Scholarship Stewards

A LITERACY FOUNDATION

community & giving.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN · AGES 8–12

A Family Conversation Guide

As we prepare for *A Morning of Giving*, we invite families to explore with their children what brings people together and the ways we care for one another. These talking points and questions offer a starting place. Begin with examples that feel familiar to your child and let the conversation grow from there.

a morning of giving.

Here are a few ways to share with your child why families are coming together, and how your family will be part of it.

> *We're going to a gathering called A Morning of Giving. Families are getting together to help bring more books to local schools. We're joining them because we want to help children discover new stories and enjoy reading.*

> *When we choose a book to share, we're thinking about another child who might enjoy reading it. We may never meet that child, but we can still pick something we think they'd like.*

> *We're not the only family choosing a book. Other families are picking books, too. When everyone contributes, the schools can add many more books to their collections than one family could provide alone.*

TRY TOGETHER

Explore the Scholarship Stewards book wish list and invite your child to help select a book to contribute.

1. Which book would you like to choose?
2. What interests you about it?
3. What do you think another child might enjoy about this book?

01 What is a community?

Communities connect people in different ways.

We belong to many communities. Some examples are neighborhoods, sports teams, schools, and groups of people who share an interest. Sometimes we're connected by where we live, and other times by experiences or activities we enjoy together.

We don't have to know everyone in a community to be part of it. People who live in the same city may never meet, but they still share public spaces, use local services, and make decisions that affect one another.

People bring different experiences and perspectives.

Every community includes people with different backgrounds, interests, and ways of thinking. We might learn about a holiday we've never celebrated or discover a new activity through a neighbor or friend.

A classmate might teach you a game from where their family grew up, and now it's something your whole class plays at recess.

Communities depend on people's contributions.

One example is a neighborhood farmers market. Farmers and vendors bring things to sell, organizers coordinate the event, and families come to shop.

Contributions don't always involve a job or money. Children can contribute by welcoming someone new, helping with activities, or taking care of places they use with others.

People can help shape their communities.

The choices we make in shared spaces can affect other people. For example, leaving our bikes on the sidewalk might make it difficult for someone using a wheelchair or pushing a stroller to pass by.

Communities also make decisions about shared spaces and services. If a library is planning new events, the families who use it may have ideas about what would be most useful.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. What communities do you feel part of, and what makes you feel connected to them?
2. What have you learned from someone with a different background or experience?
3. What are some ways children can contribute to their communities?

02 Differences in opportunities

“ Communities create opportunities to learn.

Learning happens in many places throughout our communities. Libraries offer books to explore, museums introduce us to history and science, and recreation centers provide opportunities to develop new skills like dance or basketball.

Schools are another important part of our communities. Books and classroom materials help students discover new things and explore what they’re curious about.

“ Access to learning resources can differ.

Not every community has access to the same learning opportunities. One neighborhood might have a recreation center offering many sports, while another has fewer programs available. These differences can affect what families can easily participate in.

Schools also have different resources available to them. One school might regularly add new books to its library, while another may need to spread those purchases over several years.

Public schools receive funding, or money, through government systems, and decisions made by state and local leaders influence how resources are given out.

“ Fairness means considering access and needs.

Fairness doesn’t always mean giving everyone exactly the same thing. A classroom of beginning readers and a classroom of older students may benefit from very different books.

It’s also important to consider what resources are already available. A school that hasn’t been able to update its library in a long time may need more than one with a large collection that is often updated.

Thinking about fairness means asking questions about what people need.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. Where are some places in our community where you enjoy learning something new?
2. What’s something you wish every school had? Why?
3. Is giving every school the same books always fair? Why or why not?
4. If you were choosing books for another school, what would you want to know first?

03 What can we do together?

“ Meaningful change begins with understanding.

Sometimes we notice something we’d like to improve. Maybe students want a quieter place to read, or families would like safer places to ride bicycles.

Before deciding what to do, it helps to listen to the people who we want to help. They might have different needs or ideas that we haven’t thought of. Understanding helps us make more thoughtful decisions.

“ We can contribute in different ways.

Making a difference doesn’t always require donating money. Children can contribute their time, ideas, or skills. They can help organize a book exchange or design a poster for an event.

Speaking up can also be a way to help. Sharing an idea with a teacher, writing to a local leader, or teaching others about a problem are ways people can contribute to their communities.

“ Working together can create greater change.

Some goals are difficult for one person to accomplish alone. Imagine students wanted to create a reading club at school. They might work with a teacher to find a meeting space, invite classmates to participate, and decide together which books to read.

When people organize around a shared goal, it’s called **collective action**. It might involve neighbors working to improve a public space, families supporting a school library, or students asking for changes to a school rule.

“ Making a difference is an ongoing process.

Some projects have an immediate result, like adding books to a library or planting a community garden. But keeping those resources useful often requires continued effort.

Communities change, and so do people’s interests and needs. After a book drive, for example, we can check back with the school to see which books students are reading and what they’d like next.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. What’s something you’d like to improve at school or in our neighborhood?
2. Who would you want to talk to before deciding how to help?
3. What could you and your friends accomplish together that might be difficult to do alone?

Our Community, Our Ideas



What do you appreciate about your community?



Is there something you wish could be better in your community?



What are some things you could do to help your community?

