

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Writers Tell Many Stories.”

We are kicking off our fourth 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, we will read and compare a variety of genres to understand the purpose of storytelling. To help students recognize the wide range of stories writers tell, the selections in this unit feature everything from animal fantasy and fairy tales to poetry and realistic fiction.

This unit will inspire the writer in all of us and hopefully spark some lively discussions 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.

Writers Tell Many Stories

In this unit, we read and compare stories to understand the purpose of storytelling and think in depth about the question “Why do people tell stories?” Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about the purpose of storytelling and to build on the skills and concepts your child is learning in school. These thought-provoking activities are sure to get you both thinking.

Topic Connection

Library Loop

At your local library, select age-appropriate books from different sections. Once you’ve collected a pile, find a spot where you can browse your collection together, to explore how they are the same and different. For each book, look at the cover, read the title, and flip through the pages. Prompt your child to consider what kind of story it is. You can model by saying, for example, “I think this book is a true story—or nonfiction—because there is a picture of a scientist on the cover.” Encourage your child to notice how each writer has a different purpose for writing his or her story.

Vocabulary Connection

Act the Word

In school, your child is learning new words that writers use in their storytelling. Some describe characters and their actions, such as **carefully, exclaimed, terrified, terrible, kindness, nervous**. Write each of the words on an index card or small piece of paper and put them in a pile. Have your child turn over the top card. Read the word together and discuss its meaning. Then have your child act out the word in any way he or she likes.

Comprehension Connection

Tell Your Story

In this unit, we are exploring the many reasons why people tell stories. Now give your child a chance to tell his story. In one selection, we’ll read about a boy who makes his first home run. Encourage your child to think of something special that’s happened in his life, such as acting in a play or starting school. Have your child tell a story about the event. As he tells the story, write down his words on different sheets of paper to create a small book. Then have him illustrate his story. Put the pages together to create a book, including a cover with a title and his name as the author.

Phonics Connections

Word Family Fun

In our phonics instruction, we are reading words that start with a hard *c* or /k/ sound, as in *cat*. Go on a scavenger hunt in your home or neighborhood to find words that begin with the /k/ sound, such as *candle, coat, and car*.