

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

**“How important are traditions?”** That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about cultural traditions, customs, and celebrations, and how they make our lives richer. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Talk together about a family tradition. Share what you know about how the tradition started and what your family does to celebrate or continue it. Try to use some of the New Words in your discussion.
2. On the lines below, write notes that tell about your tradition. Use the New Words when you can.
3. Choose an item that represents your tradition, such as a photo of the celebration, a craft or artwork, or a musical recording. Send the item or a picture of the item to school for your student to share with the class.

## What We're Reading

### **“Josh Ponte: A Musical Journey” by Ramona Jafar**

In this interview, explorer Josh Ponte describes how the music of Gabon connects people with their culture, nature, and each other.

### **“Shaped by Tradition” by Patricia Millman**

In this article, a blind sculptor “sees with his hands” as he follows a family tradition of working with clay.

### **“The Fairy Serpent” retold by Eloise Vivanco**

In this Chinese folk tale, a girl accepts her husband, a serpent, for who he is. She is able to look beyond the serpent’s scales and rough skin.

### **“Coming of Age” adapted from Skipping Stones**

This article tells about the Indian sari ceremony and its traditions.

# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4A | UNIT 1 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

craft  
musical  
perform  
pottery  
tradition  
weave

#### ACADEMIC

create  
culture  
express  
medium  
style

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

ancestor  
ceremony  
marriage  
occasion  
ritual

#### ACADEMIC

belief  
custom  
influence  
relationship  
role

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

**“Just how smart are animals?”** That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about animal behavior, communication, and intelligence. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Together, interview friends and family members about things that pets or other animals do that show they are smart. Collect stories and examples. Try to use some of the New Words in your interviews.
2. Work together to write notes about your interviews on the lines below. Try to include some of the New Words in your notes.
3. Remind your student to bring the completed notes to class.

## What We're Reading

### **“Kitchen Caper: A Trickster Tale”** by Robyn Montana Turner

In this tale, a clever mouse uses tricks to save himself from a hungry cat.

### **“Mouse Deer and Farmer”** adapted from a story told by Aaron Shepard

This tale tells how Mouse Deer escapes danger by tricking a farmer's dog.

### **“Animal Smarts”** by Leslie Hall

This science article discusses the many ways that animals communicate and show their intelligence.

### **“The Clever Chimps of Fongoli”** by Elizabeth Sengel

In this article, Explorer Jill Pruetz studies how chimpanzees in Senegal use tools to find food.

# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4A | UNIT 2 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

adaptation  
defend  
predator  
prey  
trait

#### ACADEMIC

behavior  
characteristic  
response  
strategy  
survival

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

command  
imitate  
memory  
pattern  
skill  
tool

#### ACADEMIC

ability  
communication  
inherit  
language  
learn

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

**“Why learn about other places?”** That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about geography. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Together, interview a family member or friend about an interesting place he or she has visited. Find out what the place was like and why it was interesting. Try to use some of the New Words in your interview.
2. Work together to write notes about your interview on the lines below. Try to include some of the New Words in your notes.
3. Choose an item such as photo, postcard, or other souvenir that represents the place your family member or friend described. Send the item or a picture of the item to school for your student to share with the class.

## What We're Reading

### “What the Future Holds”

by Robyn Montana Turner

This story tells how a girl uses her imagination to travel to faraway places and forget her troubles.

### “A Map in the Sky”

by Eloise Vivanco

In this poem, two girls imagine the shapes of different countries .

### “Extreme Earth”

by Beth Geiger

The hottest, tallest, coldest, most “extreme” places on Earth are discussed in this article.

### “Photographing the World”

by Kristin Cozort

This photo-essay describes the work of Explorer Jimmy Chin, who photographs some of the most extreme places on Earth.

# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4A | UNIT 3 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

continent  
country  
equator  
globe  
hemisphere  
inhabitant  
map

#### ACADEMIC

border  
imagine  
range  
suggest  
transport

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

canyon  
elevation  
landform  
ocean  
plain  
plateau  
valley

#### ACADEMIC

feature  
locate  
physical  
region  
surface

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

**“How do we relate to nature?”** That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about natural resources and the power of wind, water, air, and Earth. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Talk together about things that show how strong nature is. Then look out the window. What signs of the natural world do you see? Try to use some of the New Words in your discussion.
2. On the lines below, make notes describing the “signs of nature” you see. In the box below, draw a picture of the scene. Then help add labels to the drawing. Use the New Words when you can.
3. Remind your student to bring the completed notes and drawing to class.

## What We’re Reading

### “Wind at Work”

by Beth Geiger

This article explains ways wind affects people.

### “Water: The Blue Gold”

by Alexandra Cousteau, with Carol Verbeek

In this persuasive article, Explorer Alexandra Cousteau encourages readers to preserve Earth’s water resources.

### “Ozzie Bear”

by Eloise Vivanco

This tall tale tells about how Ozzie Bear the giant uses nature objects to help villagers and how villagers accept him even though he looks different.

### “Nature Inside Us”

poems by Eloise Vivanco and Moira Andrew

Two poems show the connection between nature and people.



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# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4A | UNIT 4 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

convert  
electricity  
generate  
power  
renewable  
scarce

#### ACADEMIC

available  
conservation  
current  
flow  
resource

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

atmosphere  
element  
landscape  
material  
natural

#### ACADEMIC

benefit  
force  
interact  
modify  
relate

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

### “When do harmless things become harmful?”

That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about living things that move in and take over ecosystems. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Talk together about the plants growing in your neighborhood. Which grow wild? Which are grown on purpose? Share what you know. Try to use some of the New Words in your discussion.
2. Using the space below, work together to make a list of plants in your neighborhood. In the first column, name or describe the plant. In the second column, write whether the plant grows wild or on purpose.
3. Remind your student to bring the completed list to class.

**What is the name of the plant?**

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## What We're Reading

### “The Fungus That Ate My School”

by Arthur Dorros

In this humorous story, a school science experiment gets out of control.

### “Mold Terrarium”

This science experiment shows how mold can grow on food.

### “Aliens from Earth”

by Mary Batten

This science text explains how living things from one ecosystem can take over another.

### “Island Observations”

by Dr. Christy Finlayson

Through her journal, Explorer Christy Finlayson observes non-native species.

**Is it wild or grown on purpose?**

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# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4B | UNIT 5 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

decompose  
experiment  
humid  
mold  
spore

#### ACADEMIC

contain  
control  
environment  
investigate  
spread

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

habitat  
invade  
population  
species  
threatened

#### ACADEMIC

balance  
competition  
introduce  
migration  
native

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

### “How do treasures shape our past and future?”

That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about why people throughout history have looked for treasure. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Talk together about your family’s treasures, such as special souvenirs, crafts, photos, or other precious things. Choose one of these treasures to draw and write about.
2. Together, draw a picture of the treasure in the box below. Write about it on the lines at right. If possible, take a photo of the treasure, too.
3. Remind your student to bring the completed picture and notes, and any photos, to class.

## What We’re Reading

### “Treasure Island”

adapted by Mark Falstein

Based on a classic novel, this play shows how a clever boy finds treasure and escapes danger.

### “Make a Treasure Map”

These step-by-step instructions show how to draw a treasure map.

### “Diving for Treasure: The Story of Pearl Divers in the Middle East”

adapted from information recorded by Alan Villiers

This history article tells about Explorer Alan Villiers’s exciting adventures at sea.

### “La Belle Shipwreck”

This Web article explores the history of a famous ship and its valuable treasure.



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# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4B | UNIT 6 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

adventure  
coastal  
compass  
navigation  
port  
treasure

#### ACADEMIC

chart  
discovery  
exploration  
interpret  
legend

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

archaeologist  
artifact  
currency  
galleon  
merchant

#### ACADEMIC

colony  
examine  
preserve  
route  
trade

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

**“What does it take to explore space?”** That is the big question we are asking in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about solving problems in order to study outer space. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Talk together about what you can see in the clear night sky. Share what you know. If possible, observe the night sky together. Try to use some of the New Words in your discussion.
2. In the box below, draw a picture of what you see in the clear night sky where you live. Then write about it on the lines at right.
3. Remind your student to bring the completed drawing and notes to class.

## What We’re Reading

### **“What’s Faster Than a Speeding Cheetah?”**

by Robert E. Wells

The author of this article profiles fast things.

### **“Building for Space Travel”**

by Anastasia Suen

This report describes a space station designed by Explorer Constance Adams for future astronauts on their way to Mars.

### **“The Moon Over Star”**

by Dianna Hutts Aston

In this story, a girl dreams of becoming an astronaut.

### **“The First Person on the Moon”**

This biography highlights Neil Armstrong’s greatest achievement.



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# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4B | UNIT 7 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

accelerate  
height  
measure  
motion  
speed

#### ACADEMIC

average  
distance  
rate  
scale  
solve

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

astronaut  
launch  
orbit  
planet  
rotation

#### ACADEMIC

capacity  
constant  
limit  
resistance  
technology

# Reach HIGHER

## Dear Family Member,

**“What’s worth protecting?”** That is the big question we are exploring in this unit. To answer it, we are reading, writing, and talking about things that are worth preserving. Be a part of our exploration! With your student, read the New Words on the next page. Then follow these directions.

### Directions:

1. Together, interview family members about what they think is worth protecting. What living things, places, objects, or even ideas would they like to save? Ask them to share ideas about how to save what they value most. Try to use New Words in your interviews.
2. Work together to write notes about your interviews on the lines below. Try to include some of the New Words in your notes.
3. Remind your student to bring the completed notes to class.

## What We’re Reading

### “Buffalo Music”

by Tracey E. Fern

In this story, a woman rescues wild buffalo.

### “Saving Bison from Extinction”

by Dorothy Young

This report traces the history of bison in the United States.

### “Tutankhamun’s Treasures”

by Eloise Vivanco

In this story, the author tells how Tutankhamun’s treasures were found and adds adventures events that could have happened.

### “Saving the World’s Oldest Library”

by Eloise Vivanco

In this historical narrative, the author tells how a woman saves an ancient library.

# Reach HIGHER

## NEW WORDS

4B | UNIT 8 • 2

### PART 1

#### CONTENT

heritage  
hero  
president  
protect  
volunteer

#### ACADEMIC

mission  
motive  
responsible  
service  
value

### PART 2

#### CONTENT

ancient  
civilization  
empire  
object  
record  
site

#### ACADEMIC

courage  
official  
principle  
project  
risk