

## **Dear Family Member,**

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Weather and Seasons.”

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

In this unit, your child will read about the weather and each of the four seasons. They will learn about how the changing seasons and weather affect daily life. For example, knowing the weather helps us decide what kind of clothing to wear and what activities we can do. The selections in this unit feature a variety of genres, including informational texts, realistic fiction, and poetry.

Weather is an interesting topic that every child can connect with and that you can explore further at home.

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

# Weather and Seasons

In this unit, we'll read about different weather conditions and think about the question "How do our lives change with the seasons?" Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about weather and seasons, and to build on the skills and concepts your child is learning in school. Whether snow or rain, you're sure to have fun engaging in these weather-related activities.

## Topic Connection

### Signs of the Seasons

Write the names of the four seasons on separate index cards and have your child draw a picture to go with each season. Shuffle the cards and place the pile facedown. Go first by selecting the top card, but do NOT show it to your child. Challenge your child to guess the season from clues or "signs of the seasons" that you provide. For example, if you chose summer, you might say "hot," "sunny," "no school." Once your child guesses, put your card back in the pile and shuffle again. Now your child selects a card and provides clues for you to guess the season.

## Vocabulary Connection

### Season Match Up

Your child is learning words associated with weather and seasons. Write the names of the four seasons on separate sheets of paper. Now write the following vocabulary words on index cards: **rain, snow, thunderstorm, blizzard, breezy, football, hiking, skiing, snowflakes, mitten**. Place the cards facedown. Have your child select one card at a time and place it by the related season. For example, your child might select **rain** and place it by **spring**, since spring is known for rain. Words such as **rain** could work with any season while others, such as **snowflakes**, would go only with **winter**.

## Comprehension Connection

### If it Snows, Then . . .

A couple of the selections we'll be reading describe cause-and-effect situations. For example, in one story, a snow storm causes a girl, from historical times, trouble walking home. In another, a lost wool glove provides a winter home for a family of squirrels. Practice cause and effect by providing the prompt "If it snows tonight, then..." Your child might say, for example, "...there won't be school tomorrow." Add onto the story by encouraging another cause/effect relationship, such as "If there is no school, then we..." You can continue going back and forth until you create a whole story.

## Phonics Connections

### Vvvery Fun Sound Hunt

In our phonics instruction, we are reading words with a /v/ sound, as in *vet*. Go on a sound hunt in your home or neighborhood to find words that have the /v/ sound at the beginning, middle, or end of the word, such as *glove*, *vacuum*, or *river*.