

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 pollinators they see around their yard or neighborhood. Students can document with a camera or draw pictures.
- Create a display board featuring pictures of pollinators. Provide a label for each pollinator written in several different languages.
- Take pictures of students reading and writing about, and drawing, pollinators 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: 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 Decodable Reader used each week and encourage families to have students read these texts aloud to them.

Dear Family,

During Unit 2 of this module, students will investigate the importance of pollinators in helping plants grow and survive. At the end of the unit, they will be able to answer the Unit 2 guiding question: “How do pollinators help plants grow and survive?” 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 students’ learning!

What will your student be learning?

Students will continue to study how we get the fruits, flowers, and vegetables we enjoy by researching how pollinators help plants grow and survive. The learning will focus on these ideas:

- Plants and animals depend on each other.
- Pollination is an important part of the lifecycle of plants.

Students will also practice these reading foundation skills:

- Segment (break apart) and identify the syllables within words, and blend them back together.
- Decode (read) and encode (write) words with different prefix and suffixes (e.g., *un-*, *re-*, *-ly*).

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 pollinators help plants grow and survive. Students will participate in these activities, among others, to build their literacy skills:

- Listening to read-alouds and independently reading a variety of texts about pollination and plants.
- Researching specific pollinators in groups.
- Singing songs about pollination.
- Engaging in collaborative conversations with classmates.
- Writing about how pollinators pollinate plants.
- Learning how to make a scientific drawing of a pollinator.

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 pollinators help plants grow and survive?
- Read books and sing songs about pollination from home or at the library.
- Identify different types of pollinators around your yard or neighborhood; observe them closely to describe what they are doing.
- Encourage your student to read the weekly Decodable Reader or a letter book to you every night.
- Practice reading and spelling words with similar sounding endings (e.g., *strange*, *bridge*, *truck*, *spark*).

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

Sincerely,