

## *Activity: My Farm Web*

### **Activity Level: Intermediate**

Source: Utah Agriculture in the Classroom

#### **Purpose**

Students use the visual representation of a web to explore the role of agriculture in their daily lives and understand how most of the necessities of life can be traced back to the farm.

#### **State Standards It Supports**

LA 3.3.1.d Convey a perspective with clear reasoning and support.

LA 3.3.2.c Complete a task following multi-step directions

#### **Activity Snapshot**

1. Organize and Prepare Supplies
2. Read Background Information
3. Interest Approach
4. Conduct Activity
  - This lesson uses graphic organizers as a teaching strategy to explore the definition of agriculture.
5. Ask follow up questions and make the connection to agriculture.
  - What is an example of an item that originated from a farm?
  - How does agriculture provide for our daily needs?
  - What does that tell us about agriculture?
  - What can we tell our family and friends about what we learned today?

#### **Materials**

- Farm Web Graphics, laminated or mounted on colored cardstock
- 30 pieces of yarn or string

#### **What's the Connection to Agriculture?**

Agriculture is a big umbrella term that includes many concepts, ranging from farm to fork and from field to fabric. In addition to food and fiber, agriculture provides numerous products for industrial use such as linseed oil for paint and corn for fuel.

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**PROCEDURES:**

1. Organize and Prepare Supplies

See “Materials” on cover page.

*Print and cut out the Farm Web Graphics. The 30, four-inch color images can be laminated for this activity.*

*This activity may be conducted inside or outside; either way, you’ll need about 10 square feet of floor space. The students will place a picture and then the connecting yarn.*

2. Background Information

How do you define the word **agriculture**? The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* states that it is the “science, art, or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock and in varying degrees the preparation and marketing of the resulting products.” An accurate definition, but this definition doesn’t impart the integral nature or importance of agricultural products—**food**, clothing, and shelter—in our daily lives. Surely there is a better way to define agriculture!

This lesson uses graphic organizers as a teaching strategy to explore the definition of agriculture. Graphic organizers are research-based visual instructional tools that facilitate learning and student achievement. The use of graphic organizers is a teaching strategy that meets the needs of most learners, especially visual learners. How do they work? Graphic organizers relate new concepts to the learners’ preexisting understandings, which helps them to recognize new relationships between concepts. These associations help students to retain what they have learned. In addition, these visual tools may be used to help access student knowledge and identify student misconceptions.

Agriculture is a big umbrella term that includes many concepts, ranging from farm to fork and from field to **fabric**. In addition to food and fiber, agriculture also provides numerous products for industrial use such as linseed oil for paint and corn for fuel. This lesson plan has been designed for young learners who will focus on one aspect of agriculture—farming. Instead of words, these young learners will use pictures and yarn to create a simple concept web and the relationships, or linking phrases, will be discussed as a class while the concept web is completed.

3. Interest Approach

Ask the students, “What kinds of things do you use every day?” (You should get answers like food, clothes, books, paper, computers, balls, water, TV, etc.)

Discuss with the students that the items we use every day are either grown or mined (with a few exceptions, like the sun!). If the item is grown specifically for people, it is a product of agriculture.

Ask the students, “Where do we get the things we use every day?”. Most students will say, “at the grocery store!”. Some might say, “a factory”. Tell the students that the store is a distribution center where we buy things and that the factory is a place where raw ingredients, grown for us (wheat for bread) or provided by nature (petroleum for fuel) are put together to make a product that ends up in the store.

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Ask your students, "What is agriculture?" Have the students offer their answers and use the information found in the *Background Agricultural Connections* and the *Vocabulary* sections of the lesson to define the word "agriculture." Help the students identify their connection to agriculture by recognizing that food, fabric, flowers, and forestry (wood) comes from agriculture.

4. Conduct Activity

- Ask the students, "Where does agriculture begin?" (*On a farm.*)
- Guide the students to understand that agriculture begins on a farm and there all kinds of farms. Cattle ranches for beef and leather; dairy farms for milk and all the products made from milk; orchards that grow apples to make juice and apple pies; pig farms for pepperoni, bacon, and ham; grain farms that grow corn for fuel or corn syrup for soda, and wheat for bread; cotton farms for blue jeans; and tree farms for paper and landscaping. In fact, there is a different kind of farm for nearly every type of product. Farms specialize in what they grow based upon their location (climate and soil), and farmers choose only a few crops because the type of equipment used to plant and harvest each crop is very specific and expensive.
- Inform students they are now going to create a "farm web" to help them understand agriculture and where the items they use every day come from.
- Have students move to the area where they will build the farm web.
- Place the farm picture in the center of the floor. Mix up the remaining pictures and either put them in a pile or pass a picture to each student.
- Ask the students, "Which pictures will go closest to the farm picture?" (*The pictures of plants or animals that are grown or raised on a farm go closest.*)
- Students with products made from ingredients produced on a farm should place their pictures onto the web after the farm-raised item is placed.
- As each picture is placed, ask the students to use a linking phrase such as *dairy cows make milk* (the word *make* is the linking word) to describe how their items connect to the web. Discuss each new connection as the pictures are placed.
- When all the pictures have been correctly placed, review the linking phrases and ask students if they think other pictures could be added to the web.

5. Ask Follow Up Questions and Make the Connection to Agriculture

- What is an example of an item that originated from a farm?  
*Answers will vary; use the completed web for help*
- How does agriculture provide for our daily needs?  
*Agriculture provides for our daily needs – food, clothing, and shelter.*
- What does that tell us about agriculture?

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*Agriculture is a big part our everyday lives. Both our food and items we use come from agriculture and agriculture products.*

- What can we tell our family and friends about what we did today?  
*The food we eat comes from agriculture. And so do many of the items we use each day at school and at home. We use products from agriculture to make lots of things we can use. It is important to be aware of how agriculture is a part of our everyday lives.*

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