



Lesson 5: Kansas On Your Plate

Grade Level: 2nd 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. Second graders engage more deeply with the text by identifying the author's main purpose, describing how specific reasons support specific points, and comparing and contrasting the most important points across *Celebrate Wheat* and *The Soil Neighborhood*. Informative writing is elevated to a structured paragraph with a topic sentence, at least two facts with definitions, and a concluding statement.

Skillset: Activating and connecting prior knowledge across the unit, identifying the author's main purpose, describing how reasons support the author's points, comparing and contrasting the most important points across two texts, vocabulary acquisition and contextual word meaning, felt pizza activity, structured informative writing with topic/facts/definitions/conclusion, and Kansas connections through food systems and agriculture.

Kansas Academic Standards

Kansas ELA Standards

RI.2.6 Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

RI.2.8 Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.

RI.2.9 Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.

W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Science Standards

2-LS2-1 Plan and conduct an investigation to determine if plants need sunlight and water to grow.

2-LS4-1 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

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:

- Identify pizza ingredients (crust, cheese, pepperoni, sausage, peppers, onions) and connect each to a Kansas agricultural product.
- Explain that food comes from both plants and animals raised or grown by farmers.
- Model the relationship between common foods and their agricultural origins using a felt pizza activity.
- 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:

- Determine the main purpose of *Celebrate Wheat*, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.
- Describe how at least two specific reasons the author gives support a specific point in the text.
- Compare and contrast the most important points in *Celebrate Wheat* and *The Soil Neighborhood*, using specific examples from both texts.
- Write an informative paragraph that introduces a topic, uses at least two facts and one definition to develop points, and provides a concluding statement.

Materials Needed

- Book: *Celebrate Wheat* by Dan Yunk (physical copy)
- *The Soil Neighborhood* by Dan Yunk (physical copy, for text comparison)
- 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 writing paper (one per student)
- Pencils and crayons

Lesson Procedures

1. Activating Prior Knowledge — Connecting to the Unit
 - 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 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.”

2. Book Revisit — Author’s Purpose and How Reasons Support Points

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 think like analytical readers — asking not just what the author says, but why he says it and how his reasons make his points stronger.”*
- b. Explain to students Author’s Main Purpose: *“Remember, informational authors write for a purpose. They might want to answer a question, explain a process, or describe something. Think about Celebrate Wheat: what does Dan Yunk want to explain or describe? Is he answering a question? Explaining how something works? Describing a topic?”*
- c. Ask students:
 - *“What is the main purpose of Celebrate Wheat? Is the author trying to answer a question, explain a process, or describe something?”*
 - *“In one sentence, what does Dan Yunk want readers to understand after reading this book?”*
 - *“How do you know? What in the book tells you that?”*Record responses on chart paper. Students should be able to articulate something like: *“The author wants to explain how wheat grows and becomes food,”* or *“The author wants to describe the journey from a wheat seed to pizza crust.”*
- d. Explain to students How Reasons Support Points: *“In second grade, we don’t just find the author’s reasons — we describe how those reasons support a specific point. A point is a claim the author makes. A reason is evidence or an explanation that makes that claim more believable. Let’s try it with our book.”*
- e. Guide students through a structured example:
 - Say: *“One point the author makes is that wheat is important for feeding people. What reasons does he give to support that point?”* Students identify reasons: *wheat becomes flour; flour is in bread, pasta, pizza crust; Kansas wheat feeds people around the world.*
 - Then ask: *“How do those reasons support the point? How does knowing that wheat becomes flour make the claim that wheat feeds people more believable?”*
- f. Ask students:
 - *“Find another point the author makes. What reasons does he give? How do those reasons make the point stronger?”*
 - *“If the author only said wheat is important without giving any reasons, would you believe him? Why not?”*

3. Text Comparison — Celebrate Wheat and The Soil Neighborhood

- a. Hold up both books and explain: *“We have read two books in this unit — The Soil Neighborhood and Celebrate Wheat. Both are by Dan Yunk. Both are about things that grow in Kansas land. But they are not the same book. In second grade, we compare and contrast the most important points — not just surface details, but the big ideas each author is trying to get across.”*
- b. Explain to students: *“When we compare, we find what is the same. When we contrast, we find what is different. For informational texts, we compare and*

contrast the most important points — the main ideas and reasons — not just the topics.”

- c. Create a two-column comparison chart on chart paper: Celebrate Wheat | The Soil Neighborhood.
- d. Guide students through the comparison with these frames:
 - *“What is the most important point in Celebrate Wheat? What is the most important point in The Soil Neighborhood?”*
 - *“Both books explain something about how plants grow. How is what they explain the same? How is it different?”*
 - *“Celebrate Wheat focuses on the journey from seed to food. The Soil Neighborhood focuses on what happens underground. How do these two perspectives connect?”*
 - *“If you put both books together, what do you understand about Kansas agriculture that you wouldn’t get from either book alone?”*

Record responses on chart paper. Students should be able to name the most important point from each book and describe at least one similarity and one difference in those points.

4. Vocabulary — Word Meaning from Context

- a. Explain to students: *“As we talk about our pizza ingredients today, we are going to hear some vocabulary words. When you hear a word you are not sure about, look for context clues — the words and ideas around it that help you figure out the meaning.”*
- b. Introduce vocabulary with context clue modeling:
 - **Harvest** – “The text says farmers harvest wheat when it turns golden. What does harvest mean?” (to gather a crop when it is ready)
 - **Process** – “Wheat goes through a process to become flour. What does process mean?” (to prepare something through a series of steps)
 - **Pasteurize** – “Milk is pasteurized by heating it to make it safe. What does pasteurizing do?” (kills harmful bacteria by heating quickly)
 - **Gluten** – “Wheat flour contains a protein called gluten that helps bread rise. What is gluten?” (a protein in wheat flour that helps dough rise)
 - **Curd** – “Milk forms a soft substance called curd. What does soft tell you about curd?” (the soft solid part of milk used to make cheese)

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. As we add each ingredient, we are going to learn where it comes from, think about the author’s purpose in writing about it, and consider how the reasons connect to the points we have been studying.”*
- b. Ask students: “What are your favorite pizza toppings?” Allow students to share briefly.
- c. Explain to students: *“As I tell you about each ingredient, place the matching felt piece on your pizza board.”*
- d. 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 is the definition of gluten? How does that definition support the point that wheat is important for making food?”*
- *“How does the author use the journey from seed to crust to support his point that wheat feeds people?”*

e. 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 use milking machines that apply 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 definition of pasteurize? Why is that an important fact to include in an informative paragraph about cheese?”*
- *“We are going to learn more about dairy cows in our next unit. What questions do you have?”*

f. 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 — the USDA — to make sure 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?”*
- *“The author mentions the USDA inspects the meat. How does that reason support the point that food safety is important?”*
- *“Why do you think farmers want to keep their animals healthy?”*

g. 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 does the definition of fruit support that answer?"*
- *"What color do peppers turn when they are fully ripe?"*

h. 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?"*
- *"What is a scallion? What context clues helped you figure that out?"*
- *"How is an onion plant different from a wheat plant? How does that difference connect to what we learned in The Soil Neighborhood?"*

6. Discussion — Points, 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 — and let's connect it back to the author's purpose and reasons."*

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?"*

c. Return to RI.2.8: *"Earlier, we talked about how Dan Yunk gives reasons to support his points. Look at your completed pizza. Each ingredient is another reason that supports the point that Kansas agriculture is important. Can you explain how?"*

- *"How does the crust ingredient support the point that wheat feeds people?"*
- *"How does the cheese ingredient introduce us to a new point the author doesn't make directly but implies?"*

d. Return to text comparison: *"We compared Celebrate Wheat and The Soil Neighborhood earlier. Look at your pizza chart from Step 3. Can you add any new comparisons now that we have talked about all the ingredients?"*

- *"Both books explain something about how food grows. What is the most important point each author makes?"*

- *“What would you understand about Kansas agriculture if you only read one book? What do you gain from reading both?”*
7. Informative Writing — My Pizza Ingredient Paragraph
- a. Explain to students: *“Now it is your turn to be the author. Just like Dan Yunk used words 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. A strong informative paragraph introduces the topic, uses facts and definitions to develop points, and ends with a concluding statement.”*
 - b. Teach the structure: *“Your paragraph needs: (1) a topic sentence that names the ingredient and its agricultural origin, (2) at least two facts — one of which should include a definition, and (3) a concluding statement that explains why this ingredient matters or connects to Kansas agriculture.”*
 - c. Model a complete informative paragraph on chart paper:
“Cheese is a food that comes from Kansas dairy farms. Dairy cows produce the milk that becomes cheese. To make cheese safe to eat, farmers pasteurize the milk — that means they heat it quickly to kill harmful bacteria. After pasteurizing, the milk forms a soft substance called curd, which is pressed and aged into cheese. Cheese is an important ingredient that connects us to the farmers who raise dairy cows in Kansas.”
 - d. Point to and name each part:
 - *Topic sentence: names the ingredient and origin*
 - *Fact 1: “Dairy cows produce the milk that becomes cheese.”*
 - *Fact 2 with definition: “pasteurize the milk — that means they heat it quickly to kill harmful bacteria.”*
 - *Fact 3 with definition: “a soft substance called curd.”*
 - *Concluding statement: connects to Kansas agriculture*
 - e. Ask students:
 - *“How many facts does this paragraph have?”*
 - *“Which sentences include a definition? How do definitions make the facts stronger?”*
 - *“How does the concluding statement connect to the author’s purpose we discussed earlier?”*
 - f. Provide directions: *“First, draw your whole pizza and circle the one ingredient you want to write about. Then write your informative paragraph on your lined paper: topic sentence, at least two facts (one with a definition), and a concluding statement.”*
 - g. Remind students of conventions: *“Each sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a period. Leave spaces between words. Use what you know about spelling to write carefully.”*
 - h. As students write, circulate and explicitly support:
 - *Topic sentence that names the ingredient and its agricultural origin*
 - *At least two facts, one of which includes a definition*
 - *Concluding statement that connects to Kansas agriculture*
 - *Capitalization and end punctuation in each sentence*
 - *Spelling of key vocabulary words*

Differentiation note: For students who need additional support, provide a paragraph frame with labeled blanks at the teacher’s discretion. For students ready for a challenge, prompt them to write about two ingredients and compare

them using RI.2.9 language: “Both ____ and ____ come from Kansas farms. However, ____ comes from a plant while ____ comes from an animal.”

8. Unit Closing & Transition to the Next Unit

- a. Gather students and explain: *“Today, we finished our Celebrate Wheat unit. Let’s look back at everything we learned.”*
- b. 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?”*
- c. 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.

9. Kansas Connection

- a. Display a simple map of Kansas.
- b. 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.”*
- c. 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.”*
- d. 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?”*

Assessment: Student understanding is assessed through ongoing formative and observational measures embedded throughout the lesson, including participation in the author’s purpose discussion, explanation of how reasons support points, text comparison chart, vocabulary acquisition, the felt pizza activity, and the informative writing paragraph. Teacher should note whether students can identify the main purpose of *Celebrate Wheat* (RI.2.6), describe how at least two specific reasons support a specific point in the text (RI.2.8), compare and contrast the most important points across both texts with specific examples (RI.2.9), and write an informative paragraph with a topic sentence, at least two facts (one with a definition), and a concluding statement (W.2.2). 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 Pizza Ingredient Paragraph — Display and Peer Analysis: 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 paragraphs and identify: (1) the topic sentence, (2) a fact with a definition, and (3) the concluding statement. This applies to RI.2.8 and RI.2.9, thinking about student-authored texts — students are identifying how their classmates used facts and definitions to support their topic, and comparing the most important points across multiple paragraphs. 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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