

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.
- 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 the types of plants they see or grow around their home. Students can document with a camera or draw pictures.
- Create a display board featuring the lifecycle of a plant. Provide a label for each part (seed, flower, plant, fruit) written in several different languages.
- Take pictures of students sorting, drawing, reading, and writing about plants 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. Example: Consider implementing 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 1 of this module, students will build their background knowledge of plants by researching the unit guiding question, “How do plants grow and survive?” Students research this question by engaging in activities that provoke wonder and curiosity about how we get the fruits, flowers, and vegetables that we enjoy. 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 the students’ learning!

What will your student be learning?

Students will study the topic of plants, with a focus on learning about plant stages. The learning will focus on these ideas:

- Plants need light and water to grow.
- All plants go through the same stages as they grow.

Students will also practice these reading foundation skills:

- Identify and write the sound and spelling pattern for words ending in the C-le (consonant plus -le) syllable type.
- Segment (break apart) and identify the syllables within words, and blend them back together.
- Decode (read) and encode (write) two-syllable words.

How will your student be learning?

Throughout the unit, your student will read, think, listen, talk, write, draw, and ask questions about the topic of how plants grow and survive. Students will participate in these activities, among others, to build their literacy skills:

- Listening to read-alouds of a variety of texts about plants.
- Participating in “open sorts” of plant parts to decide how they are related to each other.
- Singing songs about plants.
- Engaging in collaborative conversations with classmates.
- Writing and drawing about plants parts.
- Asking and answering questions about what plants need to grow and survive.

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 this question: How do plants grow and survive?
- Read books and sing songs about plants from home or at the library.
- Identify different types of plants around your home, explain what helps them grow, and help your student learn how to care for them.
- Encourage your student to read the weekly Decodable Reader or a letter book to you every night.
- Practice reading and spelling words ending in C-le (e.g., *paddle, bubble, little*).

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

Sincerely,