iLit Family Letter

Grade 8, Unit 7

Dear Parent or Caregiver:

In Unit 7 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 7, students learn the characteristics of poetry as they read a variety of poems (PI.8.6; RL.8.10). Three of the poems play a prominent role in instruction. "Dutiful" by Margaret Atwood talks about social responsibility. "Million Man March" by Maya Angelou reflects on the importance of standing up for our beliefs. "Privacy" by Robert William Service addresses the importance of freedom and privacy.

As students read and discuss the poems, they identify the themes (PI.8.6; RL.8.2); 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 poems (PI.8.1, PI.8.5; SL.8.1).

Students also write a poem about an event in their lives and present their poem to an audience. (PI.8.9; SL.8.4) To prepare to write an engaging poem, students analyze the impact of word choices (PI.8.8; RL.8.4). When presenting their poem, they adapt their speech to reflect the tone of the poem (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 about the poems that he or she is reading in class. Encourage your child to describe the topic of one of the poems and talk about his or her feelings about the poem. You may wish to ask, for example, "Did the poem make you feel happy (sad, thoughtful, etc.)?"
- Read a poem to your child, have your child read a poem to you, or take turns reading a poem together. Then identify and discuss the theme of the poem.
- Ask your child about the topic of the poem he or she is writing and the poetic devices it includes. For example, ask if the poem includes rhyming words, repeated lines, descriptive or sensory words, metaphors, similes, and symbols. Encourage your child to rehearse the poem, with you as the audience.

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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