

Overview: You are participating in the Colorado Literacy Project – an opportunity to teach and show Colorado students (K-4th grade) about agriculture in Colorado, and around the world. This year we are focusing on history and innovation in agriculture.

Book: *John Deere, That's Who!* by Tracy Nelson Maurer, illustrated by Tim Zeltner. This non-fiction book shares about the life of John Deere, a blacksmith from the 1830s who designed the steel plow to help farmers work their fields more efficiently. His invention changed the face of farming forever, and his company is still a leader in the farming equipment industry today.

Time: 30-45 minutes

Materials Needed:

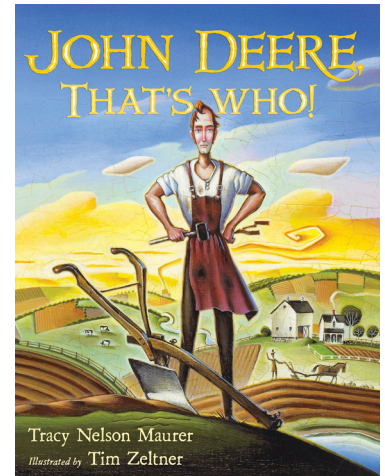
- Bring photos/artifacts of your farm and family, if you have any (especially if they are relevant to the story!)
- *John Deere, That's Who!* book (CFA will send you enough copies of the book for each class to keep.)
- Access to a white board and markers

Lesson Outline:

This lesson was adapted from the National Agricultural Literacy Curriculum lesson titled "John Deere, That's Who!"

1. Introduce yourself by sharing pictures/artifacts of your farm and family. Tell the students a little bit about yourself and what type of farm you have. Let them know how you interact with farming equipment.
2. Learning Target (these learning targets are the Common Core Standards that have been identified with this lesson).
 - a. 3rd grade: Say "Today our learning target is asking questions of the text, and finding answers within the text as well as learning about how John Deere made his mark in farming."
 - b. 4th grade: Say, "Today our learning target is discussing how this author explains events in a historical text while learning about how John Deere made his mark in the farming industry."
3. Introduce *John Deere, That's Who!*, showing the front cover and reading the title.
4. Read the book. Explain words they might not be familiar with as you read. (Most of these words are listed in the glossary at the back of the book.)

- Plow
- Blacksmith
- Forge
- Till
- Debt
- Smithy
- Calico
- Steel



5. Check for understanding.

3rd grade:

- Who was John Deere?
- What did he invent?
- Why was his invention so important?
- Who used John Deere's invention?

4th grade:

- Why did the author write this book?
- How did John Deere impact the farming industry in the 1800s?
- How does John Deere's plow compare to the heavy machinery farmers use today to work farm fields? Are farmers more or less efficient than they used to be? Why do you think that?
- How do you think farming has changed since the 1800s?

6. Summary.

"I learned...What did you learn?"

Have the students share a sentence about what they learned and what they still want to know about John Deere or about the history of farming.

7. Closing

Thank the students and teacher for allowing you to come visit their classroom. Leave the book, Teacher's Guide, CFA flyer, and the Food, Fiber and More Summer AgriCULTURE Institute information for the teacher.

Additional activities and resources

Optional additional activities and resources associated with the book *John Deere, That's Who!* are available on the National Agriculture Literacy Curriculum Matrix. Feel free to explore these items by searching for the titles on the Curriculum Matrix found at www.GrowingYourFuture.com.

Lesson Plan: John Deere, That's Who! Students will explore how producers and consumers work together to meet human needs by using the book *John Deere, That's Who!*

Book: John Deere's Powerful Idea: The Perfect Plow John Deere's farm equipment brand is famous around the world, but people may not know the story behind the man himself. Deere's humble blacksmith beginnings and a simple plow eventually led to massive success, but it wasn't easy. The story behind the name will give readers new appreciation for the popular green tractors and equipment around today.

Website: The History of the Tractor How much thought have you given to the great American tractor? If you have food on your table, you have the tractor to thank for it. This website outlines the history and timeline of the tractor and how it has revolutionized farming.

Website: Tractor Timeline- A History of Tractors Use this interactive tractor timeline to learn about the history of tractors. Dive into the history of tractor development and see how the evolution of these farm implements has changed how we farm and made it possible to increase our crop yields.



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The Colorado Foundation for Agriculture is a 501(c)3 non-profit education corporation. Our vision is to advance agricultural literacy in the next generation of consumers, citizens, and professionals. Our mission is connecting Colorado educators and students to their food, fiber, fuel, and natural resources.