

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Understanding Different Points of View.”

We are kicking off our fourth unit of study 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 our fourth unit of study, “Understanding Different Points of View,” we will read and compare a variety of genres to understand the ideas and opinions of others—particularly those who are members of the animal world! The realistic fiction and fantasy stories in this unit feature first person and third person descriptions of animal experiences.

This unit will spark some lively discussion at home as we examine the importance of understanding the world through the eyes of our furry companions.

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

Understanding Different Points of View

In this unit, we read and compare stories to understand the points of view of animals that live and work with humans. We will do this by thinking about the question “What do we learn when we look at the world through the eyes of others?” Here are some activities you can do at home to continue the conversation about understanding point of view.

Topic Connection

Pet Project

For those of you with a pet at home, take the opportunity to explore your pet’s point of view. Write a short illustrated picture book with your child to describe what it is like for that pet to live with you. What makes the pet scared, excited, happy, or sad? How does the pet act around other animals? Include details about your pet’s point of view, and include yourselves in the story and illustrations.

Vocabulary Connection

Absolutely Opposite

In school, your child is learning new words to explore point of view and seeing the world through the eyes of others. Make a two-column chart for your child and list five of the following ten words on the left side of the page: **misfortune, accustomed, dangled, contraption, produce, examined, prevented, skidded, protest, involuntarily**. Then have your child list at least one antonym for each word on the right side of the page. Check the list and offer additional antonyms wherever possible.

Comprehension Connection

Who Am I?

In this unit, we are learning to see the world through the eyes of our animal friends. Learn along with your child by creating some animal riddles together. Imagine you are an animal. Describe a first person account of how you feel, and ask “Who am I?” For example, say in a garbled voice, “I’m so tired from collecting acorns all day, and my cheeks are so full! I have to find a place to bury these because there’s a storm coming. Wouldn’t I look ridiculous with wet fur and puffed-out cheeks! Who am I?” After your child guesses, “A chipmunk!,” trade roles and have him or her describe life from the point of view of another animal.

Word Study Connections

Contentment in the Animal World

For your child’s exploration into the point of view of animals, ask him or her to focus on the word *contentment*. Ask the following questions and have your child answer or give an opinion about what the best answer might be: What do you think would bring an animal contentment? How different is it from what would bring a human contentment? Why should we think about the contentment of animals when talking about their experiences and point of view?