

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Urban, Suburban, Rural

## Three Kinds of Communities

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. A community is a group of people who live in a certain place or have something in common. Your city or town is a community. Your class at school is a community, too. A neighborhood is an area where people live and talk with one another. Neighborhoods make up communities. Your neighborhood might be the street you live on and some of the streets nearby. Your community might be all of the people who live on all of the streets in your town.

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The population is the number of people who live in a place. If a place has a high population, that means that many people live there. About 8 million people live in New York City. About 800 people live in Alma, Kansas. That means that about 10 thousand times more people live in New York City than in Alma. Alma has a lower population than New York City.

2. "City" is a another word for an urban community. People in cities usually live in apartments instead of in houses. Apartments are usually smaller than houses. They're in apartment buildings that have other apartments in them, too. These apartment buildings can be right next to one another with very little space in between.

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Skyscrapers are very tall buildings with many floors. They are often built in cities. Why would someone want to build a skyscraper? Imagine you have some Legos. You can place them all right next to each other to make a big rectangle. Or, you can stack them on top of one another to make a tall tower. The tower will take up less space on the ground. The same thing goes for skyscrapers. We can fit a lot of offices, apartments and stores in a tall building by stacking them high. The building doesn't take up a lot of space on the ground. We save space by building "up" instead of "out."

3. In cities, the places where people live, work, play, go to school and buy things are usually very close together. You might find apartment buildings, restaurants, a museum, stores, office buildings and a movie theater on one block. Not every city is like this. But in a lot of cities, you can walk from place to place.

Many cities have public transportation to help people get from place to place. Public transportation is a system of buses, trains or subways that the city is in charge of. A subway is a train that runs underground through tunnels. Instead of building “up,” these cities built “down!”

What makes transportation “public” versus “private”? Everyone in the city is allowed to use public transportation after paying a certain amount. On the other hand, types of transportation like someone’s personal car or bike are “private.” Only the person who owns the vehicle is allowed to use it, unless the owner gives someone else permission. Not just anyone is allowed to hop on your bike!

4. “Suburbs” is another word for suburban communities. Suburban communities have many of the same things as cities, like schools, stores, banks and libraries. In the suburbs, these are more spread out. There are usually fewer people in a suburb than in a city. So, all of these people can have more space. In suburban communities, people usually live in houses with backyards instead of apartments.

People may move to the suburbs so that they can have more space but still enjoy what the city has to offer. Suburbs are usually close enough to a city to get to the city and back in the same day. People can work at a job in the city or easily travel there to go to a museum or a concert.

In the suburbs, it’s common to see a lot of green! Trees, flowers and grass are all around in the suburbs. In urban communities, nature is less common. You might see a few trees here and there, but you have to go to a park if you want to see a lot of nature.

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5. There's even more nature in rural communities than there is in the suburbs. "The country" is another term for rural communities. A lot of the land in the country is used for agriculture. Agriculture means growing crops and raising animals for food. A lot of the land in the country is also used for forestry. Forestry means growing and caring for forests. Forests are large areas covered mostly with trees and plants.

Many people in rural communities have jobs related to farming and forestry. But not everyone! Others have the same kinds of jobs as people in cities and suburbs. They may be teachers, doctors, computer programmers or many other things.

In rural areas, people live farther apart from one another than in the suburbs or the city. People also live even farther away from places where they shop and go to school. In the country, you may live many miles from your friend's house. Cities can be very crowded and loud. In the country, there are fewer people and more nature. Life in the country can be quieter and more peaceful.

6. When you look up at the night sky in the urban or suburban communities, you might see a few stars. In rural communities, you'll see many, many more! Why are the stars more visible in the country? In the city and the suburbs, there are more lights from buildings and street lamps. These lights are very bright and block the stars from our view. There are about 2,500 stars that humans should be able to see without a telescope. But in most cities, you can only see about 12 of them! In rural areas, there are fewer lights from buildings. This makes it easier to see the beauty of the night sky.

7. We've described some things that urban, suburban and rural communities have in common. But not every urban community is exactly the same as every other urban community! The same thing goes for suburban and rural communities. In the city of Portland, Oregon, people get around using a railroad system that runs above ground. But in the city of Los Angeles, California, most people get around by driving cars.

An urban, suburban or rural community may also have traits that you usually find in one of the other kinds of communities. Someone in the suburbs may live in an apartment instead of a house. In a rural community, someone may drive to school instead of taking a school bus. People in the city may even practice agriculture on an urban farm. An urban farm is a place for growing and producing food in a city or town with a big population.

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