

## Example Letters to Parents

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our class will be starting a social studies unit on Identity. As a part of this unit, we are going to look at each child's personal history. The unit introduces children to the concept of history as a story, and establishes student familiarity with documents and concepts of change between now and the past. By telling their own stories through pictures, maps, toys and various other articles from their lives, students may learn to perceive history as something fun and personally relevant. The unit relies largely on sharing and class discussions. In the beginning, the teacher will model by discussing their own story and how things have changed since they were children. We will examine sources, such as photos, documents, clothing and toys and teach the children how to ask thoughtful questions and participate in discussions.

In order to make this unit successful we are asking for your help in gathering and sending various sources to school (a list is included at the end of this letter). All items will be returned to you at the end of the unit and we will be very careful with the items. We realize that there are many different sorts of families, and we have tried to be sensitive to this issue. There also are questions on the family interview portion that relate to the parents. Please let your child's teacher know if you are uncomfortable in any way with answering any of the questions. Their purpose is to help your child learn history, not to put anyone on the spot.

We also understand that some children's past experiences may be frightening, or that foster and adopted children may have no keepsakes from the past. In these instances, please let us know and we will work with your family to provide alternative "artifacts" for your child and to avoid asking questions that could be upsetting to them. Thank you in advance for your help with this unit. We look forward to learning and celebrating the history of each child in our classes!

### **Ideas for Objects to Include in Plastic Bag**

*(Due to classroom space limitations, all objects must be able to fit into a small bag or a small shoebox)*

- Family Interview sheet, filled out (We encourage you to do this with your child.)
- Photo of child as an infant (under one year old)
- Photo of child as a toddler (1-3 years old)
- Photo of child's family
- A toy, book or artifact from when the child was a baby or toddler
- Letter or card family or child has received
- Article of baby clothing

- Photo of past or current home
- Photo of family on vacation or at play

*\*If you do not have old photos of your child, but you have some of either a sibling or parent, please send these photos instead.*

Thank you,

[Name of Teacher(s)]

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have learned how we are part of our family and part of our classroom. We are now going to be looking at how we are part of our [Name of City/Town] community. Please help your child think about all the things that he/she is involved in throughout the community. For example, your child may be involved in some kind of sport or go to a certain church.

Please help your child fill out the attached sheet and send it back by [DATE].

Thank You,  
[Name of Teacher(s)]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Community Involvement

Please complete the sentence and have your child attach or draw a picture of them being a part of our community.

In [Name of City/Town], I \_\_\_\_\_

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