

**Kindergarten:** Module 3: Unit 1

# Overview for Families

### Notes to teacher:

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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 for students to create a classroom realia basket throughout the module and tree collages in Unit 3. Possible items to request: seeds, shiny ribbon, sandpaper, tissue paper, 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 living and nonliving things they observe and find at home. 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 living and nonliving things. Provide a label for each living and nonliving thing written in several different languages.
- Take pictures of students studying living and nonliving things 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 1 of this module, your student will be researching the patterns of all living things. 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?**

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Students will begin to research living and nonliving things with a focus on learning about what living things need in order to move and grow. The learning will be focused on these ideas:

- Researchers make observations and gather evidence to explain patterns.
- All living things need water, food, and air to get the energy to move and grow.
- Plants and animals are living things.

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?**

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

- Analyzing nonfiction text for patterns of living things
- Developing fluency and comprehension through poetry about living and nonliving things
- Engaging in conversations with classmates
- Recording observations, writing and drawing about living and nonliving things

**What can you do to support your student’s learning at home?**

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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: How do we know that something is living? What do all living things need to move and grow? What does a researcher do?
- Read books and sing songs about patterns of living things from home or at the library.
- Identify different living and nonliving things around your home, ask your student to tell you what makes them living or nonliving, and help your student identify the patterns between them.

## Unit 1: Overview

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

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