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## Characteristics of a Community of Learners

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A classroom community has specific, identifiable characteristics that are conducive to learning. The table below lays out the teacher's and student's roles in a classroom community.

Characteristic	Teacher's Role	Student's Role
<b>Responsibility</b>	Teachers set guidelines and expect students to be responsible. They also model responsible behavior.	Students assume responsibility for their learning and behavior in the classroom.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Teachers provide opportunities for students to read and write in genuine and meaningful activities.	Students actively participate in activities, for example, reading independently and sharing their writing with classmates.
<b>Engagement</b>	Teachers nurture students' engagement through authentic activities and opportunities to work with classmates.	Students become more engaged in literacy activities and spend more time reading and writing.
<b>Demonstration</b>	Teachers model what good readers and writers do using think-alouds to explain their thinking.	Students carefully observe teachers' demonstrations and then practice by modeling their thinking for classmates.
<b>Risk Taking</b>	Teachers encourage students to take risks while exploring a new idea and de-emphasize the need to always get things "right."	Students understand that learning is a process of taking risks and exploring ideas.
<b>Instruction</b>	Teachers provide explicit instruction through minilessons and provide opportunities for guided practice.	Students participate in minilessons and apply what they're learning in literacy activities.
<b>Response</b>	Teachers provide opportunities for students to respond to books they're reading and to classmates' writing.	Students respond to books in reading logs and grand conversations and listen attentively to classmates share their writing.
<b>Choice</b>	Teachers offer choices because they understand that students are more motivated when they can make choices.	Students make choices about some books they read, projects they create, and compositions they write.
<b>Time</b>	Teachers organize the schedule with large chunks of time for reading and writing.	Students understand the classroom schedule and complete assignments when they're due.
<b>Assessment</b>	Teachers monitor students' learning and set guidelines about how students will be graded.	Students understand how they will be assessed and often participate in self-assessment.

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