



Lesson 3: Animals Need Food and Water

Grade Level: 2nd Grade

Time: 60 minutes

Subjects: ELA, Science, Agriculture

Overview: This lesson is Lesson 3 of 5 in the *Farmers and Ranchers Care about their Animals!* unit of the *Growing Readers* micro-curriculum, based on the book series by Kansas author Dan Yunk. Students deepen their understanding that farmers and ranchers intentionally provide animals with the food and water they need through a purposeful second read of the text, a hands-on feed investigation, and a narrative writing response. Second graders confirm the author's main purpose using food- and water-specific evidence, explain how a specific image contributes to and clarifies the text, plan and conduct an investigation to describe and classify feed ingredients by their observable properties, sort both objects and words into categories, and write a well-elaborated narrative that includes actions, thoughts, and feelings, uses temporal words and collective nouns, and is checked against a beginner dictionary for spelling.

Skillset: Purposeful rereading, confirming an author's main purpose with new evidence, explaining how an image contributes to and clarifies a text, planning and conducting a scientific investigation, describing and classifying materials by observable properties, sorting objects and words into categories, connecting feed and water to animal needs, narrative writing with sequenced events, details, and thoughts or feelings, using temporal words, using collective nouns, consulting reference materials to check spelling, and recalling information from experience.

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.2.7 Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.

W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.

W.2.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

W.2.10.a Use collective nouns when writing.

W.2.11.e Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

Science Standards

2-PS1-1 Plan and conduct an investigation to describe and classify different kinds of materials by their observable properties.

National Agriculture Literacy Outcomes

Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber, and Energy

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

T2.K-2.c Recognize that farmers and ranchers are responsible for raising animals that provide food and fiber for people.

Objectives

Science Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Plan and conduct a guided investigation of farm animal feed ingredients.
- Describe feed ingredients using observable properties such as color, texture, shape, and size.
- Classify feed ingredients into categories based on their observable properties and their role in animal nutrition.

Agriculture Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Observe and describe the appearance and texture of real farm animal feed ingredients.
- Sort feed ingredients and feed-related words into categories by nutrient type.
- Explain that farmers choose specific feed for specific animals to meet their nutritional needs.
- Explain that food and water are both essential and describe how they work together to keep animals healthy.

English Language Arts Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Confirm the author's main purpose in *Farmers and Ranchers Care about their Animals!* using evidence about food and water.
- Explain how a specific image contributes to and clarifies the text.
- Sort feed-related words into categories to gain a sense of what each category represents.
- Write a well-elaborated narrative that recounts a sequence of events, includes details about actions, thoughts, and feelings, uses temporal words, and provides a sense of closure.
- Use collective nouns correctly in writing.
- Recall information from the investigation and book to support their writing.
- Consult a beginning dictionary or reference material to check and correct spelling.

Materials Needed

Read-Aloud:

- Book: *Farmers and Ranchers Care about their Animals!* by Dan Yunk, illustrated by Michelle Johnson (physical copy or author read-aloud on the unit landing page)
- Chart paper titled: "What Do Farmers Feed Their Animals?"

- Markers

Feed Investigation:

- Whole wheat kernels (small amount per table)
- Cracked corn (small amount per table)
- Oats (small amount per table)
- Hay (small bundle per table)
- Mineral salt block pieces (small amount per table)
- Magnifying glasses (one per student or one per pair)
- Small sorting trays or paper plates (one per student)
- Word cards for sorting: wheat, corn, oats, hay, minerals, water (one set per table)
- Feed Sorting Mat — companion document (one per student)
- Pencils and crayons

Writing:

- What Do Farmers Feed Their Animals? Writing sheet — companion document (one per student)
- Chart paper for shared writing model
- Beginner dictionaries or classroom word-reference books (one per table)
- Collective noun reference cards or anchor chart (herd, flock, litter, team)
- Pencils and crayons

Note: Check for any allergies to wheat, corn, or oats before this lesson. Students should not eat the feed ingredients. Remind students that these are foods for animals, not people, and that we observe them with our eyes and hands only.

Lesson Procedures

1. Connecting to What We Know
 - a. Explain to students: “In our last two lessons, we learned that farmers and ranchers care for their animals every day and that one way they do that is by building shelters to keep animals safe. Today we are going to learn about another very important way farmers care for their animals: feeding them and giving them water. Farmers do not just give their animals any food. They think carefully about what each animal needs to stay healthy and strong.”
 - b. Ask students:
 - “What do you eat every day to stay healthy? Does everyone eat the same thing?”
 - “Do you think a cow eats the same food as a chicken? Why or why not?”
 - “In our book, the author explains that farmers make sure their animals have enough food and water. Why do you think water is just as important as food for a farm animal?”
2. Purposeful Second Read-Aloud
 - a. Set a listening purpose before reading: “We have already read this book once. Today we are reading it again, but with a new job. Listen closely for the parts of the book about food and water, and think about what the author wants us to understand about why farmers make sure their animals have both.”
 - b. Read *Farmers and Ranchers Care about their Animals!* aloud.
 - c. Stopping Point Suggestions (2 total, brief stops to maintain flow):
 - Stop #1 — Image Contributes to and Clarifies Text: Page 3 — a farmer bottle-feeding a lamb. Ask students:
 - “Look at the picture on page 3. What is the farmer doing for this lamb?”

- “The words on this page tell us that farmers and ranchers have always taken care of their animals. What does the picture show us about one specific way a farmer takes care of a young animal?”
 - “Would we know the farmer was feeding the lamb from a bottle if we only had the words and not the picture? What does the image add?”
 - Stop #2 — Confirming the Author’s Purpose: Page 6 — the sentence about food, water, and medical care. Ask students:
 - “In Lesson 1, we said the author’s purpose was to explain why farmers and ranchers care for their animals. Look at this page. What two things does this page say animals need, along with medical care?”
 - “How does mentioning food and water on this page support the author’s overall purpose?”

Keep stops brief to maintain the flow of the story. Push students toward more independent responses; second graders should be able to confirm the author’s purpose and explain an image’s contribution with less prompting than in Lesson 1.
3. Main Purpose and Key Details Chart
- a. After the read-aloud, display chart paper: “What Do Farmers Feed Their Animals?”
 - b. Explain to students: “Remember, every informational book has a main purpose: the most important thing the author wants to explain. In our book, the author’s purpose is to explain why farmers and ranchers care for their animals. All of the details in the book, like the shelter, the food, and the medical care, are key details that support that main purpose. Let’s name several key details about food and water and think about how each one supports our main purpose.”
 - c. Ask students the following questions and record their responses on the chart:
 - “What is the main purpose of our book?”
 - “What is one key detail you remember about how farmers feed or water their animals?”
 - “What is a second key detail? How does it support the main purpose?”
 - “What is a third key detail about how farmers and ranchers feed or water their animals specifically?”
 - d. Read each detail back to the class after recording it, and ask: “How does this detail help support the author’s purpose?”
 - e. Explain to students: “Retelling key details is something good readers do after they finish a book. When you retell, you are not just remembering random facts. You are choosing the details that best support the author’s purpose. Our chart tells us that farmers give their animals the right kind of food and water, but it does not tell us exactly what that food looks like or feels like. To really understand what farmers are choosing for their animals, we need to become scientists ourselves and investigate real feed ingredients up close.”
4. Farm Animal Feed Investigation
- a. Have students return to their tables and clear a space in front of them for the investigation.
 - b. Distribute materials: magnifying glasses, sorting trays or paper plates, and the Feed Sorting Mat. Place a small amount of each ingredient at the center of each

table: whole wheat kernels, cracked corn, oats, hay, and a small piece of mineral salt block.

- c. Explain to students: “Farmers think carefully about what they feed their animals, just like your caregivers think about what to feed you. Today we are going to plan and conduct our own investigation of real farm animal feed ingredients that farmers use, just like a scientist would. These are the same kinds of ingredients that go into feed for animals like cows, chickens, horses, sheep, goats, and pigs. Our job is to describe each ingredient using its observable properties, meaning the things we can see, feel, and notice about it, like its color, texture, shape, and size. Use your magnifying glass to look closely at each one. Then we will classify the ingredients into categories based on what we observe and what we learn about each one.”
- d. Remind students that these are animal foods, not people food, and that we observe them with our eyes and hands. We do not taste them.
- e. Guided observation — examine each ingredient and describe its observable properties: The teacher directs students to one ingredient at a time, giving each table a few minutes to look closely with their magnifying glasses, touch it (except the ingredients being observed by sight only, per the allergy note), and talk with their table group about what they notice before the teacher asks the guided questions aloud to the whole class. Students respond orally, describing color, texture, shape, and size in their own words. The teacher can jot notable student observations on the board or chart paper as an informal running list, to be referenced later during the sorting activity.

Wheat kernels:

- “What do the wheat kernels look like up close through your magnifying glass? What color are they? Are they smooth or rough?”
- “Wheat kernels come from wheat plants, the same wheat that makes bread and crackers. They give animals carbohydrates, which provide energy. Which animals do you think might eat wheat?”

Cracked corn:

- “What does the cracked corn look like? How is it different from the wheat kernels?”
- “Corn gives animals carbohydrates too, energy for moving and staying warm. Cows, pigs, and chickens all eat corn. Have you ever seen a farmer feed corn to animals?”

Oats:

- “Look at the oats. What shape are they? Are they bigger or smaller than the corn?”
- “Oats provide carbohydrates and some protein. Farmers may feed oats to horses. Oats help give them energy and keep their muscles strong. Protein is what helps muscles and bodies grow.”

Hay:

- “What does the hay look like and feel like? Is it soft or scratchy? What does it smell like?”
- “Hay is dried grass. It is one of the most important things cattle, horses, sheep, and goats eat, especially in the winter when there is no fresh grass. It gives animals fiber and energy to stay warm.”

Mineral salt block:

- “Look at the mineral salt block. What do you notice about it? What does it feel like?”
 - “Farmers put mineral salt blocks out for their cattle and other animals to lick. The minerals in the block, things like calcium and phosphorus, help keep animals’ bones and bodies strong. Vitamins and minerals are nutrients that keep animals healthy in ways that grain and hay alone cannot.”
- f. Explain to students: “We looked at five feed ingredients today, but there is one more thing every farm animal needs that is not on our table: water. Just like you need water every single day to stay healthy, farm animals need fresh, clean water every day too. A cow can drink up to 40 gallons of water in a single day! Farmers and ranchers make sure their animals always have access to water through water troughs, automatic waterers, or even ponds on the ranch. Animals need both food and water to stay healthy. One without the other is not enough.”
- g. Ask students:
- “Why do you think an animal needs water even if it is eating plenty of hay and grain?”
 - “How do you think a rancher gets water to cattle that are out in a big pasture far from the barn?”
5. Sorting Activity — Classifying Objects and Words
- a. Explain to students: “Now we are going to classify what we observed. Scientists and farmers sort things into categories to understand them better. We are going to classify our feed ingredients into categories based on what we noticed about them and what we learned: ingredients that give energy, and ingredients that keep animals healthy in other ways.”
- b. Guide students to sort the physical ingredients on their Feed Sorting Mat:
- Energy category: wheat kernels, cracked corn, oats, hay
 - Health category: mineral salt block
 - Essential for life: water — not on the table today, but equally important as any feed ingredient
- c. Explain to students: “When we sort with our hands, we sort the actual objects in front of us. Sorting words is a different skill. That means using the word itself, without the object in front of us, to figure out which category it belongs to. This helps us understand what each category really represents, even without touching the object.”
- d. Distribute word cards (wheat, corn, oats, hay, minerals, water) to each table. Guide students to sort the word cards into the same categories on their mat:
- Energy words: wheat, corn, oats, hay
 - Health words: minerals
 - Essential for life: water
- e. Ask students:
- “Why did you sort the word water into its own category, separate from the energy words and the health words? What does that category represent?”
 - “What is the connection between the energy words and the health words? How do they work together to help an animal grow?”
 - “Why do animals need energy from their food?”
 - “Why do animals need minerals even if they are already eating grain and hay?”

- “How is a farmer choosing what to feed an animal like a caregiver choosing what to feed you?”

Keep nutrient categories accessible: energy foods for carbohydrates and protein, and health foods for minerals. The goal is for students to understand that farmers choose feed intentionally and that sorting words, not just objects, helps build category understanding, not to master nutrition science.

6. Narrative Writing: Temporal Words, Details, Thoughts and Feelings, and Collective Nouns

- Gather students where they can see chart paper clearly.
- Explain to students: “Now we are going to write about what we did today and what we learned. In second grade, our narrative writing recounts a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events. That means we do not just list what happened. We add details about our actions, our thoughts, and our feelings. We use temporal words to show order, and we end with a sense of closure. Since we investigated feed for animals like cattle, chickens, and pigs today, you will probably want to write about groups of animals, so let’s learn a special kind of noun that will help with that.”
- Collective nouns: Explain to students: “Today we are going to practice a new kind of noun called a collective noun. A collective noun names a whole group of something as one word. A group of cattle is called a herd. A group of chickens or sheep is called a flock. A group of baby pigs is called a litter. A group of horses working together is called a team.”
- Model examples: “Instead of writing ‘the cows,’ I could write ‘the herd.’ Instead of writing ‘many chickens,’ I could write ‘a flock of chickens.’”
- Ask students: “What is the correct collective noun for a group of sheep? What about a group of baby pigs?”
- Adding thoughts and feelings: Explain to students: “We also add our thoughts and feelings to our narrative, not just what happened. Instead of just writing, I touched the hay, I could write, I touched the hay and felt surprised at how scratchy it was.”
- Temporal words for sequencing: Explain to students: “When we tell about two or more things that happened, we use temporal words to show the order things occurred: first, next, then, finally. These words help our reader follow along in the right order. Watch me use them as I write about my own investigation.”
- Model a fully sequenced narrative on chart paper, thinking aloud about details, thoughts and feelings, collective nouns, and checking spelling with a reference source:
 - “First, I looked closely at the oats. I want to spell oats. Let me sound it out: o-t-s. That is my best try. Now let me check our beginner dictionary to see if I spelled it correctly. I see it is spelled o-a-t-s. I will fix my spelling.” (temporal word, detail, dictionary check)
 - “Next, I touched the hay, and I felt surprised at how scratchy it was.” (temporal word, detail, feeling)
 - “Then, I thought about the herd of cattle eating this same hay in the winter.” (temporal word, collective noun, thought)
 - “Finally, I learned that my animal needs both food and water to stay healthy. That is my closing thought. It wraps up everything I learned from the whole investigation.” (temporal word, closure)

- i. Point out each temporal word, the collective noun, the thought or feeling detail, and the dictionary-checked word in the model. Check capitalization and end punctuation together as a class: “Does each of my sentences start with a capital letter? Does each one end with a period?”
 - j. Explain to students: “When you are not sure how to spell a word today, try your best first, then check a beginner dictionary or word list to fix it if you need to. That is what good second grade writers do.”
7. Independent Writing — What Do Farmers Feed Their Animals?
 - a. Have students return to their tables and distribute the writing sheet.
 - b. Explain to students: “Now it is your turn. Write about your investigation today. Recount what happened, in order, using temporal words like first, next, then, and finally. Include at least one detail about what you thought or felt. Try to use at least one collective noun, like herd or flock. End with a closing thought about what you learned.”
 - c. Students write independently, using drawing to support their writing as needed.
 - d. Circulate and support:
 - Prompt for sequencing: “What did you do first during the investigation? What happened next? What happened after that?”
 - Prompt for thoughts and feelings: “How did that part of the investigation make you feel? What were you wondering while you worked?”
 - Prompt for collective nouns: “Is there a group of animals in your writing? What is the collective noun for that group?”
 - Support for spelling: “Say the word slowly and write the sounds you hear. Then check our beginner dictionary to see if you spelled it correctly.”
 - Support for capitalization and end punctuation: “Does your sentence start with a capital letter? What goes at the end?”
 - Support for closure: “How does your writing end? What is your final thought about what you learned today?”Differentiation: Students who need additional support may dictate their narrative while the teacher or a classroom helper scribes, or may use a picture-supported word bank for feed-ingredient words. Students ready for a challenge can add a third or fourth sequenced event, use a second collective noun, or explain in more detail why food and water work together.
8. Closing Discussion and Kansas Connection
 - a. Gather students back together with their writing sheets.
 - b. Ask students:
 - “What is the main purpose of our book? What is the most important thing it is teaching us?”
 - “What key detail do you remember about how farmers feed and water their animals?”
 - “What is the connection between food and water for a farm animal? Why does an animal need both?”
 - “Which feed ingredient surprised you the most today? Why?”
 - “Why do you think farmers choose specific feed for specific animals instead of just giving all animals the same thing?”
 - c. Kansas Connection: Explain to students: “Kansas farmers and ranchers feed their animals every single day of the year, rain or shine, hot or cold, just like our book says. In the Flint Hills of Kansas, cattle graze on native grasses in the spring and summer. In the winter, ranchers haul hay out to feed their herds every

morning so the cattle have enough to eat even when the grass is buried under snow and is not growing. Farmers who raise chickens, pigs, and horses mix special feed with grain and minerals to make sure those animals get everything they need. Whether you live on a farm or ranch, in a small town, or in a city, feeding an animal the right food and water is one of the most important ways a farmer or rancher shows they care."

d. Ask students:

- "Some of you may feed animals every day as part of your own family's farm or ranch. What animals do you feed, and what do you feed them?"
- "Some of you may not raise animals yourselves, but you see farmers and ranchers feeding animals often, maybe at a neighbor's place, a relative's place, or just around your community. What have you noticed about how they do it?"
- "Some of you may have fed an animal only sometimes, like a pet, a farm animal at a fair, or an animal at a petting zoo. Whichever one of these sounds like you, what did you feed, and what did you notice?"

Assessment: Student understanding is assessed through teacher observation during the second read-aloud, chart building, feed investigation, sorting activity, shared writing, and independent writing. The teacher should note whether students can confirm the author's main purpose using food- and water-specific evidence, explain how a specific image contributes to and clarifies the text, describe feed ingredients using observable properties such as color, texture, shape, and size, classify feed ingredients and corresponding words into categories and explain what each category represents, write a well-elaborated narrative that recounts a sequence of events, includes details about actions, thoughts, and feelings, uses temporal words, and provides a sense of closure, use collective nouns correctly, recall information from the investigation and book to support their writing, and consult a beginning dictionary to check and correct spelling. The completed writing sheet serves as the primary written artifact for this lesson.

Supplemental Activities: Display the completed writing sheets alongside the feed sorting mats and the *"What Do Farmers Feed Their Animals?"* chart from this lesson. Add the chart to the growing classroom display alongside the charts from Lessons 1 and 2. Guide students to see that feeding, sheltering, and providing medical care are all reasons farmers show they care. For an extension activity, challenge students to sort additional feed-related words, such as trough, pasture, or graze, into the existing categories.

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Student Name: _____

What Do Farmers Feed Their Animals?

Check Your Writing!



Include details.



Use collective nouns.

I, you, me

Use correct pronouns.

First, next, then, finally

Use temporal words.



Include a closing thought.

Feed Sorting Map

Energy

Health

Essential for Life