

# CULTURES SHAPE COMMUNITIES

Think about your community. What are the cultures of its people? Whether a community is in the United States or another country, cultures shape communities. Culture is a way of life shared by members of a group. How is your community shaped by the cultures of its people?

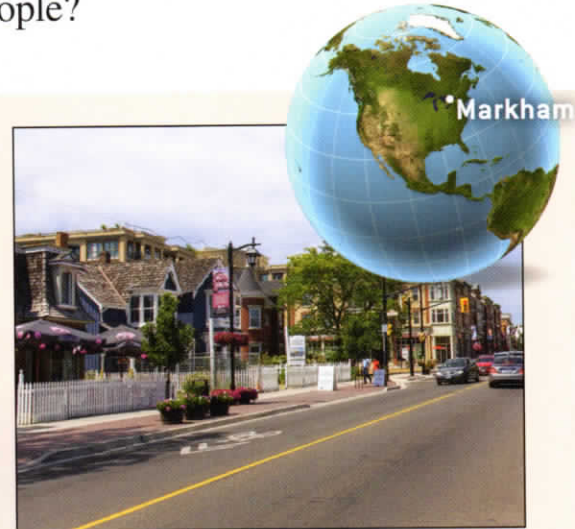
## Communities Around the World

The United States isn't the only country with urban, rural, and suburban communities. Check out three communities from around the world, and think about how the cultures of these communities differ.



↑ **Thailand is a country in Asia.** Bangkok, its capital city, is an urban area that is home to more than 8 million people. Some areas of the city have historic temples and traditional two-story homes. Other areas have tall, modern buildings.

➔ **The Netherlands is a country in Europe.** Many farms in rural communities, such as Lisse, grow tulips and other flowers. Lisse has one of the world's biggest flower gardens. Two out of every three flowers sold in the world come from the Netherlands.



↑ **Canada is our neighbor to the north.** Toronto, its largest city, has many suburbs. Markham is one of them. Once it was a farming village. But when Toronto began growing in the 1960s, Markham did, too. People moved there to have more space and still be close to the city.

## A Mix of Cultures

The United States is known for its mix of cultures. When people move to a

new community, their culture helps shape that community.



← **Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Mexico, are sister cities.** One city sits on the north side of the Rio Grande, and the other sits on the south side. Many Mexicans live in Brownsville because it has more jobs, but they often have family living in Matamoros. As sister cities, they work together to solve problems and share activities. The people of these cities honor their shared heritage on Charro Days. That's when they celebrate the Mexican cowboys, called *charros*.

→ **In 1911, a group of farmers** came from Denmark to settle in what is now Solvang, California. Today, only one out of ten Solvang residents is Danish American. But the town continues to celebrate its Danish heritage. It draws thousands of tourists each year.



**Edison, New Jersey, was** once a manufacturing center. Then, in the 1980s, factories closed, and some people moved away. But today, Edison has the largest Indian population in New Jersey.

People have moved there because it's close to highways and train lines that take them to jobs all over the area. The older Indian families welcome the newcomers and make them feel at home.