

Agriculture's Influence

Summary: Students explore the influence of agriculture on their everyday lives in the areas of food, clothing, shelter, and culture.

Objectives:

The students will:

- Define agriculture.
- Define culture.
- Explain some factors that influence the type of agriculture that occurs in an area.
- Explain how agriculture influences food, clothing, shelter, and culture in an area.

Materials:

Activity #1:

- one paper grocery bag
- index cards with food, clothing, and shelter graphics glued onto them (trees, apples, oranges, sheep, pig, cow, wheat, river, island, lake, sun, rain, snow, cotton, stone, fish, soil, etc.---choose items that would fit into any of the three categories and that influence the agriculture of an area in some way)
- chalkboard/chalk or poster board/marker
- masking tape

Activity #2:

- examples of local food, clothing, and shelter resources (bring in some and others can be found in and around the school)

Getting Started:

Activity #1:

- print computer graphics of food, clothing, and shelter resources ahead of time (or draw them)
- glue them individually onto index cards

Activity #2:

- you may decide to bring in or make foods that represent different cultures

Background:

Our planet is a very geographically diverse place. This greatly impacts agriculture, which, in turn, has a great impact on us. Agriculture is another word for farming, which provides us with the many products that we use everyday. Some of the resources that are necessary for farming are only available in certain regions and this is often influenced by the climate and weather conditions in the area. Sometimes land is scarce or not suitable for farming which leaves little soil that is viable for tilling. Other areas have very fertile, productive land. In some places water sources are either limited or abundant. How does this affect us? As a daily consumer of agricultural products, agriculture greatly influences our lives in many ways. Four main areas include our food, clothing, shelter, and culture.



Grade Level: K-6

Topic: Agriculture's influence on our lives

PA Environment & Ecology Standards Addressed:

Agriculture and Society:

4.4.4.: Know the importance of agriculture to humans.

- Explain the influence of agriculture on food, clothing, shelter and culture from one area to another.

Teaching Methods:

- Lecture/Discussion
- Hands-on activities
- Categorization

Multiple Intelligences Utilized:

- Naturalistic
- Visual/Spatial
- Interpersonal
- Verbal/Linguistic
- Bodily/Kinesthetic

Consider the island nation of Japan that has only 15% arable land. It is not shocking that a main staple of the Japanese diet is fish. The Chinese people eat pork frequently because pigs do not need the pasture space that other livestock do, and there is little farmland in China, so it makes more sense to raise pigs. Many of the people who inhabit the countries of northern Africa can not afford to eat meat, so they rely on large amounts of grains, fruits, and vegetables as staples in their diets. New Zealand is known for raising sheep, some for their meat, and some for their wool. Some animals are suited to certain climates or regions. The United States is known as the second highest producer of cotton in the world, but it can only be grown in the southern and southwestern states that have hot enough conditions for the plant to grow properly. Years ago in the United Kingdom, buildings and houses were built with stone because of the lack of trees.

Culture is the customary beliefs, social reforms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. Often, the types of food, clothing, and shelter that are available in an area greatly influence the culture. Think of the countries and resources that were mentioned above. How do those variables affect the culture of the people who live in those countries or regions?

Activity #1: Categorization Activity

- Discuss the terms food, clothing, and shelter.
- On the chalkboard or poster board, label three categories: food, clothing, and shelter.
- Ask students to take turns picking an index card out of the grocery bag. Have them identify the resource that is on the card and then choose which of the three categories it should fall under. Most should be specific enough to fit under one category, but some could fall under more than one category. Discuss the resource and then list it under the appropriate category. How would this resource influence the people of an area? (trees = food, clothing; apples = food; island = food, shelter, etc.)

Fun Facts!

Did you know that only 1/32 of the Earth's surface is fit to be used to grow the food that is needed to feed all of the people who live on the Earth?



Activity #2: Local Resources

- Analyze local resources by bringing in or finding examples around the school of food, clothing, shelter, and culture.
- What are common foods grown in your area?
- What are the primary materials used for making clothing in your area? Are they mainly natural or manmade?
- What materials is the school building made of? What are most of the homes in the area made of?
- Discuss the weather and climate in the area. How does it influence agriculture? Can food be grown year-round?
- What evidence is there of cultural identity in the area? What celebrations illustrate this?

Extensions/Variations:

- Compare your area to other regions in the country or the world. Make charts to compare data.
- Have a multicultural celebration that highlights foods from different regions of the country/world. Talk about where the different ingredients come from.
- Listen to culturally diverse music.
- Look at pictures of clothing and shelter from other cultures.
- Look at pictures of agriculture in other regions. Look at growing conditions and see what types of crops are being grown.



Evaluation:

Rubric: Agriculture's Influence

3	2	1	0	The student can define agriculture.
3	2	1	0	The student can define culture.
3	2	1	0	The student can explain some factors that influence agriculture in an area.
3	2	1	0	The student can explain how agriculture influences food, clothing, shelter, and culture.
12	8	4	0	Total Score: /12

Resources:

Project food, land & people. (1998). Project Food, Land & People: Chandler, AZ.