

Instructor Resource Guide: Family and Community Connections

The following activities and resources were selected to support classroom instruction and family literacy engagement. In addition to these instructor resources, each book in the collection has three short engagement activities for adults and families.

Suggestions for Using the Collection and Activities

- ◆ Explore the books in the *Family and Community Connections* collection by clicking on the book titles in the table below.
- ◆ Notice that the books in the collection provide text across a span of reading levels for adults and include books that are engaging for children and families to read together.
- ◆ Access the short, guided activities for each book that offer suggestions for both instructors and families. You may access the activities by clicking on the book titles in the table below. The activities are attached to each book.
- ◆ Allow learners individual time to access the application and explore the collection and guided activities.
- ◆ If using the reading collection for the first time, model how the age and language filters work in the application, and how to locate the search function, so books can be easily found.
- ◆ Decide how you will interact with the topic and curated text collection. This resource guide has suggestions to support in-person instruction and offers online resources for instructors and family engagement. Consider using the materials as starting points for larger units or creative activities to engage with topics and texts.
- ◆ Use this collection and guide to help develop and foster a reading life for your learners and their families!

Engaging Books for Adults		
Book Title	Author	Lexile Reading Level
<i>Horizontes abiertos</i>	Joelle Edouard	410-600
<i>Bright Horizons</i>	Joelle Edouard	610-800
<i>News for You: Un soldado ayuda a sanar a otros soldados heridos</i>	New Readers Press (ProLiteracy)	610-800

<i>News for You: Soldier Helps Other Wounded Troops Heal</i>	New Readers Press (ProLiteracy)	610-800
Engaging Books for Adults and Children		
<i>A Circle of Friends</i>	Giora Carmi	N/A
<i>Un día con mis tías / A Day with My Aunts</i>	Anilú Bernardo	English: 400-590 Spanish: 600-690
<i>Quinito's Neighborhood / El Vecindario de Quinito</i>	Ina Cumpiano	500
<i>These Are the People in Your Neighborhood</i>	Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy	410-600
<i>Between Night and Day</i>	Sean Julian	410-600
<i>Be a Bridge</i>	Irene Latham, Charles Waters	610

Activities to Support Instruction

To explore this topic, consider how you will build anticipation, background knowledge, and schema for your learners about topics regarding *Family and Community Connections*. To do this, consider addressing the following questions and prompts with your learners:

- Think about these words: family, community, connections.
 - What do these words mean to you?
 - Who are some family members that you feel connected to? What places in your community do you feel connected to? Why?
 - Why do you think it's important to have connections with family and community?
 - How do you define "family"? What qualities does a family have?

There are many ways to get your learners thinking, collaborating, and actively engaging with each other. Consider any of the following activities:

- **Blogging:** This strategy fosters collaboration and conversation among learners and helps learners develop connections between what they are reading to themselves, other texts, and the world around them. It will also foster and support technology use within the learning environment and help learners make connections with each other while working collaboratively. Explore a student blogging project by clicking [here](#). Learners will love sharing their thoughts and ideas in a fun way while working on writing, technology, and communication skills!

- **Heart Maps:** This activity helps thinking become visual and fosters individual participation from all learners. It also promotes learners working together to create a visual representation of their passions and connections.
- **Triangle-Square-Circle:** This strategy can be completed individually, in a small group, or in a whole-group structure. It fosters recall of prior knowledge, speaking and listening skills, and idea generation about any given topic. It also facilitates discussion and reflection of learning. This strategy will engage learners of all abilities using a variety of topics.
- **Assign Roles (Group Work):** This strategy is great for any type of group work discussion and fits any grade-level, content area, or learner ability. Learners will have a specific role within the group, but all roles must work together to create a cohesive unit. This strategy is great for both individual and small group accountability during collaboration and conversation.
- **Identity Charts:** This strategy will help learners collaborate and connect with one another. It will also foster deeper thinking about who and what they are connected to personally as well as with each other.

While you read the texts, you will want to support your learners with literacy strategies to foster their learning growth. Consider comprehension skills that learners will need to access the texts within the collection. It will also be important for learners to continue building background knowledge.

For example, if learners are reading the text, [*Bright Horizons: A Story of Friendship & Hope*](#), consider having them gather information about Florida, hurricanes, or other topics connected to natural disasters and how they impact a community. It will also be important for them to have informational context, so consider having them watch short clips of television shows or movies or read short stories to better understand the reading for deeper comprehension. The following resources and templates will help learners build literacy skills and comprehension as they read:

- **Story Maps:** This strategy will help learners organize, summarize, and visualize their thoughts and overall learning process. It will foster deeper thinking about a particular topic (fiction or non-fiction) and serves as a great graphic organizer for learners to refer back to. It supports writing skills and can be used as a formative assessment.
- **Inquiry Charts:** This strategy encourages learners to gather and analyze information from a number of sources. This strategy can be used with learners of all abilities in any content area.
- **Paragraph Shrinking:** This strategy strengthens comprehension by asking learners to re-read a text in order to build their comprehension. It also fosters collaboration among learners and builds summarization skills for all learners.

Online Resources to Support Instructors

The following resources will help instructors gather more ideas and insights for teaching texts within the *Family and Community Connections* collection:

- **[10 Powerful Community Building Ideas](#)**: This post will provide educators with examples and resources of activities for learners of all abilities that can be adapted into the learning environment to promote a sense of community, connection, and belonging.
- **[Family Engagement Plan](#)**: This resource from the Texas Education Agency is a great guide for educators and supports building learning environments that focus on community and family engagement. Consider using this as an exemplar to support your specific goals and needs.
- **[Community Is and Community Isn't](#)**: This resource from Facing History & Ourselves is designed for secondary learners to explore factors that make up a community.
- **[Exploring Community in Three Ways](#)**: This resource will foster deeper thinking for learners about community. It strengthens writing, analysis, and collaboration for learners of all abilities. This graphic organizer can be adapted with additional and/or different questions depending on the goals of the educator's discussion or lesson.

Suggestions for Using the Collection and Activities with Families

These suggestions may be shared directly with adult learners and their families, so they can explore this theme and books together.

- Choose a book to explore from the *Family and Community Connections* collection.
- Read and discuss the book with your child. Use *before*, *during*, and *after reading* questions to help your child make connections to themselves and to other parts of their life. The following are some examples:

□ **Before Reading**

Look at the front cover with your child. Explore the pictures and text, and ask them:

- Does this book remind you of anything?
- What do we already know about _____?
- What does the word "community" mean to you? What does it mean to be part of a community?
- Why do you think it is important to learn about community?
- What does the word "family" mean to you? What does it mean to be part of a family?
- Why do you think it is important to learn about different types of families?

□ **During Reading**

- If you were in this story, what do you think you would be hearing? Seeing? Tasting? Smelling? Feeling?
- What has happened to the character(s) so far?
- Have you been in a situation that is similar, or like, the situation the character in the story is in? What was the same for both of you? What was different?
- What is the problem this character is experiencing? How do you think it will turn out?
- What evidence do we know so far from the book?

□ **After Reading**

- Tell me the story in your own words.
 - What would you like to ask the author (or characters) of the book?
 - What did you like most about the story? Why?
 - Would you have done things in a different way than the character in the story did? If so, what would you have done differently?
 - Do you think it was a good ending? What would you have changed?
- After reading the story, you will notice activities at the bottom of the screen. Explore these activities with your child!

Expanded Lesson for Educators

The following is an example of an expanded lesson that instructors may find helpful for teaching texts within the *Family and Community Connections* collection. This lesson is an example based off the text, [Bright Horizons: A Story of Friendship & Hope](#), by Joelle Edouard.

□ **Before Reading**

- Explore the text features with your learners. Be sure they understand the features and how they can enhance the reading of the text.
- Ask your learners, “What do we already know about _____?” keeping in mind the topics the books will touch upon.
- Choose some key vocabulary words learners will come across in the text. Consider using a [SNAP vocabulary](#) lesson as a model for one or two of the words and then ask learners to do the same with other words you have identified.

□ **During Reading**

- Encourage learners to use [Power Notes](#) to deepen their comprehension about the topics in the text as they read. This will also foster writing skills, organize thinking, and synthesize learning!
 - Consider having learners circulate and have discussions in small groups using the [keep the discussion alive](#) handout. Encourage them to share and engage with each other while fostering reflections, asking questions, and collaborating.
 - Set up a [Flipgrid](#) for learners to engage with topics from the text.
- **After Reading**
- Ask learners to reflect on their learning from the beginning of the text to the end of the text. Consider having them share one key takeaway from the text.
 - Consider having learners work together to build a [story walk](#) to show their learning about a fiction or non-fiction topic. This is a wonderful activity to build engagement, foster community, and it is a great way to get learners involved in their community! It also will strengthen their comprehension, writing, and speaking and listening skills!
 - Ask learners to create a [one pager](#) with their biggest takeaways from the text using both words and images. Consider putting these into a collection either digitally or physically to showcase their learning.