

Dear Family Member,

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

In this earth science unit, we’ll be learning about how scientists predict and understand weather patterns. Your child will uncover new and interesting aspects of weather, like how Earth’s tropical rain belt is a group of clouds that creates wet and dry weather patterns near the equator. In addition to studying several informational scientific texts, we’ll also read poetry and a realistic fiction story about a girl from Minnesota who experiences a hurricane while visiting her grandmother in Florida. I hope both you and your child will find “Weather and Climate” a stimulating unit, full of engaging information and discoveries.

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

Weather and Climate

In this unit, we interpret weather and climate patterns and think in depth about the question “How do we understand change?” Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about earth science 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

Weather Around Us

Is it raining heavily today and are dark clouds spread across the sky? Or maybe it’s a sunny day and a cool breeze is floating through the air. At the beginning of the week, have your child start a weather log. Ask your child to record any specific changes in precipitation or temperature. Then, let your child make predictions about the week’s upcoming weather. At the end of the week, ask your child to tell you what he or she has learned about weather and climate. Talk together about what you see, what you know, and what you’d like to know!

Vocabulary Connection

Let’s Talk Weather

As we read the selections of this unit, we learned science terms having to do with weather such as hurricanes and humidity, but also related words that can be used in everyday conversation such as **billowing, thaw, track, puffy, circulates, abundant, paradise, patterns,** and **band.** To support your child’s word knowledge, look at the words together. Then sort them into verbs, nouns, or adjectives that help describe clouds, weather and climate. Ask your child to explain why a word belongs in one category or another.

Comprehension Connection

Hold the Opinions, Please!

In school, we have been working on the reading skill of distinguishing between fact and opinion. Certainly, this skill is especially important when reading the kinds of informational science texts in our unit. One way to reinforce this skill is to read a nonfiction text together or watch a news program or documentary. Then take turns coming up with facts—not your opinions!

Word Study Connections

Do You Hear That?

In our word study instruction, students in week 1 review and hear words that have a hard or soft sounding **c**. Then in week 2, they review words with a hard or soft **g**. Have your child read a piece of text, underlining any additional words that have a hard and soft sounding **c** or **g**. Examples below are from the texts.

	Hard c or Hard g	Soft c or Soft g
Word Study Week 1	can, cover, affect, come, computers	fierce, science, certain, ice, instance
Word Study Week 2	giant, gigantic	given, tug, good, gave, again, gigantic