

*my* Perspectives™  
**Home Connection**

## Highlights of Unit 4: Learning from Nature

*Dear Family,*

*In this unit, students will learn about protecting the planet, considering what kinds of things can be done to save our environment. Students will read a variety of texts and view media as they discuss the Essential Question for the unit.*

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

As a class, in small groups, and independently, students will work to answer the question *What is the relationship between people and nature?* Give your student the opportunity to continue the discussion at home.

#### TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- What are some of the ways you could answer the question *What is the relationship between people and nature?*
- What do these texts say about how the actions of people have affected nature? How does the natural environment affect the people living in it?
- Why do you think the subject of people’s interaction with nature is of such interest in the media and in books and films?

## UNIT 4 SELECTION TITLES, AUTHORS, GENRES



### WHOLE-CLASS LEARNING

<b>from <i>Silent Spring</i></b>	<i>Rachel Carson</i>	Descriptive Essay
<b>“How Grandmother Spider Stole the Sun”</b>	<i>Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac</i>	Myth
<b>“How Music Came to the World”</b>	<i>Dianne de Las Casas</i>	Myth



## PEER-GROUP LEARNING

<b>“Turtle Watchers”</b>	<i>Linda Hogan</i>	Lyric Poetry
<b>“Jaguar”</b>	<i>Francisco X. Alarcón</i>	Lyric Poetry
<b>“The Sparrow”</b>	<i>Paul Laurence Dunbar</i>	Lyric Poetry
<b>“Urban Farming Is Growing a Greener Future”</b>	<i>Hillary Schwei</i>	Media: Photo Gallery
<b>“Creature Comforts: Three Biology-Based Tips for Builders”</b>	<i>Mary Beth Cox</i>	Science Feature
<b>“He–y, Come On Ou–t!”</b>	<i>Shinichi Hoshi, translated by Stanleigh Jones</i>	Magical Realism



## INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Your student will choose one of the following to read independently. You may want to read it as well, so that you can discuss it together.

<b>from <i>My Side of the Mountain</i></b>	<i>Jean Craighead George</i>	Adventure Story
<b>from <i>An American Childhood</i></b>	<i>Annie Dillard</i>	Reflective Essay
<b>“A Young Tinkerer Builds a Windmill, Electrifying a Nation”</b>	<i>Sarah Childress</i>	Feature Article
<b>from <i>Of Wolves and Men</i></b>	<i>Barry Lopez</i>	Nature Writing

### TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- How did you choose which selection to read?
- What is the most interesting aspect of the relationship between people and nature that you learned from your reading?

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## PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will need to answer the question *What is the relationship between people and nature?* He or she will write a research-based essay, drawing on knowledge gained from the selections in this unit, as well as from the Performance Tasks he or she completed.

### **Whole-Class Learning Performance Task**

After completing the Whole-Class section of the unit, your student will learn how to put together a formal research paper. He or she will be writing a research paper to address the topic *What are specific ways in which animals and people communicate?*

### **Peer-Group Learning Performance Task**

After completing the Peer-Group section of the unit, your student will work with his or her group to research and develop a set of instructions for an activity that they will take turns presenting and following.

### **End-of-Unit Performance-Based Assessment**

At the end of the unit, your student will pull together his or her learning by completing a Performance-Based Assessment addressing the question *What is the relationship between people and nature?* In response to that question, he or she will write a research-based essay.

## STANDARDS

Activities and assignments in Unit 4 will help your student meet the following Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Here are some key standards students will work toward in this unit.

**Comprehension / Response**

- **3** Adjust fluency when reading grade-level text based on the reading purpose.
- **5.H** Synthesize information to create new understanding.

**Vocabulary / Word Study**

- **2.B** Use context such as contrast or cause and effect to clarify the meaning of words.
- **6.F** Respond using newly acquired vocabulary as appropriate.

**Analysis**

- **7.A** Infer multiple themes within and across texts using text evidence.
- **9.F** Analyze how the author's use of language contributes to mood, voice, and tone.

**Composition**

- **10.C** Revise drafts for clarity, development, organization, style, word choice, and sentence variety.
- **10.D.iv** Edit drafts using standard English conventions, including prepositions and prepositional phrases and their influence on subject-verb agreement.
- **12.I** Display academic citations and use source materials ethically.

**Inquiry and Research**

- **1.B** Follow and give complex oral instructions to perform specific tasks, answer questions, or solve problems.
- **12.H.i–ii** Examine sources for reliability, credibility, and bias; and faulty reasoning such as hyperbole, emotional appeals, and stereotype.

*Thank you for your continuing support!*