

Grade 3, Theme Five

Family Letter

Dear Family,

We are ready to begin the last theme of *Fully Alive*, our family life program. Because the partnership of home, church, and school is so important, this letter is written to let you know what we talk about in class, and to offer some ideas for your involvement. For more information for families, please go to www.occb.on.ca. If you have any questions, please contact me.

About Theme Five

Theme Five of *Fully Alive* is called “Living in the World.” We are not simply individuals who have relationships with family members and friends. We are also members of human society. We want the children to become aware of how big the world is, and of the many ways in which people contribute to making it a good home for all. This awareness is the foundation for a Christian attitude of care and personal involvement in the world.

In Theme Five we will:

- explore some of the differences and similarities of people from all over the world, and recognize how much we have in common, no matter where we live.
- discover more about human work and its importance for human society.
- learn that doing good work requires effort and patience.

Working together at school and at home

- Did you or other members of your family come to Canada from another part of the world? The students will be doing research on the customs, games, foods, and special celebrations in another part of the world. Any help you can give your child in choosing and describing a region or country would be appreciated.
- Your child will be bringing home an interview sheet and would like to talk to someone in your family about work. The students will be sharing what they learn with the class.
- In the last topic of this theme, the students will consider work from their own perspective. They already know that work, both at school and at home, is not always easy. The lesson from this topic is that a sense of accomplishment and pride in work requires effort and commitment. Your encouragement and support as your child learns to be a good worker is very important.

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Theme Five Topics

*The heavens are yours, and the earth also is yours;
The world and all that is in it, you have founded them.*

Psalm 89:11

The last theme of the Grade 3 program is developed through three topics. In the first topic the teacher and students talk about all of the wonderful people who live in the world. The students discover that people all over the world have many things in common as well as some differences. In Topic 2 the students consider the many different kinds of work that people do and how this work contributes to our lives. In the final topic, the students explore work from the perspective of being a worker, and discuss the importance of care and effort in any work that they are doing.

Topic 1 — The World is Full of Wonderful People

The view we entertain of God will determine our view of the world.

Christoph Lutlordt

Summary

This topic helps the students understand that even though people around the world live in many different ways and have a great variety of customs, all people have a lot in common. As the teacher and students explore a series of pictures of people from around the world, the students are encouraged to recognize that all people, wherever they live, share a common human nature and many human experiences.

Main Ideas

- All people have feelings, need to love and be loved, and to feel like they belong.
- All over the world, people are born and welcomed.
- All over the world people die, and those who know and love them have to learn how to say good-bye.
- God knows each person in the world by name.

Family Participation

- There are many books for children available at the public library about family life in different countries that your child might enjoy reading with you. Children are often

especially interested in the games children from other countries play, or the way they celebrate their birthdays and other special occasions.

- If your child lives or attends school in a multicultural area, he or she will be aware of the rich variety of races and cultures that make up the world. Television programs and movies also provide opportunities for children to understand that the world is a very large place, and that their way of living is not the only way.
- If your family or parish community is involved in helping individuals, families, or communities that are in need, it's important for children to participate in these efforts as much as possible. Whether it involves contributing small amounts of money or helping to collect and organize donations of food or clothing, such activities help children understand the responsibility we all share to care for the human family.

Topic 2 — The World is Full of Wonderful Work

*Whether it is engaged in independently or paid for by someone else, . . .
labour comes immediately from the person. In a sense,
the person stamps the things of nature with his seal and subdues them to his will.*

The Church in the Modern World, Documents of Vatican II

Summary

This topic helps the children understand that work is an essential human activity. The teacher and students explore pictures showing many different kinds of work in the world. The students discuss how each person's work contributes to our lives, and are given an interview sheet about work to complete at home.

Main Ideas

- All work is important.
- We depend on the work of many people for the things we need.
- Work helps make God's world a good home.
- We need to care for the world and make sure our work does not harm it.

Family Participation

- Help your child complete the interview sheet about work. These questions are not intended to be limited to jobs that people do outside the home. If you are working in the home caring

for the family, you will want to help your child understand that this is your work. The work of mothers and fathers in the home is of great value. If a grandparent is living with you, your child might enjoy finding out what kind of work he or she used to do. If someone in your home does volunteer work, be sure to tell your child about it. You might explain that many people do some work for which they are not paid because they want to help other people and make the world a good place for people to live.

- Adult jobs can be quite mysterious to children. It's a good idea to talk to children about the work that adults do outside the home. You could talk about the parts of your job that you enjoy, and the parts you find difficult. It's important for children to understand that adults, like children, find some work difficult or boring, but they don't give up because they know that other people depend on their work.
- Our attitude toward our own work teaches children a great deal. When we are cheerful and try to do our best, we help our children understand that it is good to work and serve others. It is part of God's plan for us; it is the way we build the world.
- The way we speak about the work that people do teaches our children a lot about our values. Children pick up our inconsistencies very easily. If we dismiss certain jobs as low-paying or insignificant, they learn that the value of work lies in its status or in the amount of money that is received. If we want them to learn that each person's work is important and contributes to the world, our words and actions have to reflect this attitude.

Topic 3 — We Learn How to Work

*This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;
Of all who live, I am the one by whom
This work can best be done in the right way.*

Henry Van Dyke

Summary

This topic helps the students understand the value of care and effort in their own work. The teacher and students read a story about some work that Beth and Shane Carson are doing. You will find this story at the end of the theme. The students are invited to choose a piece of their

work from this year that they are especially proud of, present it to the class, tell the class why they are proud of it, and describe the work they did to create it.

Main Ideas

- Work requires effort, patience, commitment, and perseverance.
- When we work hard and do our best, we can take pride in our work.

Family Participation

- You and your child may enjoy reading the story about Shane and Beth Carson and the project they are working on. You will find it at the end of this theme.
- As part of this topic, the students are asked to present to the class a piece of work they did this year that they are especially proud of, for example, a project, poster, story, or a piece of art. Since some of this work has likely been sent home, your child might enjoy reviewing some of his or her completed work and talking to you about which piece of work to choose.
- Sometimes children this age want to take on projects that are too hard for them (for example, a complicated model with difficult instructions, or a woodworking project that requires skills the child does not have). The result is usually a lot of frustration for the child. The more aware parents are of children's abilities and limitations, the better parents can guide the child in choosing a suitable project.
- Projects like cooking or simple home repairs, which the child and parent can share together, are a good opportunity for developing patience, care, and persistence in work. You can help your child understand that it's important to do a good job so that when the work is finished you can both be proud of it.
- It's good for parents to take an interest in children's work whether it is school-related or a hobby, and to give them some help when they need it. But at the same time, you want to be careful not to take over and to give the child too much help. Often, what children need most is someone to help them learn how to get organized, to make sure that they understand the work, to give them encouragement when they are having difficulties, and to appreciate their work when it is finished.

Theme Five Stories and Poems

Topic 3: The teacher and students read this story about Shane and Beth Carson and their work.

We Learn How to Work

Shane and Beth Carson have just turned nine. They had a family birthday party that was lots of fun. One of their cousins gave them each a model. Shane got an airplane and Beth got a car.

The twins wanted to make their models right away. But their father said they should wait. "You'll need some time," he said. "You've never made a model before."

They decided to work on the models on Sunday afternoon. Their mom and their big sister, Pamela, said they would help. Dad said he would help by taking their little sister, Donna, out.

"There are so many parts," Beth exclaimed as she emptied her box.

"Hey, look! Decals! I wonder where they go," Shane said.

"They don't go on until the very end," Pamela said.

"Do the wheels go here?" Beth asked, pointing to the axle.

"Yes, but not yet," her mother answered.

Shane and Beth began putting their models together. It was hard work because their fingers got sticky with glue. Both of them made some mistakes and had to take some pieces apart. Then they had to put them back together the right way.

"Now can I put the decals on?" Shane asked.

"No, you have to let the glue dry," his mom explained. Then she noticed what Beth was doing. "Beth! Stop putting glue on your brother's shirt!"

"But I'm bored," Beth complained. "I want to paint my car."

Their mother looked at them. "Listen," she said. "You see that coffee table? What would have happened if the person who made it was in a big hurry like you two?"

"It wouldn't look very nice?" Beth said.

“Right. And it would probably fall apart,” their mom said. “It takes time to do good work. And you want to be proud of your work.”

“But I want my model to be finished,” Shane said.

“Me too,” Beth added.

“You need to be patient,” their mom said. “The first time you try something is always the hardest.”

Beth and Shane had a snack while they were waiting for the glue to dry. Then it was time for painting. Shane wanted to put his decals on right away, but guess what? He had to wait for the paint to dry!

Finally, the models were done. Mr. Carson came home with Donna and he was very impressed. “You did a lot of work,” he said. “Was it hard?”

“Yeah, sort of,” Beth said.

Shane hung his airplane from the ceiling of his room. Beth knew that cars don’t fly, but she liked the way Shane’s model looked. So she hung hers from the ceiling too.

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