Education Language Arts

**Grade 1:** Module 4: 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.
- 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 how birds in their community help plants, animals, and people. Students can document with artifacts such as magazine articles, photographs, and interviews or can draw pictures.
- Create a display board featuring ways in which local birds are helpful and ways in which people hurt and help local birds.
- Take pictures of students reading, writing, and drawing about how birds are helpful or how people hurt or help birds throughout the day and post them in the room or hallway. Include copies of the covers of the texts read in this unit.
- 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 Decodable Student Reader used each week and encourage families to have students read these texts aloud to them.

## Family Letter

**Dear Family,**

During Unit 3 of this module, your student will research how birds are helpful to plants, animals, and people and ways in which people can help birds. At the end of the unit, they will be able to answer the Unit 3 guiding question: "How can people care for birds so they can live and grow?" 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 analyze informational texts to determine how authors support their points with reasons. They will also create a piece of informational writing and a scientific drawing of a bird that showcases all they have learned about birds. The learning will be focused on these ideas:

- Birds are needed by many living things.
- People can stop doing harmful things that hurt birds.
- People can take action to prevent birds from being harmed, such as creating Feathered Friends Savers.

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 prefixes and suffixes (un-, re-, -ly).

Throughout the unit, your student will read, think, listen, talk, write, draw, and ask questions about the ways birds help other living things, ways in which people can hurt birds, and ways in which people can help birds live and grow. Students will participate in these activities, among others, to build their literacy skills:

- Listening to read-alouds and independently rereading a variety of texts about the impact of birds on plants, animals, and people
- Saying a jazz chant, singing songs, and reading poetry about different opinions people have about birds
- Engaging in collaborative conversations with classmates
- Writing about birds using adjectives

**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: Why should we care about birds? How can people care for birds so they live and grow?
- Read books and poetry about how birds help animals, plants, and humans.

- Identify different types of birds around your yard or neighborhood and interview people about how they help them.
- Encourage your student to read the weekly Decodable Student Reader or a letter book to you every night.
- Practice reading and spelling words with similar-sounding endings (strange, bridge, truck, spark).

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

Sincerely,

_____