Students will be invited to consider the cultural diversity of communities in Australia through their engagement in a range of activities. They will also explore the positive outcomes of reflecting on and acting on community values.

The theme Communities supports intercultural learning by highlighting the following points.

* Values shape the communities to which individuals/cultural groups belong.
* Communities create a sense of belonging, whereby people develop and maintain a shared identity with others, act on shared traditions and beliefs and demonstrate loyalty to others. People in communities can show care and compassion to those who exist outside a recognised community and who have significant needs.
* Communities also grow through the acceptance of difference. The cultural diversity of Australian communities means that differences in identity, traditions and beliefs need to be understood, respected and accepted.
* Family and friendship groups are significant communities through which an individual learns about the values of identity, respect, understanding, and belonging.
* Communities are formed to provide individuals and cultural groups with such things as places to live, go to school, play games and sport, undertake creative activities. To work well, these communities depend on democratic processes that establish and maintain decision making, laws and rules and the values of leadership, respect, understanding and cooperation.
* Some people move through a range of communities – language, social, cultural – in their everyday lives. This means that the values of their different communities come into contact with each other.
* The acceptance of difference in Australian communities should encompass respect for Indigenous Australians as the ‘first peoples’ of the land. An understanding of their spiritual connection to the land and their role as custodians of the land is important to all Australians.
* People migrate to Australia so they can belong to a new community. They may seek democratic freedoms, protection from conflict, and hope for a new life. Other Australians may welcome new migrants into their communities through enacting the values of friendship, care and compassion.
* It is important that people in Australia learn to understand, respect and trust people from communities very different to their own. They can learn from each other, discover the values they have in common and their shared humanity.
Links to the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005)*

Students will explore, consider, enact and reflect on values as they:

- work constructively and collaboratively to learn about significant values of including others, cooperation, friendliness, fair go, loyalty, respect, tolerance, care and compassion, understanding, responsibility, and doing your best
- demonstrate a growing understanding of the role of communities in their lives and in the lives of others
- develop a growing understanding of the diverse nature of communities in Australia
- demonstrate integrity through acceptance of difference within and across communities and a confidence to reflect upon and articulate this.

**Preparation**

View and read through the descriptions for each digital resource in the theme.

Read through the activities and note the particular learning strategies that have been built into these.

Be mindful that students might need to view each resource several times.

Please note: Thirty-five film clips on *World of Values* are linked from the [australianscreen online](http://www.australianscreen.com.au) website. Be aware that links within the frames containing these film clips take you out of the *World of Values* website.

**A note about activities**

All of the values clarification activities are built around whole class, small group, partner or individual tasks. Use your professional judgement regarding the advice given here. Choose the most appropriate grouping for each task depending on the particular needs of your students.

**A note about the learning pathway**

*World of Values* is a flexible resource. The learning pathway tool allows teachers to create a personalised PDF-based version of selected content. See the Help feature on the *World of Values* website.

**A note on dialogue**

The challenging content of many of the digital resources and the accompanying values clarification activities necessitates that students engage in exploratory dialogue whereby they are given time to debrief, to work through their thoughts and feelings, and to reflect on what they have learned.

You may find that students generate many of their own questions throughout their exploration of Communities and that you need to be flexible around your planning for these to be shared and considered.

**A note about personal experience**

Many of the activities relate the values clarification to the personal lives of students. This is important because personal experience helps students to connect an abstract value to a concrete experience. However, students may find the connection to their experience in families, their friendship groups, and their positive self-image, for example, challenging. Your guidance and support through these times will be necessary.

**A note on working with sensitive material**

There are many topics in the digital resources that may be personally confronting for some students, and potentially cause discomfort and distress. If you are aware of specific areas that may cause concern for particular students, try to let them know in advance that you will be looking at the topic in class. Generally, you could let all students know beforehand what is coming up and suggest that if they feel uncomfortable about participating in the discussion they let you know and you can discuss strategies with them.
Involve students in setting ground rules for the discussions. It is important to emphasise the need for respect, confidentiality, sensitivity and the recognition of diversity in people’s backgrounds and experiences. The classroom must be a safe and secure environment for discussions that will arise in the course of examining such materials as you will find in this collection.

Make sure that students know what support is available if the discussion does create discomfort or distress. You could compile a list of useful contacts and phone numbers. It would be wise to let the people who are concerned with student welfare (for example, counsellor, year level coordinator) know that you will be addressing complex issues that may be challenging for some students.

Resources that provide support for teachers dealing with personal, emotive issues can be found in the MindMatters materials. See www.mindmatters.edu.au

Getting started
In Getting started, students are introduced to the theme and a set of values. They explore prior knowledge and preconceptions, and research the definitions of values, to focus on the issues they will be examining.

Ask students to open a Word file or a notebook to record their thoughts and feelings throughout the activities.

Notes on activities
Think about communities: The description wheel is a conceptual framework designed to assist students in brainstorming their prior knowledge and feelings about a particular topic or issue. Although this task here is intended as an initial brainstorm of students’ initial thoughts and feelings, you may need to prompt students by describing some features of the communities to which you belong. Students will need to keep their description wheels for a later task.

Values gallery: This activity is an initial values clarification task that will be built upon and extended in the Bringing it together section of the theme. You begin by asking students to define the values they will explore. You may wish to record their definitions on a large sheet of paper, as students will be returning to this activity. You may decide that this task is too challenging for some and so conduct this as a whole class activity.
Tuning in

Three digital curriculum resources

In Tuning in, teachers engage students with key values underpinning the general theme, and elicit students’ prior knowledge, personal experiences, feelings and beliefs. Teachers stimulate students’ thinking and encourage openness to the new learning experiences in which they will be involved.

I Think … – All together now

This animation focuses on the importance of communities in our lives. It explores different kinds of communities in Australia. It features the voices of a group of 5–9-year-old children discussing what a community is, what it means to belong to a community and the responsibilities of people within a community. They also reflect on the differences between rural and urban communities.

The children in this discussion group are from a regional town in Victoria. The town includes a large number of Indigenous Australians and the animated images are influenced by Indigenous Australian symbols and colours. The visual images often show the opening and closing of a circle, a symbol of community.

The children were chosen from schools where philosophy is taught. These schools encourage students from a young age to interact with each other within a ‘community of inquiry’. Discussion is facilitated by an expert educator who encourages children to interact freely and promotes the principles of cooperative learning. Discussions were then edited and the recordings given to the animator for visual interpretation.

The I Think … anthology of 26 animations was developed by the Australian Children’s Television Foundation (ACTF).

Values spotlight

All together now highlights the values of care, respect and tolerance which bring people together to make a community.

Notes on activities

The focus here on the initial and immediate communities to which children belong (local; family; friendship) is important in developing students’ understanding of the values of belonging, identity and friendship. These initial and immediate communities and the relationships which are formed within create and maintain the values young children draw upon as they become members of multiple and diverse communities.

I Think … – Beneath the skin

This animation features the voices of a group of 5–9-year-old children discussing the similarities and differences among people in families. They reflect on what it means to belong to a family; the similarity and differences among family members; when family members have different cultural or biological backgrounds; and the importance of having an individual identity within a family.

Families are important to community life. Families are the ‘first’ community to which a person belongs. Within this family community, different generations of family members (grandparents, parents and siblings) have things in common. They may look like each other or act like each other. There may also be differences among family members. This animation focuses on how all families are similar and also different. It explores the central place of family in children’s lives and the different connections within families such as cultural backgrounds, generations, siblings and adoption.

Values spotlight

Beneath the skin highlights that care and compassion, understanding and responsibility are important family values.
Notes on activities

The focus in this animation on different constitutions of family requires sensitive discussion and sharing of experience. In this animation, children refer to adopted families. You may have students in your class who are adopted and so need to guide and support conversations around the nature of their adoptive families. Discussion of biological similarities may not be appropriate for them. Likewise, you may have students living in single parent or foster families who could find the discussion of family resemblance very challenging.

I Think ... – Real friends
This animation features the voices of a group of 5–9-year-old children discussing the importance of friendship in their lives. They reflect on what it means to have friends and to have a best friend; the kindness, understanding and support that friends give to each other; and how their pets show them real friendship. They also discuss what happens when friendships fail and conflicts occur.

Friends are important to community life. Being a member of a community of friends gives a feeling of security and togetherness. The children’s discussion of friendships is illustrated by symbols such as the dove of peace; smiling and sad faces; children together and apart; and the devotion of pets.

Values spotlight
Real friends explores the values of friendliness, loyalty, care and understanding.

Discovering

Seven digital curriculum resources
In the Discovering section, teachers support students to explore values, text and context in a deeper way, to think about and clarify the values underpinning each digital curriculum resource, and to create concrete records of the experiences and information gathered.

Happy Feet – It just ain’t penguin
Emperor penguins are the largest breed of penguin. They spend their lives on the ice and in the waters of Antarctica. Every year, thousands of emperor penguins gather in the same place to breed and to hatch their chicks, huddling together to keep warm. After the female penguin lays her egg, she carefully gives it to the male penguin who places the egg in his breeding pouch. The female returns to the water to fish and build up her strength. Both the male and female penguins take turns to keep the egg warm and to fish for food.

This animated clip begins with a colony or community of emperor penguins waiting for the winter to end. We see Memphis and other male penguins protecting their eggs and waiting for their chicks to hatch. When Memphis’s egg breaks open, out comes a dancing chick called Mumble. Other members of the penguin colony notice that Mumble is dancing and show their concern. Memphis warns his new son that it is not wise to show such ‘un-penguin-like’ behaviour in the community. This clip focuses on how communities are built on a shared sense of belonging, and explores issues about sameness and difference.

Values spotlight
It just ain’t penguin highlights the values of care, responsibility, respect and tolerance.
Notes on activities
The activities are designed to develop students’ understandings about:

- the shared sense of belonging that is fostered in a community
- the importance of maintaining an individual identity in a community
- the need to accept difference as integral to community life.

The emphasis on positive self-image here is particularly relevant to the values of respect, identity and tolerance. You may need to guide and support some students who may not be able to articulate a positive self-image and their unique qualities and talents.

There is also an important opportunity here to explore the productive role that fathers play in caring and taking responsibility for their children. For some students this may be a sensitive issue that will need to be considered carefully.

Us deadly mob – Sharing kultcha
This film clip shows an interview with Amber Mercy, an Indigenous Australian surfer. Amber talks about her participation in Indigenous surfing competitions held in South Pacific nations. The South Pacific includes island nations such as Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu. The young people who meet each other at the surfing competitions in this part of the world come from cultures that are the ‘first peoples’, or the Indigenous communities of their countries. This common bond among the surfers gives them a special understanding of each other.

Amber explains the joy she feels when she surfs with people who understand her and who value her Indigenous culture. The interview is supported with home video clips from her travels to competitions, clips of surfers competing and relaxing at dances, and photographs.

Values spotlight
Sharing kultcha highlights the values of friendliness, respect and understanding.

Notes on activities
Please be aware that this resource may contain references to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people who may have passed away.

The focus here is on cultural identity and the significance of communities of ‘first peoples’. You may find it necessary to further contextualise the values clarification activities in several ways.

- Conduct a whole class discussion of the concept of ‘first peoples’.
- Locate South Pacific nations on a globe/atlas.
- Conduct a discussion about the stereotypical ‘surfer’ so that students appreciate the significance of Amber’s achievements and experience.
- Provide an explanation of the Aboriginal English word ‘kultcha’.

Our park – Park consultations
This film clip show people from White’s Creek, an inner city community of Sydney. They are trying to solve a problem between some of the residents and the local council. The clip shows the meeting between residents and members of the local council. The local council wants to pull down the historic buildings in the park and some local residents want to keep the ‘magical’ grounds and gardens that belong to these buildings.

The population of Australian cities is increasing and natural spaces are becoming rare. Problems occur when people in inner city communities have different ideas about how these spaces should be used. Councils are responsible for the safety of people in the community and sometimes make decisions that make residents unhappy. It is common for councils to hold community meetings where they explain their point of view to residents and listen to the views of others. It is also common for the residents of a community to protest against decisions that they do not agree with. This clip explores how people try to solve a problem when they have different views about what should happen.

Values spotlight
Park consultations highlights the values of doing your best, cooperation, responsibility and fair go.
Notes on activities

The focus here is on democracy at work in a community and how people act on community values to help make communities function well. You may feel it necessary to further contextualise the values clarification activities in several ways.

- Conduct a whole class discussion about democracy, democratic processes, and democratic freedoms in Australia.
- Explain the rules of a simple debate. You may find that creating a tool to support students’ dialogue might be useful in ensuring that all students take turns to offer their thoughts and feelings. This tool could be any object that you think serves the purpose of signalling whose turn it is to speak, for example a small ‘debating box’. (You could explain the tradition of community speakers standing on a box to voice their opinions).

Procedure

Make a small debating box for each group. Explain to students that only the person holding the box is the one who speaks.

Ask students to form small groups and to read through the statement:
- In a democracy, people have the right and the freedom to protest and to express their opinions. These values are good for communities.

You may wish to do this first as a whole class.

Assign students roles as:
- speakers for the positive perspectives
- speakers for the negative perspectives of the statement.

Select a student who wishes to begin discussing his/her thoughts about the statement from a positive perspective. This student holds the debating box until he/she is finished. The box is then passed to the first student who wishes to speak from a negative perspective on the statement.

The process is repeated until all students have completed their turn in the debate.

Storm boy – You run like a blackfella

This film clip shows the first meeting between Fingerbone Bill, an Indigenous Australian, and Mike, a young boy who lives in a small coastal community near the Coorong in South Australia. Fingerbone Bill has fired a warning shot to men who are hunting the protected wildlife. He knows where Mike is hiding. He names him Storm Boy because he runs like the wind, ‘like a blackfella’. Fingerbone Bill shows Storm Boy that the hunters have killed pelicans and warns him that a big storm is on its way. Here he is sharing his Indigenous beliefs and values about what happens when the land and its wildlife are destroyed.

The Coorong in South Australia is a protected coastal reserve. Mike, Storm Boy, lives in the nearby town with his father. Fingerbone Bill has set up camp in the Coorong and is living there. Fingerbone Bill and Storm Boy become friends and they also make friends with a pelican that Storm Boy has named Mr Percival. Fingerbone Bill teaches Storm Boy about the values that he and other Indigenous Australians have about caring for the land and for wildlife. This special friendship crosses cultures and ages.

Values spotlight

You run like a blackfella highlights the values of understanding, respect and responsibility.
Notes on activities

Please be aware that this resource may contain references to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people who may have passed away.

The focus here is on how two people from very different cultural backgrounds can develop a shared understanding of the beauty and significance of the coastal community in which they live. This focus is seen as important in that the crossing of cultural boundaries is central to Australia’s future as a culturally diverse nation. It also reinforces the rich legacy of Indigenous Australians as ‘first peoples’ and their unique understanding of the land.

You may feel it necessary to further contextualise the values clarification activities in several ways.

- Explain the complex term ‘blackfella’ and its significance to the relationship between Fingerbone Bill and Storm Boy. Students will need to appreciate and understand the term as a pejorative one when it is used by some people to denote Indigenous Australians as ‘not white and therefore inferior’. When used by Fingerbone Bill in the context of praising Storm Boy for his physical prowess, the term ‘blackfella’ is a powerful and positive affirmation of Indigenous Australian culture.

- Explain the Dreaming and the spiritual connection that Indigenous Australians have to the land. Useful examples of classic children’s literature include The Rainbow Serpent by D Roughsy (Collins, Sydney, 1975) and Stradbroke Dreamtime by Kath Walker, (Angus and Roberston, Sydney, 1972).

- Locate the Coorong on a map of Australia and explain its environmental significance and some of the current threats to its future.

Encourage students to read Storm Boy by Colin Thiele.

Last mail from Birdsville: The story of Tom Kruse – Never never country

This film clip shows the remote community of Birdsville in central Australia. Images of Birdsville as it is now are mixed with clips from a black and white film of Birdsville in 1954. These scenes show Tom Kruse, who has delivered the mail to residents of the community of Birdsville since 1936. On his last trip to Birdsville in 1998, residents came out to meet Tom and to honour him for all the hard work he had done over the years to bring the community together and connect Birdsville to the outside world.

People in remote communities may live hundreds of kilometres from their nearest neighbours. In the 1930s, when Tom Kruse first began to deliver mail in his truck, people in these communities were very isolated, often living without a phone and certainly without email. They were dependent on people like Tom to bring them news from each other, from other parts of Australia and the world.

Values spotlight

The story of Tom Kruse highlights how people build a community through the values of responsibility, fair go and doing your best.

Notes on activities

The focus here is on how people create communities that are based more on a sense of belonging rather than actual physical proximity. This is particularly relevant for some rural and remote communities in Australia. You may need to explain this so that students can better explore the community values of responsibility, care and doing your best.
Wirriya: Small boy – School
This film clip shows a 7–year-old Indigenous boy, Ricco Japaljarri Martin, and the different communities he belongs to: his school community (Alice Springs); his Indigenous community (Warlpiri); his language groups (English and Warlpiri); his skin group (Japaljarri); and the international communities he is learning about (Mexico and Nigeria).

Young Indigenous students like Ricco belong to several communities at once. Some children have difficulty moving among different communities but this does not seem to be a problem for Ricco. He is learning his Indigenous language (Warlpiri), as well as English, and he speaks both languages outside of his school community. He is learning about his Indigenous culture and identity, and about kinship, or the tribal group to which he belongs (Japaljarri). He is also learning about the broader global community and says he wants to go to Mexico.

Values spotlight
Small boy – School highlights the cultural diversity of Australia and the values of tolerance, respect and fair go.

Notes on activities
Please be aware that this resource may contain references to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people who may have passed away.

The values clarification activities for Wirriya: Small boy – School are designed to show students the remarkable ease with which Ricco moves through the different communities to which he belongs. They are also intended to provide a positive image of a confident and capable young Indigenous boy who is learning about his place within the larger global community. You may wish to point this out to students so they are well supported in their exploration of the community values of acceptance of difference, identity and belonging.

You may feel it necessary to further contextualise the values clarification activities in several ways.

- Explain that Indigenous Australians often need to ‘switch’ between languages as they move through different communities. For some young students like Ricco, English is not their first language. Aboriginal English is a variation of English that many Indigenous Australians speak.

- Explore the connection between language, culture and identity. You may have students in your classroom who speak several languages and who ‘switch’ depending on the community they are in at the time. They could be invited to share their experiences of this.

- The quote ‘We are the world’ is a complex one and so this activity may require some modelling from you so that students can explore its relevance to the values of identity, acceptance of difference and belonging and the diversity of communities in Australia.

- Locate Birdsville on a map of Australia.
- Research the following websites so that students understand the vast distances between people and how they need to act on values to support each other.

The Royal Australian Flying Doctor Service
www.flyingdoctor.net/

The School of the Air
Food lovers’ guide to Australia – A new life in Australia

This film clip focuses on the life of a young man who has moved from his homeland to begin a new life in Australia. It explores the importance of family life, religious belief and traditions. Channa has come to Australia from Sri Lanka, a small island country, south-east of India. There has been much conflict in Sri Lanka and Channa’s mother, a politician, sent him to Australia for safety reasons. He talks about his mother and describes his loneliness after her sudden death. After her death, he returned to Sri Lanka to stay at an ashram, a community formed for spiritual healing and reflection.

Channa is a chef and he talks about his passion for food. He has a friend and sponsor in Australia because he is new to the Australian community: restaurateur and businesswoman Dur-e Dara. The role of the sponsor is to support Channa while he works and applies to live in Australia permanently.

Values spotlight
A new life in Australia highlights the values of compassion, understanding, responsibility and doing your best.

Notes on activities

The story of Channa is a rich and complex one and lends itself to the exploration of people who move from one community to begin a new life in Australia. This is a shared experience for many Australians and perhaps many students in your class. The values of identity, belonging, compassion and understanding resonate with the experiences of loss, migration and new beginnings.

You may feel it necessary to further contextualise the values clarification activities in several ways.

- Locate Sri Lanka on a globe/atlas.
- Explain the value of compassion and its expression in Buddhism and other religions.
- Explain the role of a sponsor and what he or she does to assist new migrants. An exploration of the Australian Government’s Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs website www.immi.gov.au/index.htm shows the range of supports offered to migrants and those who wish to live in Australia.
Bringing it together
In Bringing it together, teachers assist students as they synthesise and compare new knowledge, feelings and beliefs with prior knowledge, experience, feelings and beliefs. In this way, students are able to understand the ‘big ideas’ behind a theme and to make conclusions about what they have learnt. They are able to reflect on their learning, and explore and justify their values in relation to the theme.

Notes on activities
The following strategies help students to reflect upon the community values they have explored. They further support students in confirming and extending their thoughts and feelings and thus continue the process of values clarification.

Values and actions: This task builds upon and extends the initial values clarification that students completed in Getting started. Ask students to return to the values definitions they completed at the beginning of the theme and to consider how they could put community values into action. Although this activity has been designed as an individual task to be shared with the whole class, you may wish to complete this as a whole class activity.

I used to think … This thinking strategy (Harvard Project Zero www.pz.harvard.edu/index.cfm) is useful for synthesising learning. It helps students to reflect on their thinking about a topic or issue and explore how and why their thinking has changed. Students can also identify their new understandings, beliefs and values.

Procedure
- Explain to students the purpose of the strategy. For example: ‘When we began this study of communities, you had some thoughts and feelings that you wrote down. Take some time to remember your first thoughts and feelings. Start your sentences with “I used to think…”’
- ‘Now reflect on how your thoughts and feelings have changed now that we have discovered more about communities. Write a few sentences about what you now think. Start your sentences with “But now, I think…”’
- Ask students to explain how their thoughts and feelings have changed. This could be started in a whole group. Students could then continue their explanations in small groups or pairs.

Symbols of community: This task builds upon and extends several activities throughout the theme of Communities that involve reflection on symbols and visual images. To begin this task, students may need to view some of the digital resources they have seen to select a symbol they think most represents what they have learnt about communities. Students who are capable of using learning technologies may wish to extend this task into a digital story or simple animation.

Suppose that … This task aims for students to clarify their values through reflection on the consequences of people’s actions in the community. You may decide that your students need to see, as a whole class, some examples of values, actions and consequences before they complete this task with a partner or in a small group.

Community values: Reflect on what you have learnt about the theme of Communities.
Going further
In Going further, teachers support students in applying their new knowledge into other contexts, in enacting the values they have explored, in making choices, and in developing the belief that they can be active and informed participants in society.

Notes on activities
Our communities: This task is designed for students to share their understanding with others about communities in Australia and community values.

Procedure
* Ask students to brainstorm the things they have learnt about communities and community values that they would like to share with others (in the school community; local community; virtual online community). Remind students to reflect on the values they have explored. Ask students to select a value/s they want to represent on their poster.
* Invite students to share their brainstorm with a partner and to explain what they will show on their poster about communities and the particular community value/s they wish to represent.
* Ask students to create a heading for their poster. This may reflect the community value/s they are representing (for example, A community Needs Care and Compassion) and to draft what they want to write on the poster about the focus they have taken.
* Ask students to reflect on the visual images and symbols they wish to use on their poster. Discuss the kinds of symbols they have seen and previously created that represent what they want to say about communities and community values. Students may wish to make a collage from magazine or newspaper images.
* Discuss with students where they think their posters could be displayed so that others can learn from these.

Personal pledge: This activity requires students to reflect upon values in action. You may choose to complete this activity with the whole class and to ask students for some action plans that they could follow up on at a later time.