

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “The Economic Development of Cities.”

We are kicking off our ninth unit out of ten 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, we will read and compare selections about the development of cities to analyze how economic changes impact society. We will be reading texts in a variety of genres, including informational texts and realistic fiction.

This unit will promote some interesting discussion about economics and how it impacts societies.

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

The Economic Development of Cities

In this unit, we read about the rise of the American city and the changes that happened as a result. With each selection, we will think in depth about the question “How do economic changes impact societies?” Here are some activities you can do at home to continue the conversation we started at school about ways that industrialization, war, transportation, and job opportunities affected the growth of American cities.

Topic Connection

To the City!

Students are learning about why people flocked to cities in the late 1800s and early 1900s, making them the economic centers they are today. Ask your child to think of an economic attraction that he or she thinks could make people flock to your hometown today. It could be a realistic idea or one that your child makes up. Have him or her write about where people might flock from, and the economic changes it would likely bring to your city. Have your child do some simple planning to indicate how those changes can be incorporated as the city grows.

Vocabulary Connection

Visual Dictionary

In school, your child is learning words related to the economic impact of cities. Ask your child to make a visual dictionary to help him or her have easy access to the definitions of the following words: **decline, entrepreneurs, estimated, ethnic, incentives, incorporated, obstacles, opportunities, prosperity, and revitalize**. Have your child stack two sheets of paper and fold them to create a booklet, then write each word and definition in the booklet, and create a drawing for each word. Alternatively, pictures cut out of magazines can be used to represent some or all of the words.

Comprehension Connection

Home Sweet Home

In this unit, students learn about the economic development of cities. Ask them to think about either their hometown or the closest city to their hometown. Do some research with your child online or by using print resources. Find out the major job sources and industries in the town. Record information about how the city's economy has changed over the years. Compare your city to one of the ones your child read about in this unit.

Word Study Connections

Cities in Contrast

During this unit, your child will be comparing how some cities faced *obstacles* and *decline*, while others faced *prosperity* and were *revitalized*. Ask your child to choose a city they read about, such as Detroit, Michigan, or Lowell, Massachusetts. Have him or her make a two-column chart with *Obstacles* and *Decline* as the heading of one column and *Prosperity* and *Revitalization* as the heading of the other. Ask your child to list examples in each column that describe how the city changed during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.