Education Language Arts

**Kindergarten:** Module 3: Unit 3

# Overview for Families

## Notes to teacher:

Making connections between home and school is vitally important in supporting students' learning. The following suggestions and materials represent some of the ways you can support these connections during this unit.

**Suggestions:**

- Copy the attached family letter and send it home with students after teaching Lesson 1 (this letter can be used as is or as a model). Consider having the letter translated for families whose first language is not English.
- Consider sending an additional letter to parents and co-workers requesting materials to deepen students' understanding and for their tree collages at the end of this unit. Possible items to request: magazine pictures of different trees and construction paper.
- Encourage students to share any at-home learning with the class. They can do this orally or by sharing writing, pictures, or artifacts. Example: Consider providing time for students to share different types of trees that they have seen in their communities or on trips to other places. Encourage them to describe the trees' unique needs. Students can document with a camera or draw pictures. (Be sure to emphasize that this should be done with an adult family member to ensure student safety.)
- Create a display board featuring pictures or drawings of different types of trees. Provide a label for the different trees and any unique features and needs they have written in several different languages.
- Take pictures of students studying different trees and what they need throughout the day and post them in the room or hallway.
- Depending on the needs of your students and the expectations of your school community, consider assigning additional homework. Examples: open-ended activities that help students read, think, talk, write, and ask questions about the topic instead of those that simply test students on their content knowledge (see suggested activities in the family letter).
- If using EL Education's K–2 Reading Foundations Skills Block, consider sending home a copy of the Student Decodable Reader used each week and encourage families to have students read these texts aloud to them.

**Dear Family,**

During Unit 3 of this module, your student will be researching how different trees meet their needs and provide animals with food and shelter. By the end of the module, students will be able to participate in a discussion around the module guiding question: "What patterns can we observe in living things?" I am writing today to explain what your student will be learning, describe the activities that will support this learning, and suggest how to support this learning at home. I hope that you will plan to join us at the end of our deep study to celebrate all of your student's learning!

## What will your student be learning?

Students will begin to research the patterns found in different trees with a focus on learning about what the trees need to live and grow as well as the food and shelter they provide to other living things. The learning will be focused on these ideas:

- Researchers make observations and gather evidence to explain patterns.
- Different trees all need sunlight and water to grow.
- Trees help other living things meet their needs in similar ways.

Students will also practice these reading foundation skills:

- Identify and write the sound for most consonants and vowels.
- Segment (break apart) the individual sounds of spoken, one-syllable words, and blend them back together.
- Decode (read) and encode (write) regularly spelled, one-syllable words.

## How will your student be learning?

Throughout the unit, your student will read, think, listen, talk, write, and ask questions about the needs and patterns of different trees. Students will participate in these activities, among others, to build their literacy skills:

- Gathering research from nonfiction text to record what different trees need to thrive
- Practicing fluency and comprehension through songs, poems, and riddles about trees and living things.
- Engaging in conversations with classmates
- Recording observations, writing and drawing about different trees, what they need and give, and their attributes
- Developing, revising, and presenting an informational collage with writing and artwork to demonstrate their learning about patterns and trees

## What can you do to support your student's learning at home?

Here are a few activities that you can do at home with your student to support his or her learning:

- Ask your student to talk with you about these questions: What do trees need to live? What tree is your student researching for his or her informational collage? What does a researcher do?
- Read books and sing songs about different types of trees from home or at the library.
- Identify different types of trees around your community and ask your student to explain the patterns and differences.
- Encourage your student to read the weekly Student Decodable Reader or a letter book to you every night.
- Practice reading and spelling regularly spelled, one-syllable words with the middle vowel sound /a/ (e.g., "pat," "chat," "tap").

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss your student's learning.

Sincerely,

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