

Home Connection

Highlights of Unit 1: Growing Up

Dear Family,

In this unit, students will investigate some of the challenges and triumphs of growing up, considering the possibilities that lie ahead of them. Students will read a variety of texts, watch a video, 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 this question: *What are some of the challenges and triumphs of growing up?* 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 are some of the challenges and triumphs of growing up?*
- Do you learn more from success or failure? Does anyone learn without taking some risks?
- Why do you think coming-of-age stories are so popular in media and books?

UNIT 1 SELECTION TITLES, AUTHORS, GENRES



WHOLE-CLASS LEARNING

"My Achilles' Meal"	<i>Firoozeh Dumas</i>	Memoir
from Bad Boy	<i>Walter Dean Myers</i>	Memoir
"I Was a Skinny Tomboy Kid"	<i>Alma Luz Villanueva</i>	Poetry



PEER-GROUP LEARNING

The Moth Presents: Aleeza Kazmi	<i>Aleeza Kazmi</i>	Media: Oral Storytelling
"Prince Francis"	<i>Roddy Doyle</i>	Realistic Short Story
"Eleven"	<i>Sandra Cisneros</i>	Short Story



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.

“Oranges”	<i>Gary Soto</i>	Poetry
“The Boy Nobody Knew”	<i>Faith Ringgold</i>	Personal Essay
“The Horned Toad”	<i>Gerald Haslam</i>	Short Story
“Raymond’s Run”	<i>Toni Cade Bambara</i>	Realistic Fiction

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR STUDENT

- How did you choose which selection to read?
- What is the most interesting aspect of childhood that you learned from your reading?

PERFORMANCE TASKS AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

Your student will complete an array of performance tasks as they work through the unit, building confidence in their ability to share insights through individual and collaborative tasks. In addition, your student will practice taking multiple-choice tests as they complete each reading and the related skills lessons.



Whole-Class Learning Performance Task

After completing the Whole-Class section of the unit, students will learn how to write a personal narrative as they respond to this question: *What childhood event taught you a lesson about life?*



Peer-Group Learning Performance Task

After completing the Peer-Group section of the unit, your student will work with his or her group to plan, rehearse, and deliver a retelling of one of the selections in the unit.



Develop Your Perspective: Unit Projects

At the end of the unit, students are given an opportunity to complete a standards-aligned project as a way of sharing their learning. In this unit, students may elect to craft a social media post, create a playlist, or participate in a group discussion.



End-of-Unit Performance-Based Assessment

At the end of the unit, your student will share newfound insights by completing a Performance-Based Assessment answering this question: *What are the challenges and triumphs of growing up?* In response to that question, students will write a personal narrative.

Thank you for your continuing support!