

Dear Family Member,

Welcome to our next unit of study, “Technology’s Impact on Society.”

As we begin our fifth unit in the Benchmark Advance program, we are approaching the halfway mark! 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.

The selections in this unit will get us thinking about the role that technology has played in people’s lives. The focus will be on the Industrial Revolution and how it changed the way people lived and worked. The selections include a variety of genres, such as poetry, informational texts, historical fiction, and biography.

This thought-provoking unit will allow you and your child to think about how technology has impacted you, your family, and the society you live in.

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

Technology's Impact on Society

In this unit, we'll read selections about technology to understand how the Industrial Revolution has impacted our lives today. We will think about the question "What value does technology bring to people's lives?" Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about technology and to build on skills and concepts your child has learned in school.

Topic Connection

Focus on an Invention

As your child reads the selections in this unit, he or she should be able to list different inventions of the Industrial Age. Have your child choose one of these inventions and work together to research it in further detail. Find out how it changed people's lives. Discuss whether it is still used today, or what has replaced it in modern society. Have your child make an illustrated poster or booklet about the invention that shows what you learned.

Vocabulary Connection

Word Association

In school, students are learning words that will help them analyze the role that technology plays in our lives. These words include **affordable, alter, available, lucrative, manual, mingle, network, radically, task, and urban.** Play a word association game with your child to help him or her understand how these words are related to other, more familiar words or phrases. You say one of the words, such as *affordable*. Your child responds by saying "inexpensive," or "cheap." Take turns guessing and giving clues, and provide as many hints as needed so that each of you can guess the word.

Comprehension Connection

Poem About Technology

In this unit, students read several poems about how technology has touched people's lives. Ask your child to choose a machine in your home and write a poem about it. The poem may be about the look or function of the machine, or it might be about what life could be like without that machine. Have your child read the poem aloud. Then post it on the refrigerator or someplace where it will show prominently in your home.

Word Study Connections

Zoom In on a Word

One of the most useful words that students are learning during this unit is *urban*. Zoom in on that word to focus on its meaning, and relate it to the understanding of the development of technology. Talk about ways that urban centers develop technologies and create jobs in technology. Then talk about how urban centers use and rely on technology. Choose a city near you to research specific examples as you talk.