Repeat the activity from Part 2 – choose 2-3 ideas from the list that mean the most to you and draw pictures to represent them. You might want to do this on different coloured paper to distinguish them from the previous activity.
 4. The drawings from parts 2 and 3 could be combined into a large community display, with lots of representations of the children's individual communities and their favourite aspects of the school community. Staff and parents could also be asked to contribute to this, to make it fully inclusive.



Make it more student-led

- Groups of students could lead the community display – decide how the pictures are arranged, design the title and consider how these ideas fit with the school's existing values.

Make it more guided

- Choose a smaller selection of words to discuss in a guided group. Focusing on one word at a time, model drawing some of the children's ideas, then let the children draw.

Part 4:

I can write a poem about what I want for my community

Possible stimuli:

- *J'Ziah's Manifesto for the New World* (p.66), *When I Am Well Again* (pp.52-53), *All It Takes is a Little Thought* (p.48), *If I Could Go Anywhere* (p.28), *A Wheelbarrow Full of Ice Cream* (p.11)
1. Revisit *Just Supposing* from the introduction to the lesson. Think about the final question: 'If you woke up tomorrow, decisions all lifted, what kind of a world would you want to be gifted?'
 2. Explain that a lot of people have spent time during lockdown considering what is important to them and their communities. While people missed out on lots of good things, there were some things that they liked – that they would keep if they could. Things like 'less traffic' or 'more time to read'. Look at a couple of these poems together – draw out the themes of hopefulness and ask the children which parts they agree with.
 3. Discuss the children's ideas for what they would want for their communities for the future. Explain that you are going to write poems about what you want for the future of your school community and bring them together into a 'community poetry book'.
 4. Writing a poem could take many forms – depending on the age and ability of the children you teach. Here are some ideas to help you get started:

Repeating patterns/phrases:

This can be a really helpful way to structure poems and give them some consistency. *A Wheelbarrow Full of Ice-Cream* (p.11), for example, begins most lines with 'If I could...'

Acrostic poems:

Acrostic poetry could work really well for this activity, especially for supporting younger children. *Jamie teaches Dylan his ABCs* (p.15) is an example of this, with the first letter of each line spelling out the alphabet. You could choose a word or phrase that suits your school community – such as the name of the school.

Haikus:

Haikus are a Japanese form, with a simple structure based on the number of syllables per line (5, 7, 5). *Cocoon* (inside back cover) is a haiku.

Rhyming poems:

Many of the poems in the collection have a rhyme scheme. *J'Ziah's Manifesto for the New World* uses an ABCB scheme, for example. Rhyming poems also often have a rhythm = a specific number of syllables per line, and a pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. Writing rhyming poems is challenging, but fun and may be suitable for older or more able children.



Want to go further? Try these:

- Community quilts are an age-old tradition, whereby the patchwork is built up over time to create a record of the contributions of members of the community. Author Sita Brahmachari sees storytelling as a patchwork. Her resource on Pop Up Hub, *Patchwork Quilt of Storytelling*, explains how it works. Sita also runs Pop Up CPD sessions on her patchwork storytelling approach.
- *Shackleton's Journey* by William Grill – a stunningly illustrated account of how a team of explorers trying to cross Antarctica survived by applying teamwork, skill sharing and community thinking. There are drawing activities to accompany the book available on Pop Up Hub.
- *Old Dog, New Tricks* by Bali Rai – the story of how a man with racist views and his Sikh neighbours learn to understand one another. A heart-warming story about the importance of family and friends. Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant and dyslexic readers aged 12+.
- Pop Up Hub is a free, child-centred digital platform showcasing hundreds of quality contemporary books, plus inspiring content by authors, stories created by pupils in response to books, and book-based resources produced by teachers.

Other resources from A New Direction that link with this lever:

Cooking up Community →

Keeping Creative at Home:
Five easy ways into poetry →

Class pictures →

Tapestry →

How Do You Draw a Story? →

Keeping Creative at Home:
Creative collaboration from a
distance →

10 Tips for Teachers: How
to build partnerships in the
community →

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