

History in a Nutshell

How a Community Changes Over Time

Grade level: K-2

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Explain what a community is and why theirs is important to them. (Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks INQ K-2.1, INQ K-2.3)
2. Identify, classify, and make connections among the three types of communities - urban, suburban, and rural. (Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks GEO 1.2, INQ K-2.4)
3. Understand how and why a community changes over time and compare a community from the past to one today. (Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks HIST 1.1, HIST 1.2)

Program framework:

1. Introductory Video
2. Close-Looking Activity
3. Independent Practice

Materials: introductory video; images for close-looking activity; copies of activities for independent practice

Teacher Background:

In this program, students will be able to see how a community changes over time. Using Main Street in Hartford, Connecticut as an example, students will observe the changes this location has undergone over the past 300+ years. In addition, students will gain an understanding of the three types of communities - urban, suburban, and rural.

1. Introductory Video

Images shown:

1. [*Hartford Panoramas*](#), photographed by Kevin M. Doyle, 2002, Connecticut Historical Society, 2002.145.11-.15.

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2. [*Hartford Buildings*](#), photographed by Richard Welling, after 1972, Connecticut Historical Society, 2012.284.54-.61, .70-.77, .176-.185.
3. [*Busy Street in New York City*](#), May 8, 2010, courtesy of Pixabay, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.
4. [*5 facts about U.S. suburbs*](#), photographed by James Brey for Getty Images, October 2, 2018, courtesy of Pew Research Center.
5. [*Ansonia*](#), photographed by Peter Lucas, mid-20th century, Connecticut Historical Society, 2010.160.7.
6. [*Rural buildings along river, New Hartford, Connecticut*](#), from the collection of F.H. DeMars, about 1915, Connecticut Historical Society, 2015.87.897.
7. [*Houses in a Suburban or Rural Area*](#), photographed by William G. Dudley, 1916-1927, Connecticut Historical Society, 1995.36.1736.
8. [*Map of pioneer Hartford: founded 1636, incorporated 1784, showing early landmarks and the locations of historical events*](#), pictorial map by James and Ruth Goldie, March 1, 1927, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, G3784.H3 1927.G6.
9. [*Putnam Building, Hartford \(1860\), Hartford and its Point of Interests*](#), New York: Mercantile Illustrating Company, 1895.
10. [*Main St. at the Old State House*](#), photographed by William H. Thompson, November 25, 1903, courtesy of the Connecticut State Library, sa_20110927_02_11H_001.tif.
11. [*Benedict & Burnham Manufacturing Company, Casting Shop Employees*](#), 1901, courtesy of the Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries, UC9-0048.
12. [*Mills and workers' housing, Thompsonville*](#), probably photographed by Nathan Page Palmer, 1890-1910, Connecticut Historical Society, 2011.239.2.
13. [*Inside Mill No. 1, Ponemah Mills, Taftville \(Norwich\)*](#), photographed by William G. Dudley, about 1913, Connecticut Historical Society, 1974.108.1.
14. [*Bicycle club, Pope Manufacturing Company, Capitol Avenue, Hartford*](#), about 1910, Connecticut Historical Society, 2000.194.27.
15. [*Armory of Colt's Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Company*](#), printed by E.B. & E.C. Kellogg, 1840-1848, Connecticut Historical Society, 1995.182.174.
16. [*Pratt & Whitney Co., Factory*](#), *Machinery Magazine*, September 1895, pg. 17, courtesy of Vintage Machinery.
17. [*State House, Hartford, Connecticut*](#), drawn by Edward Williams Clay, 1834, Connecticut Historical Society, 1958.71.1.

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18. [*Last Breakfast at 524 5th Ave*](#), attributed to Harriet V.S. Thorne, 1886, Connecticut Historical Society, 2011.344.1035.
19. [*Class in English Language*](#), 1890-1910, courtesy of the Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries, UC5-0001.
20. [*Views of Hartford*](#), photographed by Kevin M. Doyle, 2002-2003, Connecticut Historical Society, 2003.166.1-.45.
21. [*Connecticut's Old State House*](#), courtesy of Connecticut Office of Tourism.

2. Close-looking Activities

1. The video shows how the city of Hartford has changed over almost 400 years. Now take a look at the two pictures of the New Haven Green below. Compare the images and think about how the Green has changed over time.
 - a. *What is going on in the images?*
 - b. *What is the same between the two images? What is different?*
 - c. *What makes you say that?*
 - d. *Why do you think the changes were made?*
2. While watching the video you may have asked yourself, "Why was Hartford never a suburban community?" That is a great question. Look at the pictures of suburban communities below and think about why Hartford was never a suburban community. What characteristics does a suburban community have?

3. Independent Practice

1. Interview someone who has lived in your town for 50 years or more. Ask them to share with you how your town has changed over time.
2. Draw a picture of what you think your town will look like 100 years from now.
3. Compare urban, suburban and rural communities. What is the same? What is different?
4. Locate a picture of your town's main street from the past and compare the image to what the street looks like today.

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Interview an older member of the community

Find someone who has lived in your community for at least 50 years and ask them these questions to learn more about where you live and how it has changed over time.

Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about your favorite place in town to go as a kid. Why was it your favorite and is it still here in town?
2. Who was someone in town that you remember and why? What did they do in the community?
3. What types of jobs did people have?
4. Has the number of schools changed?
5. Can you remember your favorite teacher?
6. What types of stores were there?
7. What type of community activities were there?
8. Tell me a favorite memory you have about this community.

Now ask some questions of your own!

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New Haven Green...Then and Now

Then



[East view of the public square or green in New Haven, Conn.](#), engraved by John Warner Barber, 1831, Connecticut Historical Society, 1992.139.5.

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Now



[*New Haven Green: New Haven, Connecticut*](#), courtesy of the Greater New Haven Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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Observing Suburban Communities



While watching the video you may have asked yourself, “Why was Hartford never a suburban community?” That is a great question!

It’s because suburban communities grow out of urban communities. In time, cities can get overcrowded and some people want more space. Companies might find having their businesses in the city difficult and start to move out too. Colt moved their factory to the suburb of West Hartford. Pratt and Whitney moved their factory to the suburb of East Hartford. Towns like Manchester, Bloomfield, and Wethersfield have all become suburbs of Hartford.

What is a suburb? According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a suburb is:

- the outlying part of a city or town
- a smaller community next to or close to a city
- the residential area on the outskirts of a city or large town

Look at the pictures of these three suburban communities below. Why do you think Hartford never really looked like these communities? Why do you think it went from rural to urban?

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["10 Reasons to Move to New England,"](#) *Moving.com*, May 15, 2019.

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[“Wealthy New Yorkers are hunting for weekend homes close to the city and it’s changing the way people think of the suburbs,” Business Insider, June 21, 2019.](#)

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["Suburbia,"](#) photographed by Jon Dawson, October 15, 2010, [CC BY-ND 2.0.](#)

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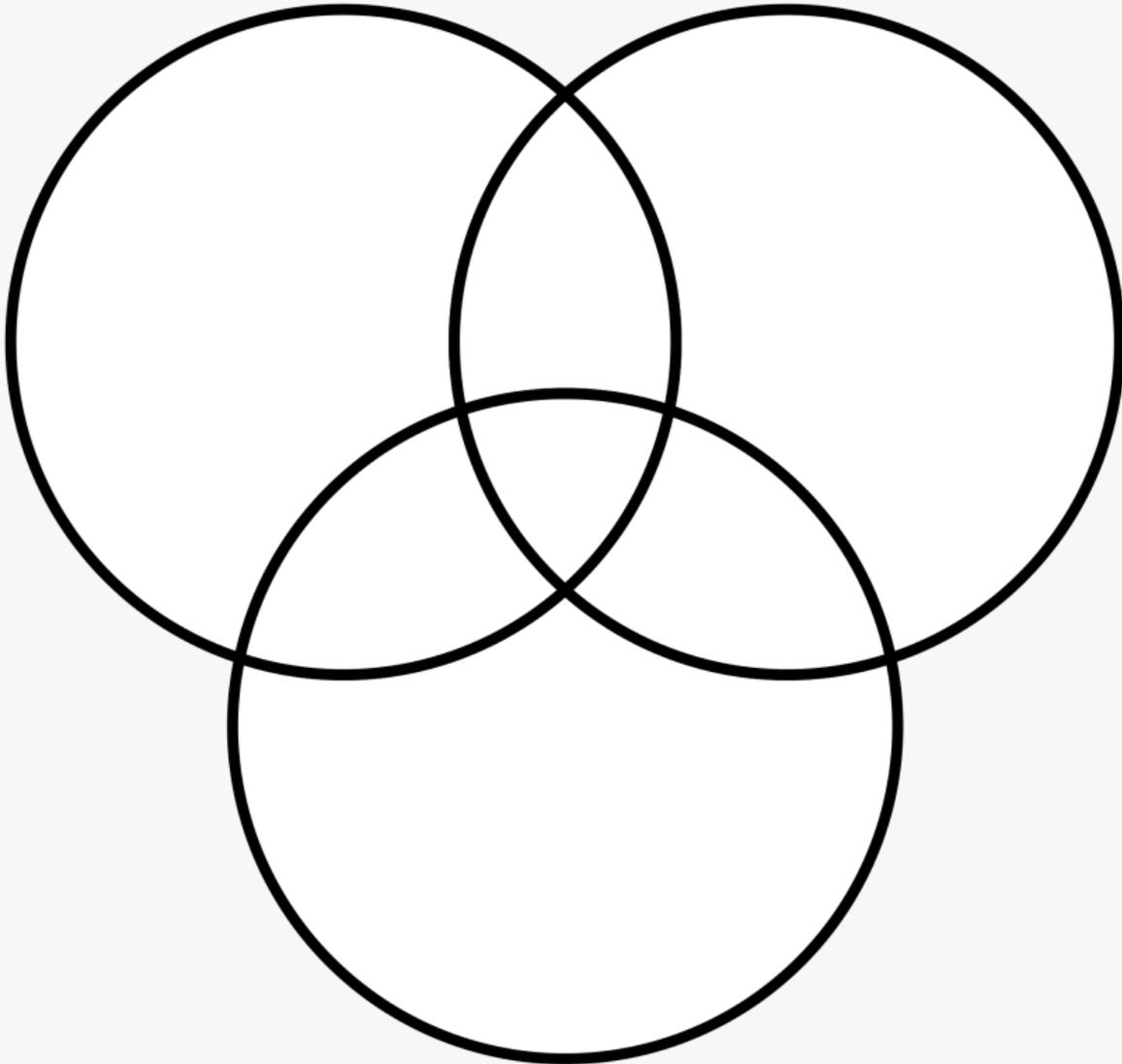
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Let's compare the three types of communities: rural, suburban, and urban.

Write or draw traits of each type of community in the Venn diagram below. The outer circles are for traits belonging to only that community. Overlapping circles are for traits that belong to the two or three overlapping communities.

Rural communities

Suburban Communities



Urban communities

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