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# Introduction

Social studies (the study of people and their relationships to each other and to their environments) is a natural part of early childhood education. Very young children are focused on their own wants and needs. As they reach school age they become developmentally ready to begin forming relationships outside of their own families and exploring the world around them. Preschool and kindergarten classrooms are perfect settings for young children to begin expanding their experiences with other people and with their communities.

*Me and My World* is full of engaging cross-curricular activities designed to expand a child’s view from self to family, to community, to world. Character development and citizenship are woven through each unit. The units in this book build upon one another—children first focus on what they know and what they are able to do in the “Me” unit. They then gradually expand their awareness of the world around them and their place in it in the “My Family,” “My Classroom Community,” and “My World” units. The activities in this book will help young children move beyond their natural egocentricity and begin to take on the perspective of others, becoming active participants in the classroom community and the larger world beyond.

## Character Education Traits—Pieces of the Puzzle

By helping students become productive and responsible members of their families, their classrooms, and their communities, early childhood education prepares students for life. Throughout this book, you will find puzzle pieces indicating the traits of good character that are addressed in the lessons:

*Citizenship*  
*Cooperation*  
*Courage*  
*Empathy*  
*Fairness*  
*Integrity*  
*Kindness*  
*Perseverance*  
*Respect*  
*Responsibility*  
*Self-discipline*



By helping children acquire and fit together these “pieces of the puzzle,” teachers will guide them on their first steps toward responsible adulthood.

## Social Studies Themes

The following social studies themes are addressed throughout the units, as indicated by a globe icon:

- Identity
- Culture
- Time
- Geography

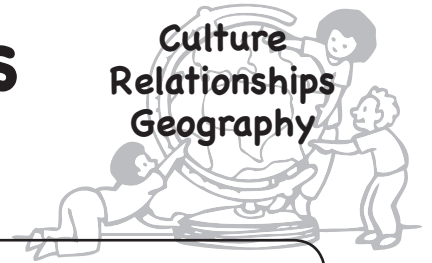


- Civics
- Relationships
- Economics
- Environments

# Many Kinds of Homes

## Community Circle Activities

Culture  
Relationships  
Geography



### Home Sorting

Ask each student to describe his or her home. Discuss the different rooms in students' homes and how they are used. Set out three large boxes labeled "Bathroom," "Bedroom," and "Kitchen." Show students a variety of objects that they might find in one of these three rooms and have a student volunteer place each object in the correct box. Keep in mind that some items might have more than one proper placement. For example, a hairbrush could go in the bathroom or the bedroom. Encourage students to explain their choices.

For this activity you will need three large boxes and assorted household items.



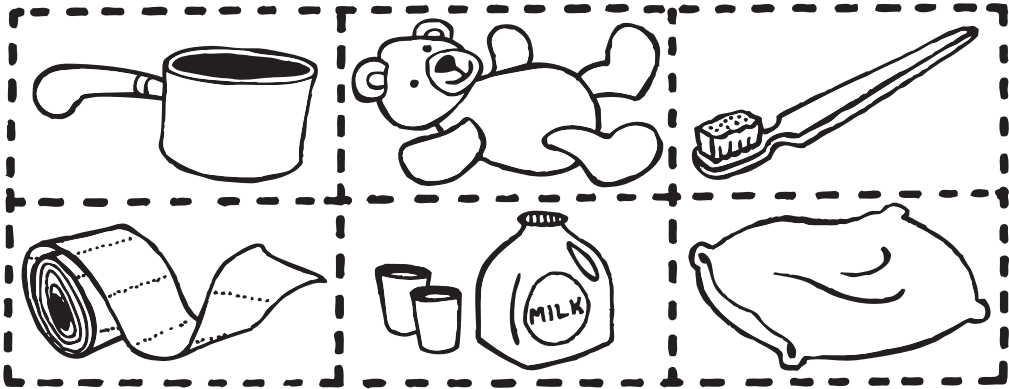
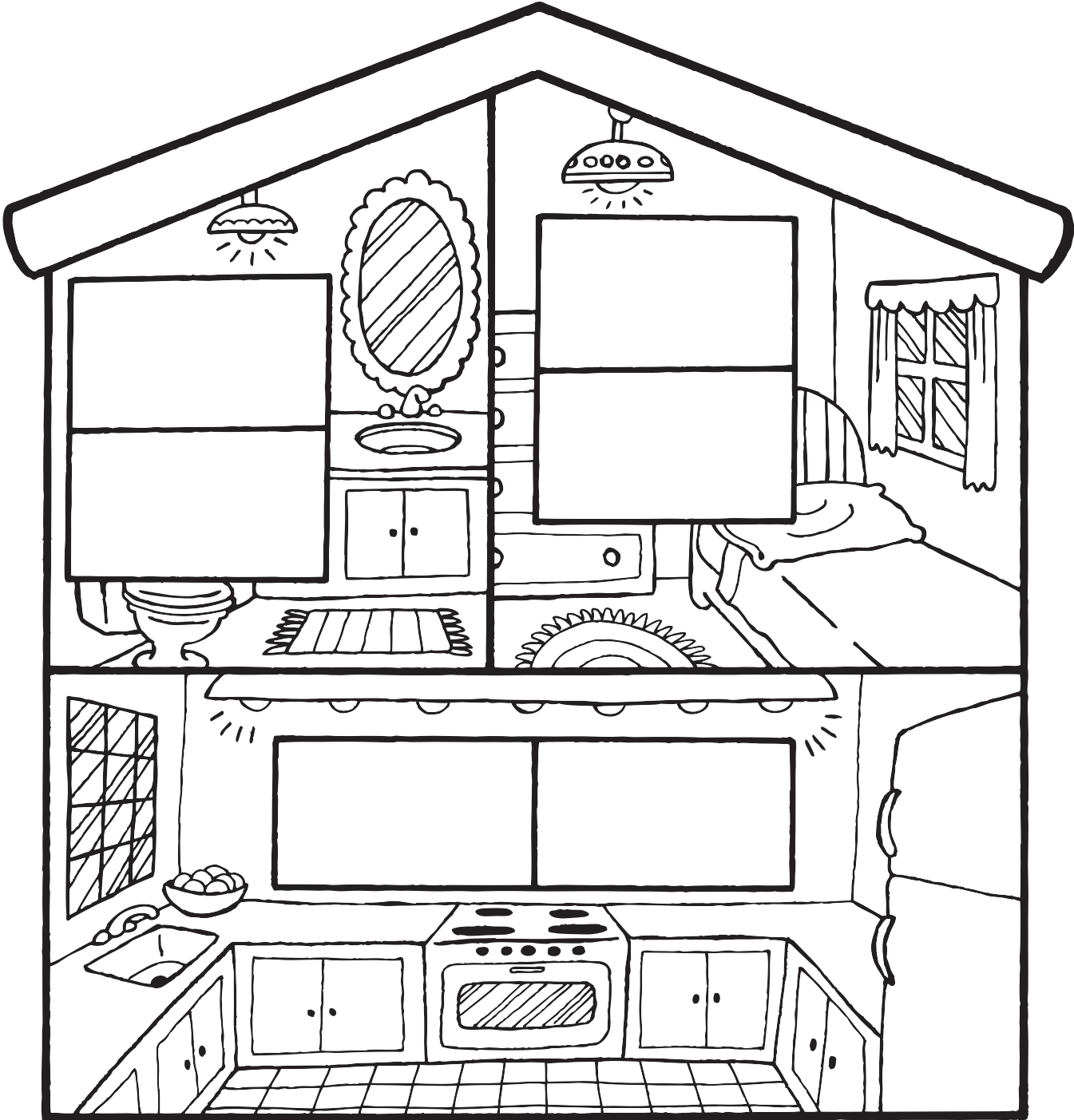
### Some Items for Sorting:

- pot or pan
- silverware
- spatula
- roll of toilet paper
- hand soap
- hairbrush
- shampoo
- stuffed animal
- articles of clothing

### Home Sorting Worksheet

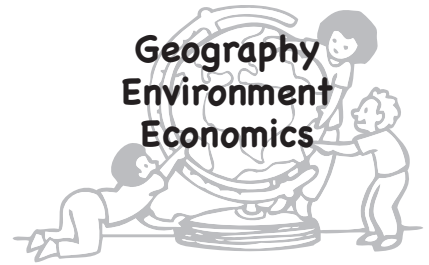
Copy the Home Sorting Worksheet (page 86) for each child. Ask students to cut out the items on the dotted lines and then glue or paste the items in the appropriate rooms.





# Our Earth

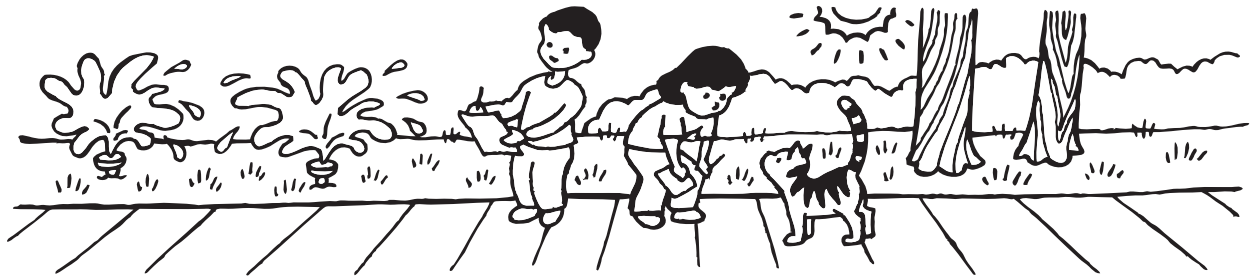
## Community Circle Activities



### Nature Observation Walk

Take students on a walk through your campus or your neighborhood to observe nature. Before you go, talk with students about the difference between natural and man-made. Give examples: buildings, sidewalks, streets, and cars are man-made. Trees, plants, animals, air, and sunlight are natural. Tell students that they should look for as many natural things as they can find on your walk. If students are developmentally ready, provide notebooks or paper and pencils so students can record their observations.

When you return to the classroom, create a chart titled, "Our Natural World" and record anything students saw on the walk that was natural. Have students draw pictures and write or dictate about what they saw. Gather their pages into a book about "Our Natural World."



### Natural Resources

Building on Where Does it Come From? (page 157), talk with students about natural resources. Natural resources are things in nature like air, water, and trees that we use to fill our wants and needs. Show students the Natural Resources mini posters on pages 197–199 and read the text aloud. Invite students to ask questions and discuss each natural resource. Ask students for examples of how they use each resource.



### Natural Resources Song

Copy and display the mini poster on page 200 and sing The Natural Resources song with students.



### Identifying Natural Resources

Use the worksheet on page 201 to help students identify some of the ways in which they use natural resources.





We need to breathe clean air to be healthy. Take a deep breath. Do you feel the air going into your lungs? Blow on your hand. Do you feel the air coming out of your mouth? Plants and animals also need air.

We cannot make air. Air is part of the Earth. Air is a natural resource.