

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Past, Present, and Future.”

We are beginning our seventh unit in the Benchmark Advance program. As with the previous units, I am providing activities you and your child can do together at home to build on the work we’re doing in class.

In this unit, we’ll explore how the past affects the present and future, by reading and comparing selections about historical events and people. For example, we’ll read a poem describing what children played long ago compared to today, which will get us thinking about how children will play in the future. In addition to poetry, we’ll read a variety of genres including informational texts and realistic fiction.

I’m looking forward to this time-traveling unit, exploring with your child how the past influences the present and future.

As always, should you have any questions about our reading program or about your child’s progress, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Past, Present, and Future

In this unit, we'll read about life in the past and compare it to life today and in the future. As we read, we'll think in depth about the question "Why is the past important?" Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about the past, present, and future and to build on the skills and concepts your child is learning in school.

Topic Connection

Life Then & Now

Have your child interview you and/or someone older than you, such as a grandparent or an older friend or neighbor, about life long ago. Help her come up with questions about subjects such as entertainment, transportation, or school. For example, an entertainment question might be "What did you do for fun when you were my age?" or "What games did you play when you were my age?" After the interview, encourage your child to compare and contrast her life with the person she interviewed.

Vocabulary Connection

Words: Past, Present, Future!

In school, your child is learning new words related to life in the past, present, and future, such as **future, historic, past, time line, tablets, communicate, rebuilt, historic, rovers, astronaut, memorial, minuteman, president**. Write these words on index cards. Take turns turning over the cards and identifying each word as belonging to the past, present, future, or all three. Then use the word in a sentence.

Comprehension Connection

Flash Forward

One of the selections we'll be reading describes how schools from long ago compare and contrast with schools today, and suggests what schools will be like in the future. Have your child practice comparing and contrasting by considering another topic, such as transportation. Discuss how people get places today (e.g., cars and buses). Then review how people used to get places, such as by horse and carriage. Encourage your child to think about how people will travel in the future. Have your child draw a picture of this form of transportation and write a caption to go with it.

Phonics Connections

Go with the Flow

In this unit, your child is reading words that have a long *o* vowel team, such as the *oa* in **boat**, *ow* in **flow** and *oe* in **toe**. Write one of the long *o* vowel teams on three different index cards, so that you have nine cards in total: three with *oa*, three with *ow*, and three with *oe*. Shuffle the cards and turn them over. Take turns choosing a card and saying a word with that long *o* team. If you are successful, keep the card. If not, the other player gets a chance. Keep playing until all the cards are gone.