

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Advancements in Technology.”

In our fifth unit, we’ll be reading about inventors and their inventions. It might come as a surprise that the value of a new invention has not always been recognized at first. For example, in 1877, then President Rutherford B. Hayes had the first telephone installed in the White House. He called it “an amazing invention, but who would ever want one?” As we read the biographies and informational social studies texts of this unit, we will examine both the influences on inventors and the impact of their inventions on society.

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

Advancements in Technology

In this unit, we read about inventors and their inventions, and we think in depth about the question “What is the value of innovation?” Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about inventions and to build on the skills and concepts your child has learned in school. Hopefully you’ll even have some fun, too, as you work together!

Topic Connection

The Next Big Thing!

Imagine what the world was like when Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Alva Edison were young! There were no digital cameras or cell phones, let alone telephones or lightbulbs. Through their curiosity, imagination, and hard work, they were able to come up with inventions that have changed the world. What inventions do you think will come next? Brainstorm with your child about the possible innovations that will brighten our future. Feel free to let your imaginations run wild!

Vocabulary Connection

It’s Revolutionary!

In school, students are learning new words related to this unit, such as **innovations, revolutionary, amplified, soared, vibrations, communications, installed, transmitted, signal, technology, and device.** You can support your student’s word knowledge by working together to sort the words above into three categories: adjectives, verbs, and nouns, all of which can be used when talking about inventions. Can any word (or words) be placed in more than one category?

Comprehension Connection

Which Came First?

One reading skill we have been working on in class is the ability to recognize cause and effect. This skill is important when reading nonfiction as well as fiction. To help your child become more proficient at this skill, ask your child what he thinks has caused specific actions in real life or in a story you’re reading together. Help her to distinguish between the cause and effect.

Word Study Connections

New Endings

In our phonics and word study instruction, students are learning inflectional endings like *-ed* and *-ing*. To help your child with adding endings, try the following activity. Get 8 index cards and write the words from the unit (shown below) on each. Shuffle the cards, put them in a pile, and take turns picking a card. Add the ending *-ed* and *-ing* to each word. Bonus: write each word with its new ending.

carry	change	create	use
rely	introduce	share	take