

Lesson 5: Kansas On Your Plate

Grade Level: 1st Grade

Time: 60 minutes

Subjects: ELA, Science

Overview: This lesson is Lesson 5 of 5, the closing lesson of the *Celebrate Wheat* unit within the Growing Readers micro-curriculum, based on a series of books written by Kansas author Dan Yunk. This lesson brings the unit full circle by returning to the pizza party at the end of the book and examining every ingredient on the pizza through the lens of Kansas agriculture. Using a felt pizza board, students place and discuss each ingredient while learning how each one is connected to Kansas farmers and the land. First graders engage more deeply with the text by using illustrations and details together to describe key ideas, distinguishing between what illustrations show and what words tell us, and identifying textual evidence for the author's reasons. Informative writing is elevated to a structured paragraph with a topic sentence, at least two facts, and a closing sentence. Lesson 5 also serves as a transition into the next unit, which will focus on dairy and beef cattle, by introducing students to the role of animals, dairy cows, and pigs, in producing the food on their pizza.

Skillset: Activating and connecting prior knowledge across the unit, using illustrations and text details together to describe key ideas, distinguishing illustration information from word information, identifying author's reasons with textual evidence, asking and answering questions to clarify word meanings, text-to-text and text-to-experience connections, comparing two texts on the same topic, structured informative writing with topic/facts/closure, vocabulary acquisition, and Kansas connections through food systems and agriculture.

Kansas Academic Standards

Kansas ELA Standards

RI.1.4 Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

RI.1.6 Distinguish between information provided by illustrations or other graphics and information provided by the words in a text.

RI.1.7 Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.

RI.1.8 Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

RI.1.9 Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

W.1.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

Science Standards

1-LS1-1 Use materials to design a solution to a human problem by mimicking how plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive, grow, and meet their needs.

1-LS3-1 Make observations to construct an evidence-based account that young plants and animals are like, but not exactly like, their parents.

National Agriculture Literacy Outcomes

Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber, and Energy

T2.K-2.a Describe how plants are grown and used for food.

T2.K-2.b Identify animals involved in agricultural production and their uses (i.e., work, meat, dairy, eggs).

T2.K-2.d Identify examples of food and fiber products that come from plants and animals.

T3.K-2.b Recognize that agriculture provides our most basic necessities: food, fiber, energy, and shelter.

T5.K-2.a Identify the ways farmers use land to grow crops and raise animals.

Objectives

Science Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Match pizza ingredients (crust, cheese, pepperoni, sausage, peppers, onions) to their Kansas agricultural origins.
- Explain that food comes from both plants and animals raised or grown by farmers.
- Model the relationship between food and its agricultural origins using a felt pizza.
- Recognize dairy cows and pigs as animals that provide food for people, building a foundation for the next unit.

English Language Arts Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Ask and answer questions to determine or clarify the meaning of key vocabulary words encountered in the lesson.
- Distinguish between information provided by illustrations and information provided by the words in *Celebrate Wheat*.
- Describe both the illustrations and text details together to describe the key ideas in the book.
- Explain at least two reasons the author gives for why wheat — and Kansas agriculture — is important, citing evidence from the text.
- Compare and contrast *Celebrate Wheat* and *The Soil Neighborhood* using specific examples from illustrations, descriptions, or procedures.
- Write an informative paragraph that names a topic, supplies at least two facts, and provides a sense of closure.

Materials Needed

- Book: *Celebrate Wheat* by Dan Yunk (physical copy)
- Book: *The Soil Neighborhood* by Dan Yunk (physical copy)
- Felt pizza board (one per student or one shared class board)
- Felt pizza ingredient pieces: crust, cheese, pepperoni, sausage, peppers, onions (pre-cut, labeled)
- Real ingredient samples or photographs: wheat flour, milk or cheese, pepperoni/sausage, green pepper, onion
- Chart paper and markers
- Simple map of Kansas
- Lined paper with a space to draw for students' informative writing activity— My Favorite Pizza (one per student)
- Pencils and crayons

Lesson Procedures

1. Activating Prior Knowledge — Connecting to the Unit
2. Book Revisit — Text Features, Illustrations, and Author's Purpose
 - a. Gather students and explain: *"We have spent the last several days learning about wheat and Kansas crops. We planted wheat seeds, studied seeds from many different Kansas crops, compared popcorn and popped sorghum, and learned that Kansas farmers grow food that ends up on our tables every day. Today is our last lesson in this unit, and we are going to bring everything together."*
 - b. Ask students:
 - *"What is one thing you remember learning about wheat?"*
 - *"What Kansas crops do you remember from our farm-in-a-glove activity?"*
 - *"At the end of Celebrate Wheat, what was Kailey celebrating?"*
 - c. Bridge to today's lesson: *"Kailey's birthday party ended with pizza — and so will our unit! Today, we are going to look closely at every ingredient on a pizza and find out how each one is connected to Kansas agriculture. You might be surprised how many Kansas farmers had a hand in making your pizza."*
3. Book Revisit — Text Features, Illustrations, and Author's Purpose

Hold up the physical copy of *Celebrate Wheat*.

 - a. Explain to students: *"Before we begin our pizza activity, let's revisit our book one more time. We are going to look at it like readers who know a lot more than we did the first time we read it."*
 - b. Ask students to identify text features:
 - *"What is on the front cover? What does it tell us about the book?"*
 - *"Can you find the title page? What information does it give us?"*
 - *"Who is the author? What does the author do?"*
 - *"Who is the illustrator? What does the illustrator do?"*
 - c. Explain to students Illustrations vs. Words: *"In informational books, authors use both words AND pictures to give us information. But they don't always give us the same information. Sometimes the picture shows us something the words don't say. Sometimes the words tell us something the picture doesn't show. Let's look at one page together and figure out which information comes from where."*
 - d. Open to the page showing the combine or the wheat field. Ask students:
 - *"What does this illustration show us?"*
 - *"What information does the picture give us that the words do not say?"*
 - *"What do the words tell us that we cannot see in the picture?"*
 - *"How do the illustration and the words work together to give us the full picture?"*
 - e. Explain to students Illustrations + Details Together: *"Good readers use both the illustrations and the words together to understand the key ideas. What is the key idea on this page? What do the picture AND the words tell us together that we wouldn't know from just one alone?"*
 - f. Explain to students Author's Reasons: *"Authors of informational books give us reasons to support their ideas. Dan Yunk wants us to understand why wheat matters. Let's find the reasons he gives in the text — not just what we think, but what he actually wrote."*
 - g. Ask students:
 - *"What reasons does the author give for why wheat is important? Where in the book does he say that?"*

- *“Why do you think Dan Yunk wanted kids to know about wheat and Kansas farming?”*
- h. Explain to students Text-to-Text Comparison: *“We have read two books in this unit — The Soil Neighborhood and Celebrate Wheat. Both books are by Dan Yunk, and both are about Kansas land and growing things. But they are not exactly the same. Let’s compare them carefully.”*
- i. Ask students:
 - *“How are the illustrations in the two books similar? How are they different?”*
 - *“Both books describe how something grows. How is the process described in Celebrate Wheat different from what we learned in The Soil Neighborhood?”*
 - *“What information does Celebrate Wheat give us that The Soil Neighborhood does not?”*
 - *“What do both books tell us about why Kansas land and farming matter?”*

Record student responses on chart paper. This activity directly addresses RI.1.9 with specific textual examples rather than general impressions.
- 4. Vocabulary — Word Meaning from Context
 - a. Explain to students: *“As we talk about our pizza ingredients today, we are going to hear some new words. When we hear a word we don’t know, good readers ask questions and look for clues in the surrounding words and in the pictures. That is called using context clues.”*
 - b. Introduce vocabulary. For each word, model how to use context clues before giving the definition:
 - **Harvest** – “The book says farmers harvest wheat when it turns golden. What clues in that sentence help you figure out what harvest means?” (to gather a crop when it is ready)
 - **Process** – “The wheat goes through a process to become flour. What do you think process means when something has to go through many steps?” (to prepare something through a series of steps)
 - **Pasteurize** – “Milk is pasteurized by heating it quickly to make it safe. What context clue helps you figure out what pasteurize does?” (to heat milk quickly to kill harmful bacteria)
 - **Gluten** – “Wheat flour contains a protein called gluten that helps bread rise. What does that sentence tell you gluten does?” (a protein in wheat flour that helps bread rise and hold its shape)
 - **Curd** – “Milk is treated to form a soft substance called curd. What does the word soft tell you about curd?” (the soft solid part of milk used to make cheese)
 - **Ripening** – “Cheese is aged during ripening to develop its flavor. What does the connection to flavor tell you about what ripening does?” (aging cheese over time to develop its flavor)
 - c. Explain to students: *“If you hear one of these words during our lesson and you are not sure what it means, ask a question or look for context clues. That is what good readers do.”*
- 5. Felt Pizza Activity — Kansas Agriculture from Field to Table
 - a. Explain to students: *“Kailey’s birthday pizza had a lot of ingredients on it. Today we are going to build our own pizza using felt pieces, and as we add each*

ingredient, we are going to learn where it comes from and how Kansas farmers helped make it.”

- Ask students: “What are your favorite pizza toppings?” Allow students to share briefly.
- Explain to students: *“As I tell you about each ingredient, place the matching felt piece on your pizza board. Listen carefully — after each ingredient, I will ask you questions about what the words told you and what a picture might show.”*

- b. Ingredient 1: The Crust: Hold up a sample of wheat flour or a photo of a wheat field. Explain to students:

“Pizza crust is made from wheat flour — and we know a lot about wheat! The farmer plants wheat kernels in the ground. When the wheat is ready to harvest, the farmer uses a combine to cut the wheat in the field and loads the kernels into trucks. The trucks carry the wheat to a grain elevator, where it is stored and cleaned. Then the wheat is sold and shipped to a mill, where it is ground into flour. Wheat flour contains a protein called gluten. When a baker adds yeast, warm water, and other ingredients to the flour, the gluten traps air bubbles released by the yeast — and the dough rises! That rising dough becomes our pizza crust.”

Have students place the crust felt piece on their pizza board.

Ask students:

- *“What crop does the crust come from?”*
- *“What machine does the farmer use to harvest wheat?”*
- *“What is wheat turned into before it becomes crust?”*
- *“If there were an illustration of this process, what would it show? What would only the words be able to tell us?”*

- c. Ingredient 2: The Cheese: Hold up a sample of cheese or a photo of a dairy cow. Explain to students:

“Cheese is made from milk, and milk comes from dairy cows. Dairy farmers once milked their cows by hand, but today most farmers use milking machines with a gentle vacuum to collect the milk. To make cheese, the milk is first pasteurized — heated quickly and cooled to kill any harmful bacteria. Then the milk is treated to form a soft substance called curd. The curd is pressed into blocks and aged in storage rooms. The longer the cheese ages, the sharper its flavor becomes. Then it is packaged and sent to stores. The cheese on your pizza started with a dairy cow on a farm.”

Have students place the cheese felt piece on their pizza board.

Ask students:

- *“What animal does cheese come from?”*
- *“What is the vocabulary word for heating milk to make it safe? What context clues helped you figure that out?”*
- *“We are going to learn a lot more about dairy cows in our next unit. What questions do you have about them already?”*

- d. Ingredient 3: Pepperoni and Sausage

Hold up a pepperoni sample or a photo of pigs. Explain to students: *“Pepperoni and sausage are made from pork, which comes from pigs. It takes about six months from the time a pig is born to produce a full-grown animal ready for processing. Farmers who raise pigs work hard to keep their animals healthy,*

because healthy animals mean a successful farm. After the pigs are processed, the meat is inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure it is safe to eat. Then the pork is made into products such as pepperoni and sausage, and sent to stores and restaurants. About half of all pork in the United States is sold in grocery stores." Have students place the pepperoni and sausage felt pieces on their pizza board.

Ask students:

- *"What animal does pepperoni come from?"*
- *"Who inspects the meat to make sure it is safe?"*
- *"Why do you think farmers want to keep their animals healthy?"*

e. Ingredient 4: Peppers

Hold up a green pepper or a photo of a pepper plant. Explain to students: *"Green peppers are a vegetable — well, actually, they are a fruit! Because peppers have seeds inside them, they are technically the fruit of the pepper plant. Green peppers are usually picked while they are still green and unripe. If left on the plant longer, they turn red or yellow and become even sweeter. Peppers grow on small bushy plants and can be grown in Kansas gardens. When they are ready, they are picked by hand or machine, cleaned, and sent to grocery stores."*

Have students place the pepper felt piece on their pizza board.

Ask students:

- *"Are peppers a fruit or a vegetable? How do you know?"*
- *"What color do peppers turn when they are fully ripe?"*
- *"What context clues in the explanation helped you figure out what unripe means?"*

f. Ingredient 5: Onions

Hold up an onion or a photo of an onion plant. Explain to students:

"Onions are a tasty vegetable that adds flavor to food. Unlike peppers, onions grow underground — the part we eat is actually a bulb that forms beneath the soil. Onions have long green tops above the ground. Young onions before the bulb develops are called scallions. Onions can be grown from seeds or small starter bulbs called sets. In Kansas, onions are grown mostly in gardens. They are picked by hand or machine, cleaned, and sent to grocery stores or processing plants."

Have students place the onion felt piece on their pizza board.

Ask students:

- *"Where does the part of the onion we eat grow — above or below the ground?"*
- *"How is an onion plant different from a wheat plant?"*
- *"What does the word scallion mean? What context clues helped you figure that out?"*

6. Discussion — Key Ideas, Author's Reasons, and Text Connections

a. Gather students with their completed felt pizzas. Explain to students: *"Look at your pizza. Every single ingredient on it came from a farm. Let's talk about what we learned."*

b. Ask students:

- *"Which ingredient surprised you the most? Why?"*
- *"Which ingredients came from plants? Which came from animals?"*
- *"How is making pizza similar to the wheat journey Grandma described in the book?"*

- *“Dan Yunk wrote this book to celebrate wheat. What reasons did he give in the text for why wheat is important? Can you point to where he says that?”*
 - c. Reinforce vocabulary using context clues:
 - *“Can someone explain what pasteurization means using a context clue from what we learned?”*
 - *“What is gluten? What clue from the text helped you remember?”*
 - *“What happens to peppers during ripening? What does that tell us the word ripening means?”*
 - d. Explain to students Text-to-text comparison: *“We read two books in our micro-curriculum — The Soil Neighborhood and Celebrate Wheat. Let’s think about how they are alike and different — not just in what they talk about, but in how they show it.”*
 - *“How do the illustrations in both books help us understand things we cannot see with our own eyes?”*
 - *“Both books describe a process. How is the wheat-to-food process in Celebrate Wheat different from the soil-helpers process in The Soil Neighborhood?”*
 - *“What does one book tell us that the other does not?”*
7. Informative Writing — My Pizza, My Facts
- a. Explain to students: *“Now it is your turn to be the author. Just like Dan Yunk used words and pictures to teach us about wheat, you are going to write an informative paragraph to teach someone else about one pizza ingredient and where it comes from.”*
 - b. Teach the structure of informative writing: *“A strong informative paragraph has three parts. First, a topic sentence that names what you are writing about. Second, at least two facts that give the reader information. Third, a closing sentence that wraps up your thinking.”*
 - c. Model a complete informative paragraph on chart paper:
“Cheese is a food that comes from Kansas farms. Dairy cows make the milk that becomes cheese. Farmers pasteurize the milk to keep it safe. Cheese is an important part of a pizza!”
 - d. Point to and name each part:
 - *Topic sentence: “Cheese is a food that comes from Kansas farms.”*
 - *Fact 1: “Dairy cows make the milk that becomes cheese.”*
 - *Fact 2: “Farmers pasteurize the milk to keep it safe.”*
 - *Closing: “Cheese is an important part of a pizza!”*
 - e. Ask students:
 - *“What is the topic of this paragraph?”*
 - *“How many facts does the writer give?”*
 - *“How does the writer close the paragraph?”*
 - f. Provide draw-and-write directions: *“First, draw your whole pizza and circle the one ingredient you want to write about. Then write your informative paragraph: topic sentence, two facts, and a closing.”*
 - g. Remind students of writing conventions: *“Each sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a period. Leave spaces between your words. Use what you know about spelling patterns to spell your words.”*
 - h. As students write, circulate and explicitly support:
 - *Topic sentence that names the ingredient and its origin*

- *At least two facts from the lesson content*
- *Closing sentence*
- *Capitalization at the start of each sentence*
- *End punctuation on each sentence*
- *Conventional spelling for known patterns*

Differentiation note: For students who need additional support, provide sentence starters for each part at teacher discretion (e.g., “___ comes from ___.” / “Farmers ___.” / “This is why ___.”). For students ready for a challenge, prompt them to include a comparison: “Unlike [ingredient], [ingredient] comes from an animal.”

8. Kansas Connection

- Display a simple map of Kansas.
- Explain to students: *“Kansas is one of the top agricultural states in the country. Farmers here grow wheat, corn, soybeans, sorghum, and sunflowers. They raise pigs, dairy cows, and beef cattle. So much of what ends up on our plates — including our pizza — has roots right here in this state.”*
- Kansas Connection:
Kansas Connection — Teacher Script: *“Today you built a pizza — and without Kansas farmers, that pizza would be a lot harder to make. The crust came from wheat grown in Kansas fields. The cheese came from a dairy cow on a Kansas farm. Even the peppers and onions can be grown right here in Kansas gardens. Some of you live on farms or ranches and already know what it means to raise animals or grow crops for food. Others of you may have never thought about where your pizza comes from before today — and now you know. Every ingredient on your pizza has a story, and a lot of those stories start in Kansas. Kailey figured that out at her birthday party. Now you know it too. The next time you sit down for a pizza night with your family, you can be the one who tells the story of where it all came from. That is what it means to celebrate wheat — and to celebrate Kansas agriculture.”*
- Ask students:
 - *“Which pizza ingredient surprised you the most when you learned where it comes from?”*
 - *“Have you ever seen any of these crops or animals on a farm or ranch near you?”*
 - *“How does learning about where food comes from make you feel about farmers?”*

9. Unit Closing & Transition to the Next Unit

- Gather students and explain: *“Today, we finished our Celebrate Wheat unit. Let’s look back at everything we learned.”*
- Invite students to share one thing they learned across the unit:
 - *“What is one thing you learned about wheat?”*
 - *“What is one thing you learned about Kansas farming?”*
 - *“What was your favorite activity in this unit?”*
- Transition forward: *“Today, we learned that cheese comes from dairy cows and that pepperoni comes from pigs. Those animals are part of Kansas agriculture, too — and in our next unit, we are going to learn all about them. We will find out how dairy cows make milk, how that milk becomes cheese and other foods, and how beef cattle are raised right here in Kansas. Kansas is not just a wheat state — it is a cattle state too!”*

d. Build anticipation:

- *“What do you already know about dairy cows or beef cattle?”*
- *“Have you ever seen cows on a farm or ranch? What do you remember?”*
- *“What questions do you have about cows and dairy farming?”*

Record student questions on chart paper to revisit at the start of the next unit. These questions serve as a formative pre-assessment.

Assessment: Student understanding is assessed through ongoing formative and observational measures embedded throughout the lesson, including participation in book feature identification, text-to-text and text-to-experience discussions, vocabulary acquisition using context clues, the felt pizza activity, and the informative writing paragraph. The teacher should note whether students can distinguish between information provided by illustrations versus words, cite textual evidence for the author’s reasons, identify specific similarities and differences between the two unit texts, and construct an informative paragraph with a topic sentence, at least two facts, and a closing sentence. Student questions recorded at the end of the lesson about dairy and beef cattle serve as a formative pre-assessment for the next unit.

Supplemental Activities: My Favorite Pizza — Informative Writing Display: After students complete their informative paragraphs, display them alongside the class opinion graph from Lesson 4 and the germination gloves from Lesson 3 as a visual record of the unit’s learning journey. Invite students to do a brief gallery walk to read each other’s informative paragraphs, noting similarities and differences in the ingredients and facts their classmates chose. Prompt students to identify at least one thing two paragraphs have in common and one different thing — a natural extension of the RI.1.9 text comparison work from this lesson applied to student-authored texts. Take-home papers give students a natural way to share what they learned with their families and a reason to talk about Kansas agriculture at the dinner table.

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