



Day 2: What is community? What was Broome County's community like?

Overview

Students will explore what a community is and investigate what Broome County's community was like in the 1950s-1960s through examining local images and a read-aloud of 'Beccye Fawcett Stands up'.



I can learn what a community is and talk about what Broome County was like when Beccye Fawcett was alive by reading a book about her and looking at pictures.

Teacher Resources

[BC Day 2 Grade 2 Slide Deck](#)
[Read aloud Teacher Guide](#)
[4 Corners posters](#)

Share with Students

[Day 2 Grade 2 Handout](#)
[Target Tracker for days 1-4](#)

NYS Social Studies Framework

2.2b A community is strengthened by the diversity of its members, with ideas, talents, perspectives, and cultures that can be shared across the community.

Students will explore how different ideas, talents, perspectives, and culture are shared across their community

Next Generation NYS ELA Standards

2SL4: Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

NYS Culturally Responsive Framework

Reflect, honor, value, and center various identity perspectives as assets in policies and practices

Teaching Tolerance Standards

Identity 1 ID.K-2.1 I know and like who I am and can talk about my family and myself and name some of my group identities.

Identity 3 ID.K-2.3 I know that all my group identities are part of me—but that I am always ALL me.

Identity 4 ID.K-2.4 I can feel good about myself without being mean or making other people feel bad.

Identity 5 ID.K-2.5 I see that the way my family and I do things is both the same as and different from how other people do things, and I am interested in both.

Diversity 8 DI.K-2.8 I want to know about other people and how our lives and experiences are the same and different

Justice 12 JU.K-2.12 I know when people are treated unfairly.

Justice 13 JU.K-2.13 I know some true stories about how people have been treated badly because of their group identities, and I don't like it.

Justice 14 JU.K-2.14 I know that life is easier for some people and harder for others and the reasons for that are not always fair.

Justice 15 JU.K-2.15 I know about people who helped stop unfairness and worked to make life better for many people.

Action 18 AC.K-2.18 I will say something or tell an adult if someone is being hurtful or something is unfair, and will do my part to be kind even if I don't like something they say or do

Sequence of Instruction

Pre-Teaching/Introduction

Students will review vocabulary from Day 1 lesson



Vocabulary Teaching Tip

The following terms will be defined throughout the lesson. These definitions will provide foundational knowledge and understanding as they progress through this and the proceeding lessons on race and community.

Vocabulary

Community: A community is a group of people who live, learn, celebrate, play, and work together. A good community is safe, kind, and fair.

Racist: Supporting ideas, rules, practices, and laws that believe one racial group is superior through actions or inaction



Social-Emotional Teaching Tip

In this lesson, students will learn about the history of their community. While reading the story of Beccye (pronounced 'Bessy') Fawcett, students may not know about Broome County's history of discrimination. However, some students may have close relatives or family friends, like Mrs. Fawcett, who experienced racist acts. It is important to recognize this painful history and the memories that may surface for many local neighborhoods and families. It is also possible that some students have relatives or family friends who were responsible for racist acts and policies. As mentioned in lesson 1, it is important to give permission for students to feel big feelings or even be confused. Check-in regularly with students throughout the lesson to gauge cues of discomfort, confusion, sadness, anger, guilt, etc. Remind students that no one in the classroom is at fault. The goal is to learn from the past to provide a brighter future for all Broome County citizens.



Figure 1: Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning. ©CASEL 2017

NYS SEL Benchmarks

2A.1a. Recognize that others may experience situations differently from them. 2A.1b. Use listening skills to identify the feelings and perspectives of others.

2B.1a. Recognize their similarities to and differences from others. 2B.1b. Express respectful curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others.

2B.1c. Recognize bullying behaviors and practice safety and courage in seeking help from a trusted adult to respond.



Culturally Responsive Teaching Tip

Before teaching the lesson, become familiar with the narrative of Beccye Fawcett and her experiences in Broome County fighting against racist policies. Consider reading/watching through the following materials to build background knowledge on her story. Note that Beccye Fawcett was from New Orleans, a college graduate, a librarian, an ordained minister, a playwright, a radio show host, a wife, a friend, an elder at her church, and so many other things over the course of her life. She was also a civil rights leader. Be sure to help kids see her humanity, brilliance, and complexity.

- [WBNG Changemakers 2023](#) (this is on the last slide as an extension activity too)
- [WIVT, A History of the Fawcetts, 2024](#)
- [FPSCNY bio, 2022](#)
- [36 years after crying clip](#)
- [Oral history interview, 1978](#)
- [Beccye letter to the editor of the Press Sun Press and Sun-Bulletin Binghamton, New York • Wed. Jun 3, 1942 Page 6](#)

If students ask hard questions that you may not have an answer to, inform them that you will search and provide an answer the next day. It is okay to not have all the answers in this lesson. If students are asking difficult questions, it reveals their engagement and interest in the topic. Feel free to reach out to our team at swiegand@ccsi.org for help answering student questions.

Historical Background to Consider

This  1944 Binghamton Committee on Discrimination in Labor.pdf report documents upsetting incidents of discrimination in the Triple Cities including one in the 1940s when IBM in Binghamton refused to hire Black people citing the expense of creating separate bathrooms for Black and White employees. Learn more about this history in our [grade 8 lessons on Civil Rights in Binghamton](#).

Class Activity 1/5: Warm-Up/Introduction

5 minutes

Note: Teacher directions are directly connected to the slides in the **slide deck**.

Teachers can guide this analysis by focusing on words and activities that are embedded in the Learning Target. (Slide 2)



Learning Target: I can learn what a community is and talk about what Broome County was like when Beccye Fawcett was alive by reading a book about her and looking at pictures.

(Slide 3) Social and Emotional Learning check-in

As the lesson is beginning, check in with your students to gauge how they are feeling. There still may be emotions or thoughts from the previous lesson that have not been processed, so it is important to check in with students to assess their social and emotional learning needs before the discussions and activities about building community. Invite students to show the class with their fingers which number 'pig' represents how they're feeling today? Or ask a student to pick one of these SEL check ins for the class to use.

(Slide 4) Consider showing the short video on Belly Breathing. Let students know that they might have some big feelings during the story they're going to read today. They can take belly breaths to help them manage how they're feeling. Invite them to share what strategies they use when they have big feelings.

(Slide 5) Review the group norms established the day before. See the day 1 teacher directions for support. Consider asking students to pick one they want to work on today or have them share a compliment with a friend who is doing a good job with one of them.

Class Activity 2/5: What is a community? notice and wonder activity

10 minutes

(Slides 7-17) Spend a few minutes on each slide having students turn and talk with a neighbor about their notices and wonders and then sharing with the group about their responses to the questions on the slides:

- *What do you notice and wonder about this Broome County Community?*
- *Are these pictures of Broome County communities LEARNING, CELEBRATING, PLAYING, or WORKING together?*

Note that all of the images chosen are from Broome County's past and present. Prompt students to state what they notice about each picture. Encourage them to look closely at the picture and make observations. Positive affirmation is critical in this stage as it spurs students on to make further observations. This is a perfect activity to engage students who tend to avoid sharing answers. Making observations and the affirmation that follows is a helpful way to build student confidence. Steer the sharing toward specific details of WHAT they see and guide them away from inferences and guesses at first.

4 CORNERS: When answering the question about what the communities are doing, consider asking students to move to 4 corners: learning, celebrating, playing, and working. Using 4 corners of a rug space or 4 corners of the room allows for movement and quick discussion.

(Slide 18) This summary slides allows for reflection on the definition of community and different communities to consider.

(Slide 19) Invite students to consider and assess how Broome County is safe, kind, and fair. A first step might be to ask

What did you notice is **safe**, **kind**, and **fair** in these pictures of Broome County communities?

Teaching Tip



Recording student thoughts about activities of a community (learning, celebrating, playing, and working) as well as their observations of how Broome County is safe, kind, and fair can build student understanding of a community. Consider using an anchor chart across the following days that captures student thinking about a community.

Share with the class that

“A community is a group of people who live, learn, celebrate, play, and work together. And that a good community is where diversity is a strength and where people are safe, kind, and fair.

Class Activity 3/5: The story of Beccye Fawcett and her community?

15 minutes

(Slides 20-34) Read aloud *Beccye Fawcett Stands Up*. Let students know they’ll be reading it again tomorrow. Today our goal is to learn about what her story tells us about Broome County years ago (in the 1930s-60s). Read the entire story without any questions or checks for understanding. Consider referencing the Learning Target as a way to encourage students to pay attention to the community of Broome County in the story. Prepare students that they will analyze whether Broome County was SAFE, KIND, and FAIR. Let them know Beccye Fawcett was a real person.

NOTE: Consider printing this short page by page **teacher reading guide** to support dialogue, inquiry, and common questions students ask.

Teaching Tip



Communicate that you will read the story out loud. Read slowly at a steady pace. In lessons 3-4, students will be close reading specific parts of the story. The purpose of today’s reading is to introduce the entire story and to spark interest and curiosity about Beccye Fawcett and the city of Broome County.

See and review suggestions under the Social and Emotional Learning section. In the process of reading Beccye Fawcett’s story, pay attention to student body language and listen for comments that might hint at feelings or emotions. If appropriate, remind students that the goal is not to portray Broome County as a bad place. Our past as a community includes racist policies and actions but due to the activism and leadership of people like Mrs. Fawcett, Broome County is still becoming a community that welcomes everyone. The goal is to inspire students to continue the legacy of Mrs. Fawcett and others.

Class Activity 4/5: Handouts and Discussion

10 minutes

(Slide 35) If there’s time, consider passing out the three different handouts. Make sure each student has one of them. Invite students to work in groups of two or three to look at their picture from the book and write a sentence or two about whether Broome County was ‘fair, safe, and kind’.



Teaching Tip

The pictures in this activity are designed to suggest that Broome County is both safe and not safe, kind and not kind, as well as fair and not fair. If all answers lean in one direction, encourage students to see a different perspective. As students make claims about the Broome County community, encourage them to identify evidence from the pictures to support their analysis. Planning to leave time for individual student reflection and time to debrief their answers collaboratively at tables and/or with the whole class can lead to rich insights and questions.

Class Activity 5/5: Optimistic Closure and SEL Check-In

(Slide 35) Review the Learning Target and invite any thoughts about the definition of a community and how students might be thinking about community in light of the story about Beccye Fawcett.

(Slide 36) SEL Check-in

Invite students to share what zone or zone they're in. Let them know that whatever zone their in is ok. There is space for their unique feelings and reactions in class. Encourage kids to support their neighbors with a smile or a fist bump if they're having a hard time. Then consider sharing that

Beccye and her friends were in the red zone when they experienced unfairness in Broome County. They were also in the green zone because they were proud of who they were.

Tomorrow we're going to look closer at the story and explore how they noticed their big feelings and used them to roll up their sleeves, stand up, and make their community stronger.

Invite a few students to share with the class how we can use our feelings to make a difference like Beccye Fawcett and her friends did.

Historical Note:

Please note that Beccye Fawcett was originally a teacher and didn't have a degree in library science. Technically she worked as a clerk at the Binghamton Public Library. She had her own office and staff. [Thelma Morris](#) was officially the first Black librarian in Binghamton. She had a degree in library science and served on the board of the local chapter of the National Book Association. Mrs. Fawcett helped pave the way for her.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to our writing team Greg Ahquist, Tricia Gonzalez, Kesha James, Kerry Robertson, Dr. Crystal Simmons, Danielle Turner, Syd Bell, Justin Murphy, Tay Porter-Jourdain, Jeanette Adams-Price, and Shane Wiegand.