iLit Family Letter

Grade 8, Unit 3

Dear Parent or Caregiver:

In Unit 3 of the iLit program, your child is engaged in many learning activities that support mastery of the English Language Development Standards (ELD Standards) and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (CCSS for ELA). The ELD Standards and the CCSS for ELA are aligned. Accordingly, aligned ELD Standards and CCSS for ELA for this unit of instruction are cited together in parentheses within this letter. ELD Standards are cited first, and CCSS for ELA second.*

During Unit 3, students learn the characteristics of drama as they read the play *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (PI.8.6, RL.8.10). The play tells the story of an ongoing feud between the Capulet and Montague families that causes havoc in Verona. The Prince of Verona issues a mandate meant to prevent further violence between the families. Instead of peace, a series of tragic events followed, each one building on the last. Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet, the young lovers at the heart of the play, marry in secret because their love is forbidden. Before long, however, the feud between their families overpowers them.

As students read and discuss the play, they analyze the dialogue and plot, and determine the theme of the play (PI.8.6, RL.8.2, RL.8.3). They also cite textual evidence that supports analysis of the texts (PI.8.6, RL.8.1); use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words (PI.8.6, L.8.4); acquire and use grade-appropriate vocabulary (PI.8.12, L.8.6); and demonstrate an understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meaning (PI.8.8, L.8.5). In addition, they engage in collaborative discussions on a variety of topics, including the ideas they encounter in the plays (PI.8.1, PI.8.5, SL.8.1).

Students also complete a collaborative project that involves creating a dream scene and performing the scene for an audience (PI.8.9, SL.8.4). To represent their scene effectively, students analyze the impact of specific word choices (PI.8.8, RL.8.4) and adapt their speech to accurately portray the setting, characters, and events (PI.8.4 SL.8.6).

To support your child's learning during this unit, here are some suggestions for at-home activities:

- Ask your child to describe the play that is being read aloud in class. Inquire about the characters, setting, and plot. Ask if there is a character that reminds your child of someone he or she knows in real life and, if so, who that person is and how he or she and the character are alike.
- Ask your child to describe the collaborative unit project and the role he or she is taking. Ask how the project represents important characteristics of drama, such as characters, dialogue, and plot.
- Ask your child about the book that he or she is currently reading during independent reading time, including the reasons why your child chose the book. You may then wish to take your child to the local public library to find books on the same topic or by the same author.

Thank you for your support of your child's learning.

Sincerely,

*To read the cited English Language Development Standards, please refer to the ELD Standards document for your child's grade, which you can access using this link: https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx

To read the cited Common Core State Standards for ELA, please refer to the document "Common Core State Standards, English Language Arts and Literary/History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects." You can use the following link to access the document: http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/

iLit inspireLiteracy

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