

# Overview

## What Makes A Family?

Family ties are the focus of the second unit, which combines a novel, poetry, and nonfiction. Students explore ways that families can support each other, focusing on how different kinds of people can behave like families. Students trace family relationships across the Jacqueline Woodson novel *Locomotion*, in nonfiction, and in varied genres of poetry. Composing memory poems, debating whether young teens should work, and a poetry slam are some of the high points of this unit.

### LITERATURE

*Locomotion* (Woodson) - Novel told in first person poems that feature an African American boy adjusting to foster care

*How to Eat a Poem* (Ed. by The American Poetry & Literacy Project and The Academy of American Poets) - Anthology of contemporary and classic poems that highlight topics of relevance to young teens

*Who Are These People?* (Fallon) - Nonfiction work incorporating short portraits of different family situations, e.g., having a parent in the military, along with advice targeted at young teens on coping strategies

*Local News* (Soto) - Collection of humorous short stories set in the Latino community of Fresno, California

### FLUENCY TOPICS

foster care system, Brooklyn, the Knicks and Mets, African American poets, house fires, nontraditional families, adoption

### FOCUS

Literary analysis

- Genres of poetry, e.g., sonnet and haiku, rhyme scheme, line breaks
- Characterization

Reading comprehension

- Predicting and confirming/disconfirming predictions as a component of Reciprocal Teaching
- Previewing nonfiction using the table of contents and illustrations
- Skimming and scanning as nonfiction reading strategies

Decoding

- Identifying spelling patterns for long and short vowel sounds
- Pronouncing vowel teams
- Identifying syllables as units within words
- VC|CV syllable division rule

Debate

- Teens working: A good idea or bad idea?
- In *Locomotion*, how are the different characters “family” to Lonnie?

# Unit 1.2