

About MAEC

MAEC is an education non-profit dedicated to increasing access to high-quality education for racially, culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse learners. We work to promote excellence and equity in education to achieve social justice.

About CAFE

CAFE is the Statewide Family Engagement Center for the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania. We help build sustainable infrastructure to support healthy family, student, and community engagement. CAFE serves all educators – from state agencies to school districts to school staff and early care providers – and families by developing resources, co-designing learning opportunities, and fostering dialogue designed to help families connect with local schools and support their children's development and learning.

Authorship

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Disclaimer

MAEC is committed to the sharing of information regarding issues of equity in education. The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education under the Statewide Family Engagement Centers Program. However, the contents of this document do not necessarily represent the policy or views of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Department of Education or federal government, generally.

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Suggested citation: Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc. (2021). 21st-Century Learning At Home: A guide for families and caregivers of English Learners to support project-based learning at home. Bethesda, MD. Edition: February 2022



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Today's K-12 English Learners need 21st-Century Skills to help them succeed in school and tackle real-world problems. This guide provides project-based learning tools for families and caregivers to teach children these essential skills.

What are 21st-Century Skills?

Communication - Exchange of ideas and information through listening, speaking, writing, art, and technology

Collaboration - Working cooperatively with families, friends, and people in your community

Creativity - Coming up with new ideas or different solutions

Critical thinking - Understanding big ideas and using strategies to solve problems

Battelle for Kids. (n.d.). 21st century learning for early childhood framework. Retrieved December 11, 2021, from http://static.battelleforkids.org/documents/p21/P21EarlyChildhoodFramework.pdf.

What is project-based learning?

Project-based learning is an educational approach where children create authentic products that can be used or presented at home or with their communities. Project-based learning also helps children and families identify and solve real-world problems, ask and answer questions, reflect on their thinking, and experiment with new ways of thinking.

Home languages, culture, families, communities, and everyday resources equip English Learners with the foundation needed to engage in project-based learning. Engaging in project-based learning also helps English Learners develop the four domains of language: **speaking**, **listening**, **reading**, **and writing**.









Families and caregivers can play a critical role in supporting the development of 21st-Century Skills by connecting with your child's teachers and school and providing authentic learning experiences at home. You may want to connect with teachers to see if these projects align with what your child is learning in the classroom. This guide promotes communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking while engaging with a child's culture, family background, and home languages.

Target audience

This guide is for families and caregivers to support and lead English Learners through projects at home. The activities, however, are appropriate for all children and families to do together. Children can complete projects individually or in groups, with more adult support for younger children.

In this guide, the term "family member" includes parents, extended family, and caregivers. We recognize that families are defined in many ways.

Organization of this guide

There are six projects. Each project has the following sections:

- Purpose describes the project, recommended age range, learning goals, and other suggestions.
- **Getting started** lists materials, timelines, and additional suggestions to plan and start the project. Most of the materials can be found in the home and community. The timelines tell how long it will take to complete different parts of the project. It also lists the appropriate worksheets for that project.
 - o **A suggestion on choosing materials:** When gathering materials for each activity, use materials representing the children family, culture, and community history. Books, music, videos, and other materials can be in their home language or English. These materials will help children learn more about their families and cultures while developing different domains of language.
- **Questions for children** provides questions and ideas to consider before starting the project. You can also ask these questions to prompt your child's thinking as they work on the project.
- **Instructions** provide steps to complete each activity. Each step contains a list of questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills and an example conversation between the caregiver and child that includes the questions.
- Additional activities and resources include more activities, ideas, and online resources to keep the learning and fun going.



Purpose

For this project, the child will write a cookbook of their favorite family recipes, including their history and stories. They will research the ingredients and processes used to create the dishes and make a cookbook they can share with others.

Recommended age

4 years old and up

Project suggestions

- **For older children:** They can conduct independent research or create their recipes.
- **If working with more than one child:** They can create different recipes for the same book or make their own cookbook.

Getting started

Materials

Here are items you need for the project:

- Recipes from your family or culture
- Interviews of family members to learn more about recipes and the stories behind them
- Ingredients and cookware to make the dishes
- Books and online resources to research the ingredients
- Cookbooks, cooking shows, or other resources to find examples
- Photos or drawings of the dishes that go with the recipes
- Paper, pencils, crayons, markers, or any other materials

Suggested timeline

Each recipe can take 1-2 days for a total of 5-7 days, depending on how many recipes the child wants to include in the cookbook.

Worksheets

Use the following worksheets to help organize the project:

- "Identifying Special Recipes"
- "Recipe Interview Notes"
- "Recipe Research"
- "Creating your Cookbook"

Questions for children

Ask your child the following questions throughout the project to help them learn and apply 21st-Century Skills.

- What is one of your favorite recipes?
- Where does this recipe come from?
- Why is this recipe important or special to you?
- What memories does this recipe remind you of?
- · Where does each ingredient come from?
- · How are these ingredients made?
- How is the recipe prepared? What skills are needed to prepare this recipe?
- How could you change this recipe so that it becomes your own?
- How can you share this recipe and the stories behind it with others?
- · How do food, recipes, and cooking help build community?

Instructions

Follow the steps below to plan your conversation and complete the activities with your child. Each step has an example script and questions to help you through the project. Questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills are in **bold**. You can also use the worksheets at the end of this project for additional support.

Step 1: Identify special recipes

Tell your child they will be historians and chefs by making a cookbook of special recipes from their family and culture. Ask them to think about their favorite dishes and recipes, any stories about them, and what makes them special. Instruct the child to record the recipe and its story and include it in the cookbook.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: For this project, we're going to be real-life chefs and historians! We make so many delicious dishes from recipes passed down through different family members. Some of the recipes we make are from our culture, but they might be new to our family. We'll choose some of your favorite special recipes and put them into our very own cookbook that we can share with friends and family! What is one of your favorite recipes? Where does this recipe come from?

CHILD: I like when we make rice and peas, like the ones we have when we visit our family in Jamaica. It's my favorite because they're yummy. This recipe comes from our family. Great-grandma made the recipe, but Auntie told me rice and peas are eaten all over Jamaica.

FAMILY MEMBER: Why is this recipe important or special to you? What memories does it remind you of?

CHILD: I remember when I made it with my auntie, she let me pick the peas and clean them. I was so proud that I got to help in the kitchen even though I'm just a kid. Auntie told me our family had made this recipe for a long time.

FAMILY MEMBER: That's a great recipe! Now, you should record the recipe and the story behind it in our cookbook. You can draw, write, or record what you just shared.



Step 2: Learn the stories behind the recipes

Share stories with your child about different dishes and recipes from your family or culture that are special to you. You can interview your family members to learn more about the recipes and the stories behind them. Prompt your child to ask questions like the ones you asked. Ask the child to record the recipe and story behind it and add it to the cookbook.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: I've asked you questions about your favorite recipe and what makes it special. Now, you'll have to ask me questions to learn about the recipes that I like and their special stories. **Try asking your first question.**

CHILD: OK, my first question is, what is your favorite recipe, and where does it come from?

FAMILY MEMBER: My favorite recipe is fried cassava. It comes from my family in Cuba, where I grew up. **Now, ask me another question to learn more about the recipe.**

CHILD: My next question is, why is this recipe important or special to you? What memories does it remind you of?

FAMILY MEMBER: This recipe is special because I helped grow the main ingredient with my brothers and sisters. I never liked to cook it when I was little, but I remember going into the fields to pick it from the ground. It was a lot of work but tastes very good. Now that you learned more about the recipe and what makes it special, record what you learned about the story behind the recipe. I will help you write down the recipe with instructions and ingredients. You can also call some of our other family members and get more recipes for our family history cookbook.

Step 3: Research recipe ingredients and steps

As your child learns recipes from their family or culture, encourage them to research the ingredients and skills used to prepare the recipes and include them in their cookbook.

Example script and questions 1

FAMILY MEMBER: Let's research more about the ingredients in the rice and peas recipe you like. **Where do the ingredients come from?** Let's research the ingredients and the stories behind the recipes and add them to our cookbook.

CHILD: While studying the history of rice and peas, I learned that the peas used in Jamaica are called pigeon or gungo peas. They are found in many countries in the Caribbean but first came from India, and then East Africa, over 3,000 years ago!

FAMILY MEMBER: Wow! I didn't know that. How are the ingredients grown or produced?

CHILD: The peas are grown in tropical farms, mainly in India and East Africa, but they also grow in the Caribbean, like in Trinidad and Tobago.

FAMILY MEMBER: This is great information. Let's record it and add it to our cookbook so others know more about where the ingredients in our favorite recipes come from.

Example script and questions 2

FAMILY MEMBER: Now that you've chosen your recipes and learned more about them, let's put together our cookbook! How would you like to put together your cookbook? Would you like to record it as a video or write and draw? Would you like to do both?

CHILD: I want to write and draw our cookbook first, then record us cooking one of the recipes!

Step 4: Share your cookbook

Help your child edit the book so that it is clear and shareable with others. Encourage them to use different pictures, drawings, and other visuals that show the dish, ingredients, and the story that goes with the recipe. Ask the child to reflect on the importance of food in building community and how they would share this cookbook with others.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: This is a great cookbook! Now that you created it, how can you share these recipes and the stories behind them?

CHILD: I could make copies of the book and send it to others in our family and community. I could also record some of the recipes like a cooking show!

FAMILY MEMBER: Those are great ideas, and we can share this with others by making copies. We can also record a few recipes to share with others. How do food, recipes, and cooking help us build a community?

CHILD: I think cooking and recording recipes helps us build a community because we can learn more about our families and cultures and share this with others. It can help us connect with other people and also share some of our favorite foods!

Additional activities and resources

Here are additional ideas that you can use when exploring culture, family history, and food with your child:

- Record your own cooking show! Have your child write a script of what they will say in their cooking show and record them making one of the recipes they researched.
- Learn how to start a community dinner group to share food and recipes with others from the Family Dinner Project. (https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/)
- Explore how different ingredients have arrived in the U.S. using the food timeline site. (https://www.foodtimeline.org)



worksneet 1: Identifying Special Recipes				
Our special family recipe is called:				
Why is this recipe special to you or your family?				
Draw				
Write				

Worksheet 2: Recipe Interview Notes

Name of person I'm interviewing:
Examples of questions you can ask:
 Why is this recipe important to you or our family? Is this dish made and eaten for any special occasions? What is the history of this dish or recipe? Who in the family is famous for making this recipe? When did our family start making this recipe? What traditions are connected to this recipe?
Use this space to write down any information you learned during the interview.

Worksheet 3: Recipe Research Ingredients in this recipe: **Draw**

Worksheet 3: Recipe Research continued

Sample research questions:

- What is the history of the ingredients?
- Where do the ingredients come from?
- What is the history of this recipe?
- What are the steps for making this recipe?

Use this space to write down any information you learned during your research.				
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Worksheet 4: Creating your Cookbook What is the name of the dish? Why is this recipe special or important? Ingredients **Directions**



Purpose

In this project, you and your child will get to create your very own museum at home. Museums are places that hold artifacts: an object, art, or material that can teach us about science, culture, and history. Creating an athome museum can help your child learn more about their culture and family history and teach others about it in a creative way.

Recommended age

4 years old and up

Project suggestions

- **For older children:** They can conduct independent research and create an online digital museum exhibit.
- **If working with more than one child:** They can work together on the same exhibit or work on separate exhibits for the same digital museum.

Getting started

Materials

You can help your child create a museum by using various objects and materials from family, home life, culture, and community. Here are some examples of useful items you can gather **before** starting the project:

- Discover a children's museum through the Find a Children's Museum website. (https://findachildrensmuseum.org/)
- Pick a virtual museum tour from *Time Out* travel magazine website. (https://www.timeout.com/travel/virtual-museum-tours)
- Artwork
- Crafts such as ceramics or wooden objects
- Photographs
- Books, magazines, and newspapers about your culture or community
- Household items and family artifacts
- · Music that relates to your family, home life, culture, and community
- Fabrics, clothes, or textiles
- Toys from childhood
- Paper, pencils, crayons, markers, clay, cardboard, fabric, or other materials

Vocabulary

Artifact: An object made by a human being, typically an item of cultural or historical interest.

Suggested timeline

Each exhibit can take 1-2 days for a total of 5-7 days for five exhibits.

Worksheets

Use the following worksheets to help organize the project:

- "Collecting Artifacts"
- "Museum Interview Notes"
- "Artifact Research Notes"
- "Museum Planning and Labels"

Questions for children

Ask your child the following questions to help them learn and apply 21st-Century Skills.

- Why might museums be important?
- What is the artifact?
- What is the story behind the artifact?
- Why is this artifact important to me, my family, or my culture?
- How was this artifact made, or how might it have been made?
- How can you use this artifact?
- How does this artifact make you feel? Why?
- · How can you create another artifact like this?
- How would you teach others about this artifact?
- Where have I seen other examples of this artifact?
- Why should you this artifact to your museum?

Instructions

Follow the steps below to plan your conversation and complete the activities with your child. Each step has an example script and questions to help you through the project. Questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills are in **bold**. You can also use the worksheets at the end of this project for additional support.

Step 1: Introduce museums and build excitement

Begin by asking your child to think back to when they visited a museum. You can also visit a museum virtually or in person. Ask your child to think about why museums might be important. Ask them to think about what they see, hear, or feel in the different museums they visited virtually or in person. Let them know they'll have a chance to create their museum with special artifacts for this project!

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: I'm so excited about our project today because we're going to create our own museum here at home! Museums are places that show objects, art, and other materials that teach us about science, art, cultures, and history. **Why might museums be important?**

CHILD: I went to a museum with my class for a school trip! I think they're important because they can teach us about other people, history, our culture, or the cultures of other people.

Step 2: Gather and teach about artifacts

Before starting this step, gather artifacts such as art, photos, fabrics, and other items from your culture and family that your child might want to put in their museum. Explain the artifact's history and why it is important to you, your family history, or your culture. Ask your child to look at the object and tell you what they notice and what story they think the object is telling. Ask your child to write down the information to display it next to the artifacts in their museum.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Some artifacts are made by people special to you because they are a part of your history or culture. I have a few different artifacts from my childhood and our culture that I would like to talk to you about. Afterward, you can choose some of these objects to put in your museum! Let's look at this basket. I made this basket when I was a child after my uncle showed me how to weave different kinds of plants and strings. **Why do you think this artifact is important to me?**

CHILD: I think it's important to you because you made it with your uncle.

FAMILY MEMBER: That's right! He helped me make this basket, and I keep it because it reminds me of him and because I'm proud that I made it myself. **How might this basket be used?**

CHILD: You could use it to store things or for decoration. You could also use it to carry small things.

FAMILY MEMBER: Those are great ideas. I use this basket to store small buttons and thread. There is usually a small card next to the artifacts in museums that describe the artifact, where it came from, and how it's used. **Check out an example on the Museum Planning Page worksheet!** Let's write down some of the things we just talked about so you can put them next to the artifact later.

Step 3: Explore artifacts

Let your child explore other objects, art, or music from their family and culture to add to their museum. Ask them what they notice about the objects and encourage them to ask questions to learn more. You can give your child examples of questions to ask.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: I see that you picked an artifact from your room. **What is the artifact? What is the story behind it?**

CHILD: This is a shirt that I got from my cousin in Cuba. She told me it's called a *guayabera* and it is made by hand. I mostly wear it for special occasions or when we go to visit our family in Cuba. It has special designs made with thread and it's very light, so I can stay cool in the warm weather.

FAMILY MEMBER: That's a great artifact. Let's write that down so you can put the description in your museum next to this artifact.

Step 4: Plan and make your museum

Ask your child if they want to create a museum throughout the home so family members can walk through (if space allows) or create a mini-museum using a large box, container, or a digital museum. Check out the additional activities and resources below for more fun ideas! Encourage your child to include the objects you've discussed in their museum and to create other art, photos, or objects to add to the museum.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: We have a few artifacts now for your museum. **How can you create your artifact for the museum?**

CHILD: I can make some art for the museum that shows our family in our community, like when we help take care of the community garden at the park.

FAMILY MEMBER: Why should this artifact go in your museum?

CHILD: This artifact should go in the museum because it shows us doing something special that makes us feel good and that helping others is important in our family.

FAMILY MEMBER: How might you teach other people about this artifact?

CHILD: I could teach other people about this artifact by displaying the drawing and writing a description that tells a story about it like I just told you.

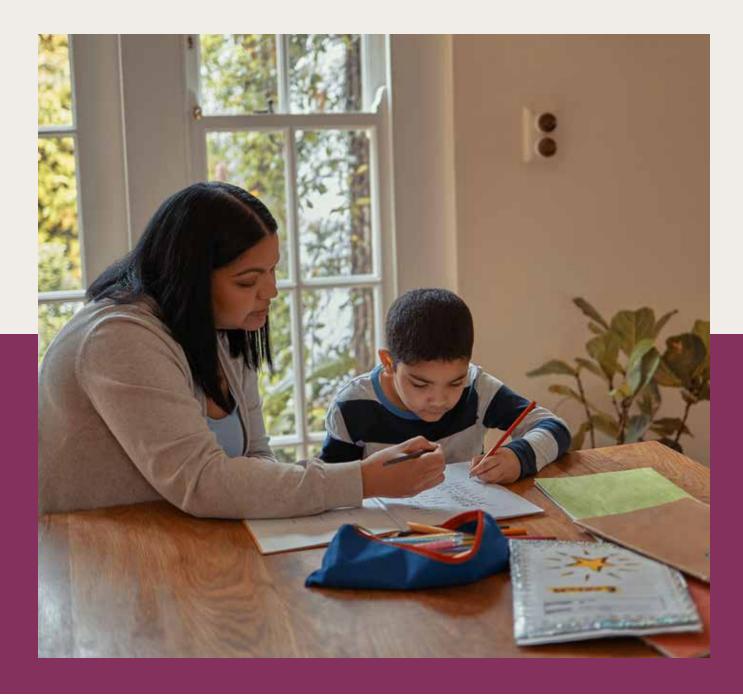
Step 5: Open your museum to visitors

Encourage your child to invite other family members and friends to visit their museum in person or virtually by recording it on video. Help your child display their objects and creations with the descriptions they wrote so others can read and learn about the artifacts in the museum.

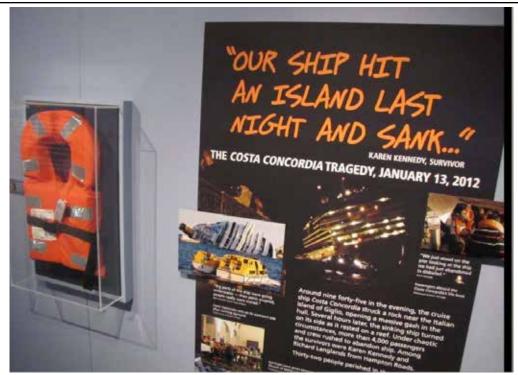
Additional activities and resources

Create more artwork and artifacts for your home museum using great art project ideas from the following sites:

- Keeping Creative at Home: How to transform your home into a museum, from A New Direction. (https:// anewdirection.org.uk/blog/keeping-creative-at-home-how-to-transform-your-home-into-a-museum)
- Build an online museum at the Scratch coding site. (https://scratch.mit.edu/)
- Create a virtual museum with Google Slides. (http://google.com/slides)
- Make virtual reality exhibitions by Artsteps. (https://www.artsteps.com/)
- Get ideas from Art Making at Home on the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston website. (https://mfa.org/ programs/community-programs/art-making-at-home)



Worksheet 1: Collecting Artifacts



Example of a museum exhibit with description label

Name of your artifact:

Why did you choose this artifa	act?	

Worksheet 1: Collecting Artifacts continued

Questions to help you think about the artifact:

- What is this artifact?
- Where did the artifact come from? What is the story behind it?
- Why is this artifact important to you, your family, or your culture?
- How is this artifact used, or how might it be used?
- How was this artifact made, or how might it have been made?
- What story does this artifact tell you?
- How does this artifact make you feel? Why?

Use this space to write what you learned about the artifact.				

Worksheet 2: Museum Interview Notes

Name of person I'm interviewing:
Examples of questions you can ask:
 What is this artifact? Where did the artifact come from? What is the story behind it? Why is this artifact important to you, your family, or your culture? How is this artifact used, or how might it be used? How was this artifact made, or how might it have been made? What story might this artifact tell you? How does this artifact make you feel? Why? Use this space to write down any information you learn during the interview.

Worksheet 3: Museum Artifact Research

Research Questions:

- Where did the artifact come from? What is the story behind it?
- How is this artifact used, or how might it be used?
- How was this artifact made, or how might it have been made?

Use this space to write down any information you learned during your research.				

Worksheet 4: Museum Planning Page Create a map or sketch of your exhibits

Worksheet 4: Museum Planning Page continued

Create labels for your exhibits and cut them out. The labels should include:

- 1. Title of artifact and date it was made: Make an educated guess if you are not sure.
- 2. Materials used to produce the artifact and size: Materials are what the artifact is made of. Then you need to measure the size of the artifact in inches by height and width (sometimes referred to as length). If the artifact is three-dimensional, measure the depth as well.
- 3. Brief description of what the object is used for.
 Here is an example of an artifact and a label that has these 3 parts:



Rolling Luggage 22" x 14" x 9" Made from polyester. This is for storing clothes while traveling.

Label for Artifact	



Solving Problems at Home

Purpose

In this project, you and your child will find a problem around your home and come up with creative solutions to solve it. When children address real-life problems, they learn to think creatively and begin to understand that their learning matters.

Recommended age

8 years old and up

Project suggestions

- **For older children:** Have them identify a problem and explore possible solutions more independently.
- **If working with more than one child:** They can work together on a single project as a team.

Getting started

Before starting, help your child think about problems around the home they could help solve. Below is a list of issues you can explore with your child. Feel free to explore a different problem with your child that is not on this list. This is their chance to get creative.

Examples of problems

- Food and water waste
- Not being able to see family members or friends during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Not getting enough exercise or playtime
- Communicating with friends who speak a different language

Materials

You can help your child learn more about the problem they want to solve using different objects and materials from your home and culture. Here are some examples of items you can gather after your child chooses the problem they want to solve:

- · Family stories
- Photographs
- Books about the problem or possible solutions
- Household items and family artifacts
- Music and TV shows about the problem or other possible solutions

Suggested timeline

This project can take 7-10 days. Each step can take 1-2 days. Some problem-solving projects may take more time depending on the problem and the number of solutions your child tries.

Worksheets

Use the following worksheets to help organize the project:

- · "Identifying Problems"
- "Brainstorming Solutions"
- "Planning and Experimenting"
- "Revising and Reflecting"

Questions for children

Ask your child the following questions throughout the project to help them learn and apply 21st-Century Skills.

- What are some problems you find at home?
- Which problem do you want to solve and why?
- How do these problems affect you and your family?
- Why is this problem important?
- Why is this problem happening? What is the cause?
- Why might this problem be hard to solve?
- What are some different ways to solve this problem?
- Which solution is the best one and why?
- Did your solution work? Why or Why not?
- How can you improve the solution?

Instructions

Follow the steps below to plan your conversation and complete the activities with your child. Each step has an example script and questions to help you through the project. Questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills are in **bold.** You can also use the worksheets at the end of this project for additional support.

Step 1: Identify a problem

Begin by telling your child that you and they will work together as problem-solvers! Explain that anyone, including kids and adults, can help solve real-life problems; this will get your child excited to solve a problem in their home. Ask your child what problems they see in their home and how does it affect them and the rest of the family. Ask your child why this problem matters and why it is happening. Your child can record different problems by writing, drawing, taking pictures, or making a recording of them.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Today, we're going to work together to look for problems at home that we can solve! Let's walk around the house and find any possible problems. **What are some problems you find around your home?**

CHILD: One problem I found is that we waste a lot of food during mealtime. I also notice that we don't spend a lot of time together because we're busy and we watch too much TV.

FAMILY MEMBER: Let's record those so we can keep track of them. **You can draw and write, or even video** record with my phone. Which problem do you want to solve and why?

CHILD: I can write down the problems and draw pictures to match! I want to solve the food waste problem because it can help us save money and help nature.

FAMILY MEMBER: Great idea! How does this problem affect us? Why is this problem important?

CHILD: This problem affects our family because we lose the money used to pay for wasted food. It also matters because wasting food hurts the environment.

FAMILY MEMBER: That is so true! Solving this problem would help your family and our environment. **Let's** add that to your writing and drawings. Now that you found a problem, we need to think about why it is happening.

CHILD: This problem is happening because we get bored with the foods we eat, or we don't use all parts of the food.

Step 2: Brainstorm solutions

After your child has chosen a problem they want to solve, help your child explore possible solutions. Let your child know that they will need to try many different solutions, and some might not work. There's something to learn from each solution we try out. Encourage your child to talk to different family members, read about the problem, look for information using the internet, watch TV shows, and use different materials around the home that can help them solve the problem. The entire family can participate together and decide how to approach the problem. Your child can record different ideas about possible solutions by writing, drawing, taking pictures, or recording.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Now that you found a problem, we need to think about how we can solve it. **What are different ways to solve this problem?**

CHILD: We could solve this problem by buying less food, eating smaller portions, or reusing the food in different ways so we don't get bored with the food and have leftovers.

FAMILY MEMBER: Those all sound like solutions we can try. Which solution is the best one and why?

CHILD: I want to use food in different ways because that sounds like something fun we can do together.

Step 3: Plan and experiment with solutions

Ask your child to think about different solutions that might help solve this problem. Remind them that it's OK if one of their solutions does not work and encourage them to think of different solutions. Your child can work with other family members to create and try out solutions. You can help your child come up with answers by asking guiding questions instead of giving them the solution. Your child should try out their solutions and record what happens.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: What are some creative ways you can think of to use food?

CHILD: I noticed that we always have leftover seeds, fruits, and vegetables. We could plant the seeds and put pieces of vegetables in the soil like you used to do on the farm where you grew up. We can also come up with new recipes we haven't tried before.

FAMILY MEMBER: Those sound like creative ideas. When I was a child, we used parts of food for special projects too. What will we need to solve the problem?

CHILD: We will need some recipes. Maybe we have family recipes or ideas for cooking in new ways! We can call grandma to get ideas since she is a great cook! We can also plant a garden with the seeds.

FAMILY MEMBER: We don't have space for a garden outside. What else can you use to plant the seeds?

CHILD: We can use an egg carton or cut up some milk cartons and put soil and fruit seeds to make a garden in our kitchen!

Step 4: Revise and reflect

As your child experiments with different solutions, ask them to reflect on whether the solution works. Your child should decide if the problem has been solved or consider another solution.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: We tried some new family recipes and also made a small garden using different materials. **Did these solutions work? Why or why not?**

CHILD: The new recipes definitely worked! We got to try new foods from grandma's recipes, and it was so good! That's why we don't have any leftovers! The garden did not work well because we couldn't use all of the food waste for planting. We only used the seeds.

FAMILY MEMBER: How can you make the solution better?

CHILD: We could research what else we can use vegetable scraps for since we can't use them to grow more vegetables.

FAMILY MEMBER: We can definitely try that.

Step 5: Share your solution

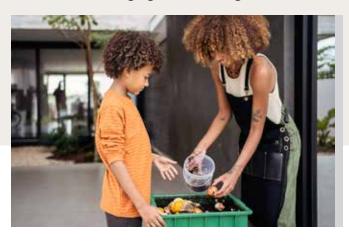
Once your child finds the best solution for the problem, they should present the solution to the whole family! They can reflect on what they learned about solving problems and coming up with creative solutions.

Additional activities and resources

Here are more resources to help build problem-solving skills:

- Learn at-home family projects from *PBL Works*. (https://www.pblworks.org/blog/pbl-home-3-ideas-projects-families-can-do)
- Find research projects using *Kiddle*, a kid-safe search engine. (https://www.kiddle.co)
- "Kidtopia" is a directory and search engine and recommended by educators. (https://kidtopia.info/)
- Create virtual solutions to problems using the Scratch coding site. (https://scratch.mit.edu/)
- Watch shows addressing the impact of food waste at "Kids Go Green: Reducing Food Waste" from PBS. (https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/ee18-sci-foodwst/kids-go-green-reducing-food-waste/)





Worksheet 1: Identifying problems

Here are some questions to help you think about the problem. Draw and write your thinking.

- What are some problems I see in my home?
- How do these problems affect my family or me?
- Why is this problem important?
- Why is this problem happening? What is the cause?
- Why might this problem be hard to solve?

Draw		

Worksheet 2: Brainstorming Solutions

Think of creative solutions to solve the problem. What ideas do you have?							
Praw							

Worksheet 3: Planning and Experimenting

Talk with your family about what you want to try. Find some materials you can use to try out one of your ideas Write down the materials here and plan how you will try out your solution.							
Draw							

Worksheet 4: Revising and Reflecting

After trying out one of your solutions, ask yourself these questions: Did my solution work? Why or why not? How can I improve my solution? You can draw and write your ideas and plan for how you will make changes to your solution: **Draw**



Purpose

In this project, you and your child will learn what makes a good leader by researching leaders in your family and community. Children will also explore how they can become leaders.

Recommended age

8 years old and up

Project suggestions

- For older children: Adapt this project so that older children conduct their research and interviews. You can help create a plan for how they will be leaders in their home and community.
- If working with more than one child: Children can research different leaders separately or work together and research the same leader.

Getting started

Materials

Here are items you will need to gather **before** you start the project with your child:

- Books, magazines, and newspapers about leaders
- Movies or TV shows about leaders
- Photographs of leaders, which can include family members and friends
- Family heirlooms or artifacts from, or related to, a leader in the family
- Paper, pencils, crayons, markers, or other materials your child can use to record new information

Suggested timeline

This project can take 5-7 days. Each step can take 1-2 days. As children develop a plan to become leaders, they may want to start a different project.

Worksheets

Use the following worksheets to help organize the project:

- "Leaders Brainstorming"
- "Leader Interview Notes"
- "Researching Leaders"
- "Planning to be a Leader"

Questions for children

Ask your child the following questions throughout the project to help them learn and apply 21st-Century Skills.

- Who are leaders in your family or community that you look up to?
- Why do you look up to that person?
- What do they do or say that makes them a good leader?
- How do they show leadership in their community?
- What qualities should good leaders have?
- Why is it important to be a good leader?
- How can you be a good leader?
- Why is it important to learn about leadership?
- Why is it important to have leaders who share a similar identity to you, your family, or community?



Instructions

Follow the steps below to plan your conversation and complete the activities with your child. Each step has an example script and questions to help you through the project. Questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills are in **bold**. You can also use the worksheets at the end of this project for additional support.

Step 1: Brainstorm about leaders

Begin by telling your child they will learn about great leaders in their family or community that we look up to or appreciate. Ask your child to think about someone they consider to be a leader; this person can be from their family, community, or someone who shares part of their identity, like language or culture. Ask your child to think about why this person is a leader and record their response with drawings, writing, or recordings.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Today, we're going to learn about leaders in our family community and how you can be a leader for others too! Leaders are important because they can help others. Who are leaders in your family or community that you look up to? Why do you look up to that person?

CHILD: My uncle is a good leader who I look up to. I look up to him because he helps other people in our town and family.

FAMILY MEMBER: What makes him a good leader? How does he show his leadership?

CHILD: He shows his leadership in the community by volunteering at the community center in town. He is generous, kind, and a good listener.

FAMILY MEMBER: Those are great ideas about leadership. Let's record what you are learning about leaders and leadership so you can become a leader too! Would you like to draw, write, or record?

Step 2: Research leaders

Have your child investigate other leaders in the family or community who share their language, culture, or background. Your child can learn about these leaders through conversations or interviews with others, books, videos, and online research.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Now, you're going to learn about leaders in your family and community. Think about the qualities of a good leader. You will record what you learn about good leaders and leadership. You can draw, write, or even record what you learn on video.

CHILD: I learned that my cousin is a leader. She is a cook and shows her leadership by helping train the new cooks to do their jobs well. I think good leaders need to be caring for others and helpful.

Step 3: Reflect on the qualities of a good leader

As your child learns about different leaders and what it means to be a good leader, ask them to think about how they can be leaders in their family or community. They can record their ideas in writing, drawing, or video recordings.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: You learned about different leaders in our family and community and how they show their leadership. **How can you be a leader?**

CHILD: I can be a leader at home by helping my little sister do her homework and setting a good example for her with schoolwork and chores.

FAMILY MEMBER: That is a great example! Let's add that to your leadership recordings. **Would you like to write, draw, or record a video?**

Step 4: Be a leader

After helping your child learn that they can be a leader, help them plan how they will show their leadership and take action at home or in their community. Then, ask the child to reflect on the importance of being a good leader.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: You've learned so much about being a good leader and already have plans for how you will show your leadership. **Why is it important to learn about and show leadership?**

CHILD: It's important to learn about and show leadership to help your family and community. Good leaders listen to others, help other people become leaders, and take action to make our lives better.

Additional activities and resources

Here are additional resources to learn more about leaders and leadership with your child:

- Here are leadership activities and games from the UNICEF Kid Power site. (https://www.unicefkidpower.org/ leadership-activities-for-kids/)
- Read this Kids Post article,"12 kids who are changing their communities and our world" from the Washington Post. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/ kidspost/2020/04/11/12-kids-who-are-changing-theircommunities-our-world/)
- "10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism" is an article for educators from the Anti-Defamation League. (https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in-activism)
- "How to Make a 2020 Vision Board for Kids" from Parents magazine. (https://www.parents.com/kids/development/how-to-make-a-vision-board-for-kids/)



Worksheet 1: Leaders Brainstorming Page

Questions to help you think about leaders:

- Who is a leader in your family or community that you look up to? Why do you look up to them?
- What makes this person a good leader? What do they do or say that makes them a good leader?
- How do they show their leadership in their community?

Write or draw your ideas here.		
Draw		

Worksheet 2: Leader Interview Notes

Name of the person I'm interviewing:_ **Examples of questions you can ask:** • What are the qualities of a good leader? • How are you a leader? • What do you do to be a leader for others? • Why is it important to be a good leader? Use this space to write down any information you learn during the interview.

Worksheet 3: Researching Leaders

Name of the leader I am researching:
Research Questions:
 Where is this person from? What is their connection to my family, community, or culture? What makes this person a good leader? What do they do or say that makes them a good leader? How do they show their leadership in their community?
Use this space to write down any information you learned during your research.

Worksheet 4: Planning to be a Leader

Here are some questions to help you think about how you can be a leader and make a plan to show you are a leader in your home or community:

- What are the qualities of a good leader?
- Why is it important to be a good leader?
- How can you be a good leader?
- Why is it important to learn about leadership?
- Why is it important to have leaders who have a similar identity to you, your family, or your community?

Write or draw your ideas here.		
Draw		



Purpose

For this project, children will learn about themselves and their social and cultural identities. To do this, you will facilitate conversations and fun activities where children reflect on their families, language, and culture.

Recommended age

10 years old and up

Project suggestions

- **For older children:** Modify the project so that older children conduct their own research and interviews. You can encourage them to learn about identities other than their own.
- **If working with more than one child:** Each child can explore their own identities or parts of their identities they share with others in the group.

Getting started

Materials

Children can learn more about their identity and who they are by using different objects and materials from their home and culture. Here are some items you can gather before starting the activity:

Family stories (collected through interviews from different family members)

- Photographs
- Books about family culture or country of origin, written the student's home language or English
- Family heirlooms or other family artifacts
- Music and TV shows that reflect culture or identity in a child home language or English
- Family recipes

Vocabulary

Identity: Who you are, which is shaped by culture, language, family history, ability, gender, etc.

Suggested timeline

This project can take 5-8 days to complete. Each step can take 1-2 days. The amount of time depends on the number of interviews and how long it takes to conduct research.

Worksheets

Use the following worksheets to help organize the project:

- "My Identity Chart"
- "Identity Interview Notes"
- "Identity Research"
- "I Am Poem"
- "Bio Poem"

Questions for children

Ask your child the following questions throughout the project to help them learn and apply 21st-Century Skills.

- How do you identify yourself? Is it the same way others recognize you?
- What are your identities?
- What makes you unique or special?
- What identities do you share with your family? What identities are different from them?
- Why is it important to learn about your identity and the identities of others?
- Where do you find examples of your identity (at school, in the community, in books, music, and TV)? How does this make you feel?
- How can you respect people's identities? Why is this important?
- How can you teach others about your identities and learn more about theirs?



Instructions

Follow the steps below to plan your conversation and complete the activities with your child. Each step has an example script and questions to help you through the project. Questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills are in **bold**. You can also use the worksheets at the end of this project for additional support.

Step 1: Talk about your identity

Begin by telling your child that everyone is special in different ways, and today's project will help them explore what makes everyone unique. Then, ask your child to think about what makes them special or unique. You can explain what identity means using the key vocabulary definition.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Tell me about yourself. What makes you unique or special?

CHILD: I am Carlos. I am 8 years old, I am a boy, and I like to play video games.

FAMILY MEMBER: That's great! Who you are is called your **identity**. Your identity is made up of many things, like what you told me. The languages you speak, culture, where you come from, and family history are different parts of your identity.

Step 2: Make an identity chart

Teach your child more about identity by talking about your own identity. Find similarities and differences between your identities like culture, language, country of origin, etc.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: I'm going to tell you about my identity. I am a man, a Spanish-speaker, Guatemalan, a son, and a father. I'm going to write these parts of my identity on our identity chart. Now, let's think about your identity and put it on the chart too. **How are our identities similar and different?**

CHILD: We are both boys and speak Spanish, but I speak English more. I was born in America.

Step 3: Research parts of your identity

Ask your child if they want to learn more about their identity by interviewing different family members, looking at family photographs, listening to music, or viewing TV shows in their home language. Let your child know they can choose to record what they learned with drawings, writing, or video.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: You can learn more about other parts of your identity by talking to family members like your aunts, uncles, and grandparents. You can also learn more about your identity by looking at pictures of your family and where they came from. I have some pictures for you to look at. **What do you notice about the family and where they came from in these pictures? How does that relate to your identity?**

CHILD: I notice that our family lived on a farm. I see plants and animals in a field. There are also pictures of my cousins and grandmother. This connects to my identity because I'm part Guatemalan too and come from a big family that lives in another country.

FAMILY MEMBER: That's true. You don't have any brothers or sisters, but you do have a big family, which is part of your identity. **How can you show this part of your identity in your drawings?**

Step 4: Share your identity

Ask the child, "Based on what you've learned, who are you?" or "Tell me about your identity." Have the child record elements of their identity using drawings, writing, video, or sound. Help your child to brainstorm ways they could share what they learned about their identities with others. Your child can create an "I Am" or "Bio" poem to share their identity.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: You learned a lot about identity over the last few days. **Tell me more about who you are** and your identity from what you learned.

CHILD: I learned that I am Guatemalan and American. I am also a Spanish speaker. I'm also part of a big family and have lots of cousins, aunts, and uncles.

FAMILY MEMBER: Let's add that to your "all about me book" you've been working on!

Step 5: Reflect on the importance of identity

Ask the child, "Based on what you've learned, why is important to know about our own identity and the identities of others?"

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Why do you think it's important to know about your identity?

CHILD: I think it's important because it helps you learn more about who you are and where you come from. I also learned that I didn't know that much about some family members, like grandma!

FAMILY MEMBER: Why do you think it's important to learn about other people's identities?

CHILD: I think it's important because you can learn about where they come from and how we are similar and different. You can also see why their identity and culture are so cool!

Additional activities and resources

Here are other ideas to explore more about identity with your child:

- Use interview questions from *Read Write Think* to learn about family and friends. (https://www.readwritethink.org/sites/default/files/resources/printouts/PossibleinterviewQ.pdf)
- Write an original or "I Am" poem about the person they interviewed.
- Create a collage of family photos and artifacts.
- Conduct a presentation on your identity for family members, friends, or other community members.
- Read diverse books that can make them feel good and gain a love for reading. Check different diverse books on *We Need Diverse Books* website. (https://diversebooks.org/)

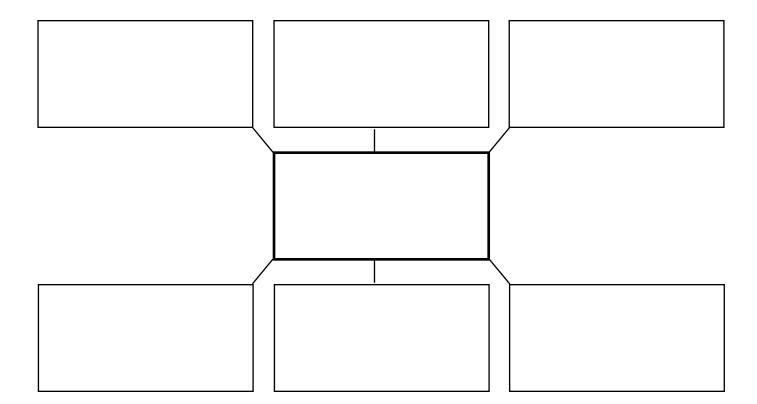
Worksheet 1: My Identity Chart

Our identities are made up of many different experiences and parts of our lives. Here are some examples:

- Role in a family (e.g., daughter, sister, mother)
- Hobbies and interests (e.g., guitar player, football fan)
- Background (e.g., religion, language, race, nationality, hometown, place of birth)
- Physical characteristics

Your Identity Chart:

Write your name in the center and write different parts of your identity in the other boxes.



Worksheet 2: Identity Interview Notes

Worksheet 3: Identity Research

Choose different parts of your identity to research.

Example Research Topics:

- Background including culture, language, religion, and race
- Hobbies

Use this space to write down any information you learned during your research.

Worksheet 4: I Am Poem

After learning more about your identity, follow these directions to write an I Am Poem. You can write the poem on the next page:

FIRST STANZA

I am (2 special characteristics you have)
I wonder (something of curiosity)
I hear (an imaginary sound)
I see (an imaginary sight)
I want (an actual desire)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

SECOND STANZA

I pretend (something you actually pretend to do)
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch (an imaginary touch)
I worry (something that bothers you)
I cry (something that makes you sad)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

THIRD STANZA

I understand (something that is true)
I say (something you believe in)
I dream (something you dream about)
I try (something you really make an effort to do)
I hope (something you actually hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

Worksheet 4: I Am Poem continued

FIRST STANZA
l am
I wonder
I hear
I see
l want
I am
SECOND STANZA
I pretend
I feel
I touch
I worry
l cry
I am
THIRD STANZA
I understand
l say
I dream
I try
I hope
Lam

Worksheet 5: Bio Poem

A Bio Poem is all about you. After learning more about your identity, follow these directions and write your poem on the next page:

Line 1: Your first name

Line 2: Four descriptive traits

Line 3: Sibling/Friend/Child (choose a role in your family) of...

Line 4: Lover of (people or ideas)

Line 5: Who feels...

Line 6: Who needs...

Line 7: Who gives...

Line 8: Who fears...

Line 9: Who would like to see...

Line 10: Resident of (your city)

Line 11: Your last name (or choose another name to describe yourself)



Example

Lisa
Outgoing, Opinionated, Direct, Go-getter
Sibling of no one
Lover of David, Kelsey, Kaitlyn
Who feels the need to take care of people
Who needs more sleep and more time
Who gives all she can to others
Who fears losing someone she loves
Who would like to see a better place
Resident of Illinois
Mom

Worksheet 5: Bio Poem continued

Line 1: Your first name Line 2: Four descriptive traits Line 3: Sibling/Friend/Child (choose a role in your family) of Line 4: Lover of (people or ideas) Line 5: Who feels Line 6: Who needs Line 7: Who gives Line 7: Who gives Line 9: Who would like to see Line 9: Who would like to sae Line 10: Resident of (your city) Line 11: Your last name



Purpose

For this project, you and your child will create stories told from different perspectives. Exploring stories from different perspectives helps your child analyze how people think or feel differently about a situation and to think creatively.

Recommended age

10 years old and up

Project suggestions

- **For older children:** Adapt this project for older children by asking them to choose books at their reading level and encourage them to write down their stories or record them digitally.
- If working with more than one child: They can work together and use the same story or select their own.

Getting started

Materials

Here are some items you will need to gather before starting the project:

- Search and download a copy of The Ant and the Grasshopper from the Library of Congress site.
- To find other stories:
 - o Choose a story from this booklist about different perspectives from *Read Write Think*. (https://www.readwritethink.org/sites/default/files/resources/lesson-docs/30792ChildrensBooks.pdf)
 - o Pick eBooks from different countries and languages on the International Children's Digital Library website. (http://childrenslibrary.org/)
 - o For younger children, find videos of children's books read aloud at the Just Books Read Aloud website. (https://www.justbooksreadaloud.com/)
- Movies or TV shows that relate to your family, home life, culture, or community in the children's home language or English
- Paper, pencils, crayons, markers, any other materials for creating stories to share with others

Vocabulary

Perspective: A person's point of view, the way they understand things or their opinion about an event, person, story, or thing.

Suggested timeline

This project can be completed over 5-7 days. Each step can take 1-2 days.

Worksheets

Use the following worksheets to help organize the project:

- "Thinking about Perspectives"
- "Creating your own Story"

Questions for children

Ask your child the following questions throughout the project to help them learn and apply 21st-Century Skills.

- Who is telling the story or sharing the event?
- Whose perspective is shared?
- What is the storyteller doing or saying? Why?
- · How does the storyteller feel or think?
- Does the storyteller include everything that's happening?
- Are there any other storytellers? How do they feel?
- How would the story change if someone else (like you or a family member) told it?
- · Why is it important to think about different perspectives?
- How can we understand other people's perspectives?
- Does this story relate to you, your family, community or culture? How?

Instructions

Follow the steps below to plan your conversation and complete the activities with your child. Each step has an example script and questions to help you through the project. Questions that relate to 21st-Century Skills are in **bold**. You can also use the worksheets at the end of this project for additional support.

Step 1: Think about different perspectives

Begin by telling your child you are going to be storytellers! You can ask your child if they experienced or remember a situation where different people had different views about what was happening. You can also give an example of an event or story told through various viewpoints. Explain to your child that everyone can have different perspectives about an event. Often, we only think about our perspective, but it is important to think about how others in that same situation feel.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Today, we're going to be storytellers and create stories! When you write or tell a story, you tell it from your perspective. Your perspective is your unique opinion and way you experience something. **Can you think of a time you had a different perspective than someone else about the same thing? Tell me about it.**

CHILD: When my friend and I were drawing, I wanted to help her finish her picture, so I started to color on her paper. She got upset at me for drawing on her paper, but I didn't understand why. I was trying to help.

FAMILY MEMBER: Who else was in your story? How do you think that person felt? Why?

CHILD: My friend was also in the story. I think she was upset because I drew on her paper. She told me she wanted to do it herself without any help.

Step 2: Think about different perspectives in stories

Tell your child that they will be hearing, reading, or watching other stories with many perspectives. Introduce a story from your childhood, family, a movie, TV show, or historical event. Discuss the perspective that the story is told from. Ask your child to identify other perspectives that are not in the story.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Let's read this fable that I read when I was young called "The Ant and the Grasshopper" by Aesop. Whose perspective is shared? How do you know?

CHILD: The story is from the ants' perspective. They tell the grasshopper what they think of him not saving food. They believe he was lazy because he didn't work on saving food and played instead.

FAMILY MEMBER: Who else is in the story? How do they feel?

CHILD: The grasshopper is in the story too. He feels happy when he's playing and then worried about not having any food for winter.

Step 3: Change the perspective in a story

Guide your child through thinking about the same story from a different perspective.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: How would the story change if an English Learner told it?

CHILD: The story would change if the grasshopper told their own story and showed how he was feeling, or explained why he decided to play instead of working. He would also talk more and tell the ants how he feels when they are mean to him.

FAMILY MEMBER: Why would the story be different if someone else told it?

CHILD: It would be different if the grasshopper told the story because we would know his opinions and how he feels.

Step 4: Create your story from a different perspective

Your child can now create the story from a different perspective. Ask your child if they would like to change the story by writing, drawing, recording, or performing it from another perspective.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Now that you thought about how the story would be different from another perspective, we're going to be creative. You will create the story from the grasshopper's perspective. **Would you like to draw, write, record or perform the story?**

CHILD: I want to write the story and then perform it for my family!

Step 5: Reflect on different perspectives

Children should practice thinking about real-life situations through different perspectives. Guide your child in considering other people's perspectives.

Example script and questions

FAMILY MEMBER: Now that you thought about perspective in different stories and made your own stories from different perspectives, **why do you think it's important to think about other people's perspectives?**

CHILD: It's important to think about other people's perspectives to understand how they feel. That way, we don't just think about our feelings and show that we care about others and their perspectives.

FAMILY MEMBER: How can we understand other people's perspectives?

CHILD: We can understand other people's perspectives by listening to them and asking questions instead of just thinking about our feelings and opinions.

Additional activities and resources

Here are additional activities to explore different perspectives through storytelling:

- Watch this fun video reading on YouTube of *The Tale of Two Beasts*, a story told from two different perspectives. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cutROw_NJvE)
- Have a conversation with your child about the different perspectives and make a video reading to share with friends and family.
- Read a book from this booklist for birth-through-grade 3 children by *¡Colorin Colorado!* (https://www.colorincolorado.org/books-authors/books-kids)
- Here is another booklist from *¡Colorin Colorado!* for grades 4-12. (https://www.colorincolorado.org/books-authors/books-young-adults)
- Create your own digital storybook using different perspectives at My Storybook website. (https://www.mystorybook.com)



Worksheet 1: Thinking about Perspectives

Use these questions to help you think about the perspective from the story you read:

- Who is telling the story or sharing the event? How do you know?
- Whose perspective is shared? How do you know?
- How does the storyteller feel or think? How do you know?
- What is the storyteller doing or saying? Why?
- What does the storyteller tell us? Does this include everything that's happening?
- Who else is in the story? How do they feel?

Write or draw your idea	as here.		
Draw			
ı			

Worksheet 2: Creating your own Story

Write a new version of the story you read using the perspective of a different character. Use these questions to help you come up with ideas for your story:

- Who is telling the story or sharing the event?
- Whose perspective is being shared?
- How does the storyteller feel or think? How do you know?
- What is the storyteller doing or saying? Why?
- What does the storyteller tell us? Does this include everything that's happening?
- Who else in the story, and how do they feel?
- How would the story change if someone else (like you or your parents) was telling it?
- Why would the story be different if someone else was telling it?

Write or draw you	r ideas here.		
Draw			



21st-Century Learning At Home - A guide for families and caregivers of English Learners to support project-based learning at home.

www.maec.org