
WIT & WISDOM PARENT TIP SHEET

WHAT IS MY SECOND GRADE STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 2?

Wit & Wisdom is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: A Season of Change

Module 2: The American West

Module 3: Civil Rights Heroes

Module 4: Good Eating

In this second module, *The American West*, we will study the growth that came from the struggle of early settlers and pioneers. By analyzing texts and art, students answer the question, *What was life like in the West for early Americans?*

OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE BOOKS:

Picture Books (Informational)

- *Journey of a Pioneer*, Patricia J. Murphy
- *Plains Indians*, Andrew Santella
- *The Buffalo Are Back*, Jean Craighead George

Picture Books (Literary)

- *John Henry*, Julius Lester
- *John Henry: An American Legend*, Ezra Jack Keats
- *Johnny Appleseed*, Steven Kellogg
- *The Legend of the Bluebonnet*, Tomie dePaola
- *The Story of Johnny Appleseed*, Alike

Poetry

- “Buffalo Dusk,” Carl Sandburg

OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THIS PAINTING:

- *Among the Sierra Nevada, California*, Albert Bierstadt

OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- How did the actions of American Indians and early Americans impact the prairie in the American West?
- What was life like for Plains Indians in the early American West?
- What was life like for pioneers in the early American West?
- What life lesson can we learn from the story of Bluebonnet?
- What life lesson can we learn from the story of Johnny Appleseed?
- How do different authors tell the story of John Henry's life?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME:

As you read with your second grade student, ask:

- *What's happening?*
- *What does a closer look at words and illustrations reveal about this text's deeper meaning?*

BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *New York's Bravest*, Mary Pope Osborne
- *Cowboys and Cowgirls: Yippee-Yay!*, Gail Gibbons
- *Locomotive*, Brian Floca
- *The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush*, Tomie dePaola
- *The Rough-Faced Girl*, Rafe Martin

IDEAS FOR TALKING ABOUT THE AMERICAN WEST:

Visit the library together. Ask the librarian to recommend a book on the American West, or select one of the titles in the list above. Take a look at the illustrations with your second grade student and ask:

- *What do you notice and wonder about this illustration?*
- *Who were the early Americans?*
- *How did they live their lives?*
- *How did they deal with the challenges of a developing nation?*
- *What was life like in the American West?*