



Use the different sections of this letter to begin conversations with your child about what he or she is learning.

Big Idea: Why do we need a government?

Ask your child how this week’s reading selection helps him or her answer this question.

This week’s reading selection: *The United States Capitol*

Summary: The U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. has a long and interesting history that begins with its initial construction under George Washington and includes partial destruction during the War of 1812, rebuilding and expansion in the early 1800s, and use as a military barracks during the Civil War. Today, the art-filled wings and chambers are toured by millions annually.

Essential Questions: What are symbols of our government? What do these symbols stand for? Why are they important?

► **DISCUSS** Washington, D.C. monuments and other landmarks with your child. Look for photographs and text descriptions online or in a book or encyclopedia.

Vocabulary

Focus: The words below appear in this week’s reading selection.

amateur	<i>adjective</i>	being a person who does something for pleasure, not as a profession
architecture	<i>noun</i>	buildings or structures planned by an architect
chamber	<i>noun</i>	a hall where a legal or governing body meets
persevere	<i>verb</i>	to continue despite difficulties
scarce	<i>adjective</i>	difficult to get or find
wing	<i>noun</i>	a structure attached to the side of a building

► **HELP** your child make flashcards to practice reading and defining these words.

Spelling

Focus: Your child will spell words with the same base and words with different shades of meaning.

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|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. knowledge | 6. direction | 11. luckily |
| 2. unlucky | 7. hurled | 12. tossed |
| 3. director | 8. expandable | 13. luckiest |
| 4. chuckled | 9. unknown | 14. directory |
| 5. roared | 10. expansive | 15. snickered |

Challenge

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. knowingly | 2. indirectly | 3. overexpansion |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|

► **HAVE** your child practice spelling these words.

Language Arts

Writing: Your child will revise, edit, and publish a business letter of request. He or she will then prewrite a summary of the history of the U.S. Capitol based on this week’s reading selection.

Grammar: Your child will also be learning about prepositions (*from, at, before*) and prepositional phrases (*from the right, at school, before dinner*).

► **ASK** your child to explain the parts of a business letter. Show him or her examples of business letters you have received.