



Tips for Families

Level 8 Module 1 | *The Power of Poetry*



We are excited about the skills and knowledge that your student will build in *Arts & Letters*™ level 8 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 8 module 1, *The Power of Poetry*, students explore how narrative poetry richly conveys the human experience. Students examine texts that illuminate how authors merge stories and poetry to capture complex human experiences and to convey universal truths. They answer the module’s Essential Question: What are the intersections between stories and poetry?

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

- How does Kwame Alexander fuse poetry and storytelling?
- What are the essential elements of narrative poetry?

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 8 module 1, students read and learn from this book:

- *The Crossover*, Kwame Alexander

Support your student by talking about books and reading together at home. Encourage your student to find books that relate to their unique interests, such as basketball, poetry, relationships, or friendships.

What is my student writing?

In *Arts & Letters*, students write about what they are learning, and they build their skills by writing narratives, arguments, and informative essays. Each module focuses on one type of writing. In *The Power of Poetry*, students plan, organize, and write a narrative poem about a personal life event that they consider a crossover and a paragraph that explains their narrative and poetic choices.

Support your student’s writing by encouraging them to write and share poetry. Consider suggesting some of the formats explored in this module by poets Kwame Alexander, Julia Alvarez, or Edgar Allan Poe.



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 and terms:

- climax
- crossover
- exposition
- external conflict
- falling action
- figurative language
- form
- internal conflict
- narrative arc
- narrative poetry
- point of view
- resolution
- rising action
- verse

Engage your student in a dialogue in which you each try to use as many of the vocabulary words and terms as possible.

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.

This module features three prominent poets: Alexander, Alvarez, and Poe. Write a poem with your student that is inspired by one of these poets.

Plan a trip to the library with your student to look for novels in verse or other examples of narrative poetry.





Tips for Families

Level 8 Module 2 | *Montgomery*



We are excited about the skills and knowledge that your student will build in *Arts & Letters*™ level 8 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 8 module 2, *Montgomery*, students explore how the civil rights movement led to significant and lasting outcomes—such as the end of legal segregation—that moved American society closer to social equity for Black Americans. Revisiting such history provides an opportunity for students to analyze multiple perspectives on defining events in our society. In the module *Montgomery*, students examine how a range of individuals and groups worked together to pursue what was fair and just. They answer the module’s Essential Question: What does it mean to move toward justice?

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

- How did Claudette Colvin affect the start of the civil rights movement?
- Why was Montgomery so significant?

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 8 module 2, students read and learn from this book:

- *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*, Phillip Hoose

Encourage your student to read books that interest them related to the civil rights movement or social change in American history. Also encourage your student to read aloud to younger children at home or in the neighborhood.

What is my student writing?

In *Arts & Letters*, students write about what they are learning, and they build their skills by writing narratives, arguments, and informative essays. Each module focuses on one type of writing. In *Montgomery*, students plan, organize, and write a classification essay that explains three methods that Claudette Colvin and other figures employed to seek justice during the civil rights movement.

Claudette Colvin’s story is told through a series of interviews in addition to a first-person account. Support your student’s writing by encouraging your student to interview someone whom they are interested in learning more about and then to transcribe the interview. Also encourage your student to keep a journal to record their daily experiences from their first-person point of view.



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:

- activism
- civil rights
- discrimination
- integration
- justice
- racism
- rebellion
- resistance
- segregation

Engage your student in talking about and using these words and in exploring words more broadly. Invite your student to look up new and unfamiliar 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.

Montgomery is a city in Alabama, a southeast US state. Engage your student in learning about another US city near where you live.. Have your student look into the city's history, architecture, or renowned residents past and present.

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