



Tips for Families

Level 5 Module 1 | *Handed Down*



We are excited about the skills and knowledge that your student will build in *Arts & Letters*™ level 5 module 1. Read on to learn more—and for ideas about how you can support learning outside of school.

What topic is my student studying?

Arts & Letters students build knowledge of important topics in history, science, and literature. They build their vocabulary and background knowledge so that they are ready to learn more. In level 5 module 1, *Handed Down*, students learn about two Native American nations, the Nez Perce and the Ojibwe, by exploring their shared beliefs, traditions, language, and ways of life. They answer the module’s Essential Question: How do communities sustain their cultures?

Support your student by asking questions like these about the topic:

- How would you describe your community?
- What are some of the beliefs, traditions, and ways of life in your community?

What is my student reading?

Arts & Letters students read books, poems, and articles. They study art. They watch knowledge-building videos. Together, these resources build students’ knowledge and literacy, including their understanding of different text genres. In level 5 module 1, students read and learn from this video, speech, and book:

- “Coyote and the Monster,” as told by J. R. Spencer
- excerpt from “Lincoln Hall Speech,” Chief Joseph
- *The Birchbark House*, Louise Erdrich

Support your student by talking about books and reading together at home.

What is my student writing?

In *Arts & Letters*, students write about what they are learning, and they build their skills by writing narratives, opinion essays, and informative essays. Each module focuses on one type of writing. In *Handed Down*, students plan, organize, and write informative paragraphs and essays to share knowledge of the Nez Perce and Ojibwe cultures.

Support your student’s writing by ensuring they have tools, technology, and opportunities to write. Engage in shared writing with your student by taking turns writing about a different tradition or belief from your family or community.

What vocabulary is my student learning?

Learning more words enables students to read, write, and speak at higher levels and about different topics.

In this module, your student will study and use these words:

- *aadizookaan* (a traditional story, in Ojibwe)
- awareness
- culture
- generation
- homeland
- justice
- natural resource
- sacred
- sustain
- tradition
- value

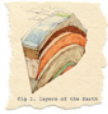
Engage your student in talking about and using these words and in exploring words more broadly. For example, invite your student to share the meanings of the words in the list. If you speak a language other than English, discuss how to say the words in another language.

What else can we do to continue learning outside of school?

If you speak a language other than English, engage your student in speaking, reading, and writing in your home language. Engage in some of the literacy activities above in that language.

Support your student in creating a list of Native American nations. Prompt your student to research the culture of one nation that interests them and then to share their findings.

Take turns during a family meal to each share a value or tradition that is important to your family or community.



Tips for Families

Level 5 Module 2 | *Extreme Settings*



We are excited about the skills and knowledge that your student will build in *Arts & Letters*™ level 5 module 2. Read on to learn more—and for ideas about how you can support learning outside of school.

What topic is my student studying?

Arts & Letters students build knowledge of important topics in history, science, and literature. They build their vocabulary and background knowledge so that they are ready to learn more. In level 5 module 2, *Extreme Settings*, students explore places that are dangerous or difficult for humans and consider how people respond to the challenges they face in such places. They answer the module’s Essential Question: How does an extreme setting affect a person?

Support your student by asking questions like these about the topic:

- In which of the following places could humans live without difficulty: cave, city, desert, farm, ocean, snow-covered mountain? Why do you think so?
- In which of those places would humans have difficulty living? Why do you think so?

What is my student reading?

Arts & Letters students read books, poems, and articles. They study art. They watch knowledge-building videos. Together, these resources build students’ knowledge and literacy, including their understanding of different text genres. In level 5 module 2, students read and learn from this short story and book:

- “All Summer in a Day,” Ray Bradbury
- *All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys’ Soccer Team*, Christina Soontornvat

Support your student by talking about books and reading together at home. The book that students read in this module describes a modern-day news story that captivated the world. Start the day with the news. Read and share print or online newspaper articles with your student.

What is my student writing?

In *Arts & Letters*, students write about what they are learning, and they build their skills by writing narratives, opinion essays, and informative essays. Each module focuses on one type of writing. In *Extreme Settings*, students plan, organize, and write opinion essays about topics related to extreme settings.

Support your student’s writing by ensuring they have tools, technology, and opportunities to write. Consider writing a note to your student in which you ask them a *would you rather* question about two different settings, such as in these two examples: Would you rather live in space or underwater? Would you rather live in a tree house or on a houseboat? Encourage them to write a note back to share their choice and the reasons for it.



What vocabulary is my student learning?

Learning more words enables students to read, write, and speak at higher levels and about different topics.

In this module, your student will study and use these words:

- cave
- collaboration
- environmental conditions
- extreme setting
- hardship
- karst
- panic
- survive
- vital

Engage your student in talking about and using these words and in exploring words more broadly. Invite your student to make a list of new and unknown words they encounter while reading or during conversations. Encourage your student to look up the meanings of these words in a dictionary.

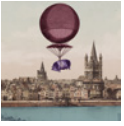
What else can we do to continue learning outside of school?

If you speak a language other than English, engage your student in speaking, reading, and writing in your home language. Engage in some of the literacy activities above in that language.

Visit your local library or search online with your student for examples of extreme environments across the globe, such as Antarctica, the Australian Outback, Dallol, Greenland, or the Sahara Desert. Discuss with your student what makes these places difficult for life to survive.

Tell your student about a time when you worked with others to solve a problem or to achieve a goal. Then invite your student to share an example of collaboration from their life—one they participated in or one they witnessed.





Tips for Families

Level 5 Module 3 | Wordplay



We are excited about the skills and knowledge that your student will build in *Arts & Letters*™ level 5 module 3. Read on to learn more—and for ideas about how you can support learning outside of school.

What topic is my student studying?

Arts & Letters students build knowledge of important topics in history, science, and literature. They build their vocabulary and background knowledge so that they are ready to learn more. In level 5 module 3, *Wordplay*, students examine how writers use words to amuse, humor, or puzzle their readers. They answer the module’s Essential Question: How and why do writers play with words?

Support your student by asking questions like these about the topic:

- What books, movies, or TV shows make you laugh? What makes them funny?
- How can words create humor?

What is my student reading?

Arts & Letters students read books, poems, and articles. They study art. They watch knowledge-building videos. Together, these resources build students’ knowledge and literacy, including their understanding of different text genres. In level 5 module 3, students read and learn from this video and book:

- “Who’s on First?” Bud Abbott and Lou Costello
- *The Phantom Tollbooth*, Norton Juster and Jules Feiffer

Support your student by talking about books and reading together at home. Create a space in your home for reading and set aside time where you and your student can read together.

What is my student writing?

In *Arts & Letters*, students write about what they are learning, and they build their skills by writing narratives, opinion essays, and informative essays. Each module focuses on one type of writing. In *Wordplay*, students plan, organize, and write stories related to *The Phantom Tollbooth*, using words cleverly or playfully.

Support your student’s writing by ensuring they have tools, technology, and opportunities to write. Suggest that your student share a joke or riddle with a relative or friend by writing a handwritten note, sending a text, or using email.



What vocabulary is my student learning?

Learning more words enables students to read, write, and speak at higher levels and about different topics.

In this module, your student will study and use these words:

- comedy
- idiom
- ignorance
- knowledge
- pun
- rhyme or reason
- surreal
- transformation
- wisdom
- wordplay

Engage your student in talking about and using these words and in exploring words more broadly. For example, invite your student to share the meanings of the words *idiom* and *pun*. Encourage them to provide an example for each word.

What else can we do to continue learning outside of school?

If you speak a language other than English, engage your student in speaking, reading, and writing in your home language. Engage in some of the literacy activities above in that language.

As a family, take turns listing favorite words and words you use frequently. Invite each person to select three or four words that they believe are the most valuable and then discuss your choices.

Play word games with your student. For example, take turns asking hink pink riddles, which are questions that you answer with a pair of rhyming words. To start, one person thinks of two rhyming words, such as *play day*. Then they ask others a question that provides a clue to the rhyming words, such as the following: What is 24 hours of fun? When someone answers the question correctly, that person creates the next hink pink riddle.





Tips for Families

Level 5 Module 4 | Windy City Poetry



We are excited about the skills and knowledge that your student will build in *Arts & Letters*™ level 5 module 4. Read on to learn more—and for ideas about how you can support learning outside of school.

What topic is my student studying?

Arts & Letters students build knowledge of important topics in history, science, and literature. They build their vocabulary and background knowledge so that they are ready to learn more. In level 5 module 4, *Windy City Poetry*, students learn about the craft of poetry and how Chicago poets used this art form to express joy and challenges during the Great Migration of the early 1900s. They answer the module's Essential Question: What is the value of poetry?

Support your student by asking questions like these about the topic:

- What do you know about poems?
- What are some poems you know? What are they about?

What is my student reading?

Arts & Letters students read books, poems, and articles. They study art. They watch knowledge-building videos. Together, these resources build students' knowledge and literacy, including their understanding of different text genres. In level 5 module 4, students read and learn from the following poems and book:

- “Evenin’ Air Blues,” Langston Hughes
- *Finding Langston*, Lesa Cline-Ransome
- “I Want to Write,” Margaret Walker
- “I dwell in Possibility,” Emily Dickinson

Support your student by talking about books and reading together at home. Visit a library with your student to check out their books of interest. Encourage your student to take their library book with them to appointments or other places where they will have to wait.

What is my student writing?

In *Arts & Letters*, students write about what they are learning, and they build their skills by writing narratives, opinion essays, and informative essays. In *Windy City Poetry*, the last module of the year, students integrate what they have learned about poetry, informative writing, and speaking and presenting. They research a Chicago-based poet and then plan and organize a presentation, sharing information through writing, speaking, and a visual display.

Support your student's writing by ensuring they have tools, technology, and opportunities to write. Invite your student to write a poem. For example, they could write a haiku, which is a three-line poem with five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second, and five syllables in the third.



What vocabulary is my student learning?

Learning more words enables students to read, write, and speak at higher levels and about different topics.

In this module, your student will study and use these words:

- biography
- the blues
- community
- influence
- migrate
- namesake
- poetry
- renaissance
- research

Engage your student in talking about and using these words and in exploring words more broadly. For example, discuss the meanings of the words *influence* and *research* with your student. Ask them how they would use these words in sentences, first as nouns and then as verbs.

What else can we do to continue learning outside of school?

If you speak a language other than English, engage your student in speaking, reading, and writing in your home language. Engage in some of the literacy activities above in that language.

Have a family poetry reading. Prior to the reading, work with your student to find poetry books in the library or individual poems online that family members would enjoy. Ask all family members to select one poem and then take turns reading the poems aloud.

Support your student in researching three to five popular tourist attractions that they would like to visit in the city of Chicago.

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