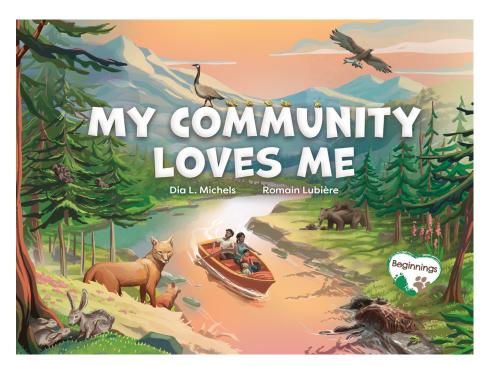
# My Community Loves Me Teacher's Guide

Written and Designed by Skyler Kaczmarczyk and Sofia Warfield



To be used with:

My Community Loves Me

Written by Dia L. Michels

Illustrations by Romain Lubière

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English

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## Meet the Author and Illustrator



Dia L. Michels is an award-winning science and parenting writer of books for both children and adults. She has authored over a dozen books, many of which explore the lessons we can extract from studying mammal behaviors. A popular speaker, she presents at conferences, libraries, and schools around the country. Her books have been translated into a variety of languages. The mother of three grown children, she lives in Washington, D.C., and can be reached at Dia@PlatypusMedia.com.

Romain Lubière studied at the École des Beaux arts of Saint-Étienne. In 2016 he shifted his focus from graphic design to children's illustration. His portfolio offers a sensitive, poetic look at nature, the animal world, and human feelings. He combines traditional techniques (pencil, watercolor, gouache) with digital tools. He regularly offers workshops and meetings in schools, media libraries, and at book fairs. Based in Saint-Étienne, Romain continues to create and inspire from his hometown in the heart of France.



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## Introduction

# MY COMMUNITY LOVES ME

#### Raising a baby is no easy feat—it takes a whole community!

Designed for children in preschool through kindergarten, this Teacher's Guide offers simple, hands-on activities to help young learners explore questions like:

What is a community? and What does my community look like?

Through My Community Loves Me, students can observe how animals care for one another and reflect on the people, and animals, that support them in their own lives. Guided discussions and reflection encourage children to notice the networks of care around them and understand the importance of empathy, cooperation, and appreciation. Teachers can help students celebrate these connections while discovering the ways they can contribute to their own communities.



## Act It Out: Cuddle, Care, and Caw!

**GRADES:** Pre-K-K

MATERIALS: My Community Loves Me

**SUBJECT:** Eearning About Community Through

Movement and Play

SKILLS: Fine Motor Skills, Social-Emotional Learning

(SEL), Empathy, Observation and Critical Thinking

**Background:** Children are natural imitators.

Through playful movement, sounds, and actions, they can explore how animals move, behave, and interact within their environments.

In this activity, students are invited to act out and embody the nurturing behaviors of the wild animals featured in My Community Loves Me. Through these playful actions, they explore and connect the animals' behaviors to their own experiences, relationships, and understanding of care and community.

## **Activity:**

- Invite students to sit in a circle on the classroom floor so they can see the teacher and one another, creating a space for shared observation and participation.
- 2. Read My Community Loves Me aloud, one page at a time. After each page, ask students to "act out" the animals in the following ways:

**Mexican Bat:** Students huddle close to the classmates beside them to feel safe and warm.

**Coyote:** Students pretend to swaddle and feed a baby, practicing nurturing behavior.

**Golden Eagle:** Students on one side of the circle make cries of hunger, while those on the other side respond with swooping arm motions and a loud "SCREEEE!"

**Canada Goslings:** In groups of three, one student honks and rushes gently to protect the others.

**Black-Tailed Jackrabbits:** Students pretend to nibble or eat alongside their classmates.

**Brown bear cubs:** Students stand up, give a playful roar, and gently pretend to play with classmates nearby.

**Western gray squirrels:** In pairs, one student pretends to clean or groom the other.

**Raccoon kits:** Going around the circle, each student makes a sound or face for classmates to mimic.

**Tree frog tadpoles:** Students wiggle together as if swimming side by side.

**Neighbors/Opossums:** Students wave to classmates beside them and across the circle.

**Beavers:** Students pretend to gather and build something together in the middle of the circle.

- 3. After each action, ask students: Who is helping, and who is being helped in this action?
- 4. Ask if students notice any patterns, like huddling, feeding, or playing together to support others. Is there someone in their own life who supports them or whom they help, like the animals in the book?



## Who's in My Community?

**GRADES:** Pre-K-K

MATERIALS: "This is My Community" template,

pencils, coloring supplies

**SUBJECT:** Reflecting on Community Connections

**SKILLS:** Fine Motor Skills, Self-Awareness, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Empathy,

Communication, Critical Thinking

**Background:** Children belong to many kinds of "communities," just like the diverse young animals in *My Community Loves Me*. In this activity, students are encouraged to think about the people and pets in their lives who care for them and reflect on how these relationships nurture and support them every day.

## **Activity:**

- Give each student a "This is My Community" worksheet.
- 2. Ask students to place one hand flat on their page and trace around it carefully. Demonstrate on your own paper or the board if needed.
- 3. Have students write their name inside the palm of their hand.
- 4. Explain that each finger will represent a person or

- pet in their community. Students should think of someone who cares for them, and write that person's name next to a finger.
- 5. Ask guiding questions as they fill in the fingers: Who makes you feel safe, happy, or loved? Who helps you learn or take care of you? Who do you share a home with?
- 6. Remind students that their community can include family, friends, teachers, neighbors, and pets.
- 7. Encourage students to think like the animals in the book: How does each person or pet help or care for them?
- 8. When everyone is finished, invite students to share one "community finger" with the class. Connect their examples to the animals in the book.

#### **Discussion:**

How do we show love and care to the people and pets in our community?

Why is it important to help and support others, just like your community helps you?

Can you think of a time you made someone in your community feel happy or safe?



This	ÎS	My	Community	Name:	
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What to Do:	Date:/
Wildi io bo.	

- 1) Put your hand on the page and trace around it.
- 2) Write your name in the middle of your hand.
- 3) Write the name of someone or a pet who cares for you on each finger.



# Saying Thank You

**GRADES:** Pre-K-K

MATERIALS: "Thank-You Card" template,

coloring and craft supplies

**SUBJECT:** Expressing Gratitude for Community

**Members** 

**SKILLS:** Fine Motor Skills, Critical Thinking, Social–Emotional Learning (SEL), Empathy

**Background:** In the previous activity, children explored the people and pets who make up their community and learned how these relationships provide care, support, and love. This follow-up activity helps children express gratitude to those community members through creative artmaking. By making and sharing thank-you cards, students deepen their understanding of kindness, appreciation, and connection within their community.



- Give each student 5 "Thank-You Card" templates.
   Note: These can be pre-cut if students are not yet comfortable using or allowed to use scissors.
- Explain that each card will be for a special person or helper in their community—someone who makes them feel happy, safe, or cared for. These names can be found on their "This is My Community" sheet.
- Ask students to choose who they would like to make their first card for and write the person's name on the front. Offer help as needed.
- 4. Guide students in reading the body text so they know what they are saying!

- 5. Remind students to sign their own name at the bottom of each card, and encourage children to decorate their cards using crayons, markers, stickers, or other craft supplies. Personalize them for each person!
- 6. When everyone is finished, remind students to share their thank-you cards with the people they made them for—at school, at home, or in their neighborhood.



#### **Discussion:**

How do these people help or care for you?

What are other ways you can show gratitude to your community?

How do we show kindness and appreciation to the people who help us every day?



## Cut me out!\_-%

Dear	<b></b> ,			
Today I learned about the importance of community and how our communities helps us feel safe and supported. This note is to say thank-you for a being part of my community, and that I love being a part of yours!				
	Love,	<b>4</b>		
Dear		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
Today I learned about the importance of community and how our communities helps us feel safe and supported. This note is to say thank-you for a being part of my community, and that I love being a part of yours!				
	Love,	<b>4</b>		
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