

# Staying Connected

## Sending “You Can” letters to families

What better time of the year to touch base with families on what their children will be learning the second half of the year. It doesn't have to be specific but paint a general picture. A key element you could make is the specific and clear “You Can” section with concrete ideas of how families can help support their child's academic work at home and school.

Here is a **sample** of such a letter.

### **What Our Grade 2 Scholars Are Working On in READING**

- Building reading stamina. The goal is that by later in the year, kids will be able to read for 45 minutes at home or at school). Right now, our second graders are reading independently for close to 20 minutes each day.
- *Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency, and Vocabulary.*
  - We teach the importance of stopping to check for understanding (tell me what you just read).
  - We teach students cross-checking (Does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it make sense?).
  - We teach students to read fluently or smoothly so it sounds like talking. One way to practice is by repeated readings of one page of a book or of a poem.
  - We teach students to make note of interesting words and to try to use them in speaking and writing.

**You can:** talk with your children about what they are reading. If they get stuck on a word, you can ask them to try to figure it out by using “cross-checking.” You can ask your child to read out loud to you so they practice fluency. The research is clear: Children who read inside and outside of school daily make the most progress with reading and in all school subjects.

**You can:** help make sure your children read for at least 20-30 minutes each night and fill out their Home Reading Log.

*You can write this information for reading, math, writing, any subject you would like for parents to work at home with their students.*

Powerful Partnerships, Karen L. Mapp, Ilene Carver, and Jessica Lander

Create paper snowballs with a quote, a thank you, recognition, have a blank snowball stapled to the back and then have your students “throw a snowball” to a person of their choice. Then that person will write a note and “Throw a snowball” to another person. This creates a chain reaction of kindness in a fun way.

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