



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: *How Congress Works*

**Summary:** Readers of this informational text will learn about the legislative branch of the U.S. government, the rules for electing senators and representatives, the duties of Congress, and the chambers of the U.S. Capitol building.

**Essential Questions:** What could happen if one person had too much power in the government? Who tells our government what to do? How?

► **DISCUSS** with your child how the system of checks and balances works. Talk about why such a safeguard is necessary in a democratic form of government.

## Vocabulary

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

<b>current</b>	<i>adjective</i>	happening or occurring now
<b>debate</b>	<i>verb</i>	to discuss the merits of something in a meeting
<b>fairly</b>	<i>adverb</i>	honestly or justly
<b>interpret</b>	<i>verb</i>	to explain the meaning of
<b>process</b>	<i>noun</i>	a series of actions performed to make or do something
<b>proposed</b>	<i>verb</i>	suggested something for consideration

► **READ** aloud a definition, and ask your child to identify the correct vocabulary word.

## Language Arts

**Writing:** Your child will revise, edit, and publish a response to a nonfiction text. He or she will then learn about the purposes and format of a business letter before planning and drafting a letter of request.

**Grammar:** Your child will also be learning about forms of the verb *to be* (*am, is, are, were*) and other irregular verbs (*eat/ate, fly/flew, bring/brought*).

► **ASK** your child to write you a short letter or e-mail message. Together, identify the irregular verbs in the text.