

Dear Families,

We are beginning Unit 2 of the Connect4Learning® curriculum. This unit starts close to home with investigations of the outdoors and other familiar environments. Then, our focus will shift to the more exotic environment of a coral reef.

The term *environment* is used to describe the area in which people or animals live. The children will explore the components within an environment; resources that come from an environment; and how animals, plants, and earth features are connected. Comparing and contrasting is a key thinking skill that is presented throughout the unit but begins with children comparing and contrasting their own environment to that of a coral reef.

In this unit, children will engage in the process of predicting, observing, and recording through drawing and emergent writing. They will use predicting skills based on prior knowledge when engaging in read-alouds and other lessons. They will continue working on verbal counting and counting objects and will also begin to compare and contrast 2-D and 3-D shapes.

In literacy, they will work with rhyming words and the beginning sounds of words. As the classroom environment continues to develop, the children will build on their knowledge of rules and expectations as they interact with classmates. Social-emotional lessons and books will focus on identifying problems, choosing solutions, and coming up with their own novel solutions. By the end of Unit 2, the class will have worked cooperatively to create a class display of a coral reef. As a focused literacy lesson, they will write invitations to a scavenger hunt of the coral reef for their family, friends, and children in other classes.

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This will be a busy and exciting six weeks! We look forward to sharing the learning with you. Below are some suggestions on ways you can support all of this learning at home:

- When asking your child about his or her learning, focus on environments, including what we are learning about animals, plants, habitats, recycling, and the coral reef.
- Play fun rhyming games, and read books with rhymes. Rhyming is an important phonemic-awareness skill.
- Begin to point out various 2-D and 3-D shapes to your child in your home or community. Ask your child to observe and discuss the features of the shapes. For example: Rectangles have four sides, four angles, and four vertices (the points where the sides meet), and the opposite sides are the same lengths.
- When interacting with family members or friends, encourage your child to address problems with solutions he or she has learned in class, or encourage your child to think of new ways to solve problems.

Sincerely,