

## Home-School Connection

Family members can offer strong support in this unit. As students and their families consider their ancestry and heritage, they may want to peruse any family memorabilia, such as photographs, artifacts, mementos, or other special tokens. Memories and traditions can come to life with oral storytelling, and recollection of stories or anecdotes that have been passed down. Students can go through each page of the unit and view intergenerational pictures or other visuals that can prompt a discussion of identity and particular traits (physical or personality) that their family feels are special. In addition, students can view unit pages where students “meet a specialist” (e.g., *Meet a Geologist*, *Meet a Historian*, *Meet a Chef*) and rewrite several examples using members of their own families as experts in a special arena.

For multilingual learners with family members who do not speak English in the home, they can invite their family members along a picture walk of the unit and explain in their home language some important ideas they are learning, as well as some key vocabulary they can discuss in parallel. Families can reread some of the students’ favorite texts together. In the event students cannot take texts home, they can view the digital copy of the text online and point out the items mentioned above or if digital access is an issue, then specific pages with examples of a “Meet the ...,” and a page from a favorite reading can be photocopied. The most important thing is to activate the funds of knowledge each family possesses that relate to the themes, tasks, and topics.

## Supporting Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

There are several areas in Unit 1 where SLIFE will need additional support. Review the suggestions below with colleagues to find ways to meet the needs of individual students. Each student has his or her own story, unique situation, assets, and abilities to capitalize on.

### Stress

Asking students to learn about ancestry and heritage may trigger memories of trauma. Students who were born and/or raised in refugee camps might not have direct knowledge of their ancestry. Others may have faced oppression based on their heritage and feel hesitant or frightened to discuss it. Also, activating memories may prove traumatic for some learners who may have had to say good-bye to family members, special teachers, and life-long friends when they left their home countries. Students may be overwhelmed by the new environment and language. If students become emotional, allow them to simply listen to their classmates and rejoin activities when they feel ready.

### Frustration

Students may be excited about the opportunity to attend school on a regular basis or for the first time, but multilingual learners may find they are academically behind their English-speaking peers. This can cause frustration. Be patient and encourage students to be patient with themselves as acclimation and learning take time.

### Social-emotional support

Some schools have “Student Ambassadors” for the purpose of supporting SLIFE. If possible, have a peer serve as an ambassador. Invite the partners to be seated together to offer adolescent level paraphrasing and re-explaining of tasks in the unit. Select a peer who is supportive, encouraging, and culturally sensitive. Follow cultural norms when placing students in pairs. Social-emotional support is critical in this transition.

## Supporting Students with Disabilities

These support notes are meant to offer general suggestions. They should be considered neither comprehensive, nor label-based. As always, a student's unique needs drive any curricular accommodations and modifications (as delineated in their individual IEP or 504 plans).

### Visual-spatial Processing

This unit includes several visual supports that will require visual-spatial processing. Point out the many visual icons that offer organizational guidance, so students can use these as cues. Direct students to watch for the color highlighting of vocabulary, which is repeated throughout the unit. For other items, such as graphic organizers like the "Supporting Evidence Organizer," have students:

- point to each circle
- say each phrase
- trace each arrow with their finger, stopping on the central idea in the center of the web
- look at the paragraph below and verbalize how to use the reading strategy and trace each arrow with their finger

## Working with Video

The videos in this unit provide more ways to enhance language and literature instruction. The first video, **Bridges to the Theme**, introduces students to the language and concepts of identity. After playing the video, pause to highlight key images that reinforce the theme. Have students discuss what they see adding details based on the comments of their peers. The second video is the **Book Club**, where students view an academic discussion. Have students listen for key vocabulary from the reading strategy and the reading selection. Next, pause the video at a phrase that demonstrates academic discourse. Write it on the board or a sheet of paper (e.g., *These stories share a central idea that is...*). Note the sentence starters in the box or have students record these themselves. Then, have them repeat some of the sample

Consider photocopying pages containing multiple graphics, enlarging them, and cutting them into sections. Place each section separately on a sheet paper, so the image is the sole point of focus in the activity.

### Physical Disability

Be aware of any student with mobility issues, especially when small groups are asked to act things out or role play.

### Auditory Processing

Provide additional time for tasks where students listen to audio. Replay the audio multiple times, as needed.

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sentences aloud. They will use language in a similar manner when they have an added discussion later.

Finally, the **Bridges to Media** lesson provides many connections to the unit theme. Have students serve as a media director. Let them control the video display and have them pause at their favorite part. Ask students to explain what is shown, and discuss why it is their favorite scene, sharing the reasons they feel connected to that segment of the video.

EXPLORE AND LEARN

Reading: My Ancestors

- **Make predictions** Ask a student to read aloud the title.  
**Ask:** *Who is the author?* **Say:** *Point to his photo.* Draw students' attention to the painting. Ask several students to describe what they see. Then **ask:** *Who do you think Stephen wrote about?* Help students see that he wrote about three of his ancestors.
- **Read and comprehend literature** Play the audio or read aloud the memoir as students read along silently.
- **Make connections** Point out the quote included at the top. **Ask:** *Why do you think Stephen included this quote?* *Do you agree with Stephen's aunt?* *Do you think your ancestors' lives are important to your life?*
- **Use a glossary** Confirm understanding of the glossary terms by asking questions. For example: *Was Knoxville a big city when Pharoah went to live there?* (No, he was one of the first people to live there.) *If I ask you to tell me about your heritage, what information would you give?* (Usually you tell where you or your ancestors came from.)
- **Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text** Draw attention to the phrase *great-great-great-grandfather*. Elicit an explanation of the term or explain it by drawing a simple family tree on the board. Ask students if they can name their great-grandfather. Have students share with a partner how far back they can name their ancestors. Encourage them to sketch and label a family tree if possible.
- **Culture note** Be aware that many cultures do not label relatives in this way to indicate removal from immediate family. Instead, a grandfather can be many generations prior. If time allows, invite students to share how this is noted in their cultures.
- **Identify key words** Point out the highlighted word *pioneer*. Remind students that this is a vocabulary word they learned on page 5 and elicit its meaning. Ensure that students fully understand the meaning of *pioneer*.
- **Make connections** Elicit examples of famous people who are pioneers. If they need prompting, provide examples such as Daniel Boone (an early American explorer), Yuri Gagarin (the first person in space), Neil Armstrong (the first person to walk on the moon), Wangari Maathai (an early environmentalist and first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize), or Mary Wollstonecraft (an early women's rights advocate). After discussing pioneers, establish the definition of the word pioneer by asking students to reflect on what all of the people have in common. Ask students to share what they know about pioneers in small groups. Ask each group to identify one additional pioneer and explain why he or she is a pioneer.



10 UNIT 1 Honoring Our Ancestors

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Scaffold

After the first reading of *My Ancestors*, conduct an oral cloze reading of the article. Read the article out loud and leave out words and phrases. Pause after each omitted word and ask students (individually or as a group) to supply the missing word or phrase. Then, after each paragraph, have students work in pairs to restate the information. Listen in as students retell, providing more support as needed.

Amplify

Ask students to choose one pioneer that was discussed in class to do further research about. Explain that the pioneer can be either historical or current but should be a pioneer in an area that interests them. To provide structure to their research, provide the following questions and prompts. Then have students present the information they discover in small groups.

- Name of pioneer
- Biographical information (birth date and death date if applicable; birthplace)
- Accomplishments (Why is this person famous?)
- Why is this person a pioneer?
- Why does this person interest me?



# MY ANCESTORS

written by Stephen Von Mason

To our ancestors: May their spirits live forever. Let us always remember them by naming our children after them and researching our history, so that those who follow us may also know their **heritage**.

—Katherine Mae Mason-Chavis (my aunt)



Stephen Von Mason is a painter, printmaker, and fine art framer whose work is exhibited internationally. He was born in South Bend, Indiana, in 1954 and now lives in Oakland, California.

1 **T**his painting is for my ancestors. On the left is my great-great-great-grandfather, Pharoah Jackson Chesney. He was a **pioneer**—one of the first **settlers** of Knoxville, Tennessee. He lived to be 120 years old.

2 On the right is my uncle, Jordan Douglass Chavis, Jr. He was a famous musician, the leader of a big band called “The Tennessee Collegians” from Tennessee State University. He was a musical pioneer. He started Tennessee State’s music department.

3 In the center is my father, Cornelius Grant Mason, Jr., in the clothes he wore when he was a student pilot in the late 1940s. He, too, was a pioneer—part of the first group of Black pilots in America.

### Check In

- 1. **Facts** How was each of Stephen’s ancestors a pioneer?
- 2. **Infer** Why does the artist say the painting is for his ancestors?

**GLOSSARY** **heritage** where a person comes from; what ancestors give you  
**settlers** people who come to a new place to live

- **Analyze integrated visuals with text** Ask several students to explain how the painting supports the information in the text. Students may point out details such as the bomber jacket his father is wearing and the airplane in the sky. Point to the words written under the two men who are sitting. **Ask:** *What information does Stephen give about these men?* (These are names of other people in his family, similar to a family tree.) **Ask:** *Were your predictions about the painting correct?*
- **Probe and reflect on a reading** Ask students to engage in conversation about what they have read. Ask questions to stimulate ideas, for example: *What is the most remarkable information about Pharoah? About Jordan? About Cornelius?*
- **Read and comprehend informational text** Ask students to read the biography of Stephen Von Mason silently. Ask factual comprehension questions, such as *Where was he born?* (South Bend, Indiana) *Where does he live now?* (San Francisco, California) *What is his profession?* (painter, printmaker, and fine art framer) *Is he famous?* (Yes, his work is exhibited internationally.)

### PRACTICE

#### Check In

- **Analyze literature** Read aloud the questions. Have pairs ask each other the questions and reread to find the answers.
- **Make inferences** For question 2, make sure students understand that they will not find the answer directly in the text. They must think about what they have learned in the memoir and make a guess about the author’s feelings.
- **Identify text evidence** Ask students to identify the parts of the text that help them infer the answer to question 2. For example, they might say that it is clear Stephen thinks that his ancestors are important and wants to remember them because he includes the quote from his aunt.

**ANSWERS 1.** Pharoah was a pioneer because he was one of the first settlers of Knoxville, Tennessee. Jordan is a pioneer because he started Tennessee State’s music department. Cornelius is a pioneer because he was part of the first group of Black pilots in America. **2.** Von Mason created this painting to honor his ancestors. Through this painting, he keeps their spirits alive and helps people to remember them.

### COMMUNICATE

**Display a growth mindset** Arrange students in groups to discuss the following questions: *Who will be pioneers in the future? What will they be the first to do?* If students have trouble thinking of ideas, **ask:** *Are there places on Earth that we can still explore? Are there other places we can explore? What developments in technology will we make in the future? What do we still have to learn?*

### DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

#### Scaffold

After the first reading of the memoir, have students do a pair read, taking turns reading sentences aloud while the other follows along. Pair students with lower language development with students with higher language development so they can benefit from additional support with both comprehension and oral fluency. Monitor and provide feedback on pronunciation and intonation.

#### Amplify

Have students work in pairs to write three to five questions about additional information they would like to learn about Stephen’s ancestors. Write a model question on the board; for example: *What was Pharoah’s job?* Have pairs join another pair to ask their questions and make guesses about the answers.