

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Being a Good Community Member.”

I’m excited to begin our third unit in the Benchmark Advance program. As with the previous units, I am providing suggested activities you and your child can do together at home to build on the work we’re doing in class.

In this unit, “Being a Good Community Member,” students will explore the many different ways people support their communities. For example, growing a garden helps beautify a neighborhood and produces food everyone can enjoy. The selections feature a variety of genres, including nonfiction, poetry, realistic fiction, and biography. Since home and school are key parts of a community, this is a perfect unit to kick off our program, and I’m sure it will spark some lively discussions.

I look forward to working together as partners this year. Should you have any questions about our reading program or about your child’s progress, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Being a Good Community Member

In this unit, we read about people who help to support their communities and think in depth about the question “Why do people get involved in their communities?” Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about what it means to be a good community member and to build on the skills and concepts your child is learning in school. I hope you will enjoy exploring this topic together.

Topic Connection

Community Reporter

Brainstorm with your child the many different people who help support your community. Your list may include police officer, firefighter, teacher, sanitation worker, gardener, or others. Invite your child to select one of the people on the list to interview and together come up with questions to ask, such as “What do you do to help the community?” “Why do you do your job?” After the interview, have your child play the part of newscaster, reporting back to your family about the interview.

Vocabulary Connection

Rules in Action

Your child is learning new words that describe the qualities of a good community member. Three of these words are **respect**, **honest**, and **responsible**. Support your child’s understanding of these words by discussing their meaning and then having your child identify a person he or she knows who embodies each of these words. It can be someone in your family, the community or even someone famous. Prompt your child to tell you why she thinks that person fits the word.

Comprehension Connection

Problem Solving

In this unit, we’ll read about problems community members solve. For example, we’ll read how a man invented the traffic light to solve the problem of traffic accidents. In another, we’ll read about neighbors who turned a vacant plot into a thriving vegetable garden. Identifying problems and solutions is an important reading skill. Practice by discussing problems that different community members solve where you live.

Phonics Connections

Grrrreat Fun!

In our phonics instruction, your child is reading words that begin with r-blends, such as the fr in the word frog. Notice how you can hear the individual f and r sounds in the word frog. That’s called a blend. Play this game to practice r-blends. On seven index cards, write the blends br-, cr-, dr-, fr-, gr-, pr-, tr-. Shuffle the cards, turn over the top card, and say a word that starts with that blend. For example, if the letters are gr, you might say grow. Then your child says another word, such as great. Move on to the next card when you can’t think of any more words that begin with that blend.