

**Exploring Rural Kentucky Through Documentary Art:
Irvin Store, 1920s - Documentary Art Interactive
Unit 2 - Lesson Set 2 - Pumpkin Harvest
- For the Teacher -**

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES – Visual Art, Reading and Writing, Social Studies

Visual Art, Reading and Writing

1. **Responding, Connecting, Creating, Presenting:** Ask students to think about pumpkins. Using mind mapping, list making, sketchnoting, or another brainstorming technique. Ask them to record words, phrases, and images related to pumpkins. This could include memories, descriptions, emotional responses, or impressions.

Ask students to share what they recorded in small groups and give them time to talk about any memories related to pumpkins. You could vary this by allowing them to select any fruit or vegetable that has strong associated memories for them.

Point out that in the **Directions to the Artist - Irvin Store**, the video producer did not ask the artist to include a wagonload of pumpkins. He did suggest a wagon of hay and a woman carrying a basket of eggs to sell or swap. Lead a discussion about why the artist might have decided on a wagon of pumpkins instead. What season was he trying to represent? What mood was he trying to convey?

Ask students to work individually or with a partner to write a poem about pumpkins (or other fruits or vegetables). Haiku and cinquain are both forms of poetry that work well for this assignment, but you could allow them to use free verse or other poetry structures, too (see **Helpful Resources for Activity 1 – Poetry Structures and Examples**, below). Once students' poems are completed and revised, print them out using a large, attractive font.

Ask students to create a two-dimensional artistic representation of the fruit or vegetable in their poem (drawing, painting, photograph, wall hanging).

Ask students how they might create an exhibit (physical or virtual) of their poetry and artwork. Who will be the audience for their exhibit? How will they share their exhibit with that audience?

Visual Art Standards

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic technique and work for presentation.

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Reading and Writing Standards - Composition

Interdisciplinary Literacy Practices: Employ, develop and refine schema to understand and create text.

Guiding Principles: Students will apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Helpful Resources for Activity 1 – Poetry Structures and Examples

Haiku Poetry

Haiku is a Japanese tradition of poetry, most often used to paint a scene of nature with words using sensory details and figurative language. It does not have a rhyming pattern, but it does have a meter (a certain number of syllables in each line).

Line 1 – 5 syllables

Line 2 – 7 syllables

Line 3 – 5 syllables

Haiku Examples

August in Kentucky

Horses' hooves clatter
on rocks in the dry creek bed,
The Earth is thirsty.

Last Light

Bronze fades to pewter,
Shadow fingers reach toward night,
Shades of winter gray.

Cinquain Poetry

Cinquain poetry has five lines and a title. You cannot use the same noun, verb, adjective or adverb more than once in a cinquain. Poets often use alliteration when writing cinquain poems.

Line One – One noun.

Line Two – Two adjectives that describe the noun in line one but do NOT end in –ing.

Line Three – Three adjectives that DO end in –ing and tell what the noun in the first line is doing.

Line Four – A **simile** (a phrase beginning with “Like a ...”) that describes the noun in Line One.

Line Five – Another noun.

Cinquain Example

Summer Pond

Dragonflies
Transparent blue
Glittering, gleaming, glowing,
Like ghost visitors from another world,
Magic.

Free Verse Poetry

Free verse is an open form of poetry that does not have a prescribed rhyme scheme or consistent pattern. It does, however, make use of poetic structures like stanzas, line breaks, and white space; and poetry devices like symbolism, alliteration, repetition, or figurative language.

Free Verse Example

It's Just a Tomato

It's just a tomato,
Grown somewhere in Central America, I think,
Sprayed with unpronounceable poisons,
harvested hard and green
by some hard-working soul
just trying to feed her family
Washed and sorted
by machines operated
by some hard-working soul
just trying to feed her family
Shipped and wrapped in plastic
And shipped again
and again
spewing diesel fumes in its wake
flung out on a shelf
and purchased with hard-earned cash
by some hard-working soul
just trying to feed her family

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It's just a tomato  
Grown in the rich dirt of a family farm  
Tended with care,  
Protected from insects by marigolds and rhubarb leaves,  
Cayenne pepper and garlic spray,  
Plucked from the vine ripe  
    And bursting sweet  
wiped gently  
by loving hands  
Packed in a half bushel basket  
For the short journey to the Farmer's Market  
And then home to the table  
    of a soul  
so blessed and grateful  
    to nourish her family

It's just a tomato,  
It's all the difference  
in the world.

## Social Studies

2. **Food Production, Economic Choices, and Social Justice:** Watch the short video [Rural Life](#). Ask students to identify what aspects of the “good old days” are represented in this vignette.

Ask students to make a list of the foods they have eaten in the past few days. Do they know where and how that food was grown or processed?

In 1877, the United States was an agrarian country. However, America's economic base has changed since then. Advances in agricultural technology have meant that fewer farmers or farm workers are needed to produce food. Today, agriculture is largely mechanized and dependent on investments in equipment, fertilizers, pesticides, large tracts of land, and access to transportation to distant markets.

This transformation has had profound impacts on American culture, both positive and negative. Today, many communities and schools are experimenting with small-scale farming and gardening for local consumption.

Ask your students to work individually or in teams to research these local efforts. You might invite speakers into your classroom, such as local gardeners or family farmers, someone from the farmer's market, someone from a grocery store that sells local produce, someone from the county extension service, or someone from the agriculture department at your school or a nearby college.

You may also want to address the impact of economic and governmental policies over time.

To supplement local resources, invite students to use resources available through PBS LearningMedia, listed below in **Helpful Resources for Activity 2**).

Guide students to develop compelling and supporting questions related to food production and consumption; gather evidence; construct arguments; and propose solutions that might have positive impacts on the local economy, environment, or health and diets of residents in your community.

### **Social Studies Standards**

**HS.UH.CH.3:** Analyze the impact of economic institutions, including the Federal Reserve, property rights, legal systems and corporations on the development of the United States from an agrarian to an industrial state from 1877-present.

**HS.UH.CH.5:** Analyze the impact of technology and new ideas on American culture from 1877- present.

**HS.UH.I.CC.1:** Engage in meaningful discussions/democratic discourse and respect diverse opinions relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions in U.S. history.

**HS.UH.I.CC.2:** Engage in disciplinary thinking and construct arguments, explanations or public communications relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions in U.S. history.

**HS.UH.I.CC.3:** Engage in disciplinary thinking and apply appropriate evidence to propose a solution or design an action plan relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions in US history

### **Helpful Resources for Activity 2 on PBS LearningMedia:**

#### **Food Justice**

Urban high school students discuss problems in food systems and what can be done about them in this adaptation of a video they created in collaboration with the Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island. They discuss lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables in urban areas; the high cost of healthy food compared to cheap and abundant junk food; the lack of food grown locally; and animal cruelty. The students offer solutions to these problems, such as urban gardening, buying local food at farmers markets, composting, recycling, and tree planting.

#### **Think Garden Collection**

This engaging KET-produced video collection helps teach elementary students about the art and science of growing food, with an emphasis on biological environmental concepts. It also addresses topics related to nutrition and economics.

The collection was created in partnership with the Food Literacy Project at Oxmoor Farms and Cane Run Elementary School in Louisville, Kentucky, and Meadowthorpe Elementary School, Lexington, Kentucky; The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky; Seedleaf; and Karen Angelucci in Lexington,

Kentucky (NOTE: although these videos target elementary students, the information and ideas discussed are relevant for high school students).

### **Sustainable Gardening**

This video from KET's **Think Garden** collection examines methods of practicing sustainable gardening. Examples explored include plant choice, companion planting, composting, water conservation, and more. Also, learn about things not to do in a sustainable garden, like tilling or using pesticides or commercial fertilizers.

### **Food Miles**

In this video, students consider the environmental impacts of America's current food system. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century global food economy, most foods travel an average of 1,500 miles from farm to plate. As renowned author Michael Pollan elaborates, the impacts of this fossil fuel-driven system are detrimental to the environment, but also to our health and social well-being. Writer Michael Shuman argues that investing in local food systems lessens the distance between who we are and what we eat and creates wealth in the community.

### **High-Tech Agriculture**

This video adapted from ATE-TV features some of the new technologies being applied in the agricultural industry, including the Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The video demonstrates how GPS can be used in a tractor to guide it through fields and how GIS analyze collected data to help a farmer make better planting decisions. It also emphasizes the growing job opportunities for students with computer and mechanical skills, as technology is being used increasingly in a wider range of occupations, including farming.

### **The Changing Face of Agriculture**

The video examines agricultural life as it had been buffeted by world markets, federal farm policy, increased costs, and the weather. Efficiency is the most important factor for successful farming today. Cheaper feeds, reducing equipment costs, diversifying, and being creative have helped farmers stay profitable as agriculture changes.

### **Stewards of the Land; Balancing Agriculture and Environmental Concerns**

Learn about a five-year Conservation Agriculture Program study involving four test forms in the Devils Lake Basin of North Dakota. The farmers took land out of rotation near wetlands, experimented with "no till" farming practices, and participated in soil testing studies to see if certain conservation practices could increase yields and profits, while also being environmentally friendly.

### **Agricultural Reform**

Beginning in the summer of 1936, President Roosevelt took a whistle-stop tour across the Midwest and Northern Plains to see the crisis himself. Inspired enthusiastic

audiences but weary audiences. At the same time, Hugh Bennett, head of the Soil Conservation Service, begin instituting his program of agricultural reform and offered incentives to farmers willing to adopt new farming methods.

### **School Garden**

Why is helping students understand where their food comes from important? How does harvesting produce help achieve this understanding?

Through the Garden Gourmet program, students create and eat healthy dishes from the vegetables they harvest. By partnering with a local farmers' market, students are able to sell their fresh produce and donate the proceeds to a local food bank.

In this video, the school partnered with a local community garden and farmer's market to deepen the learning experience. What groups, organizations, or individuals in your community can you identify as potential educational partnerships with your school?