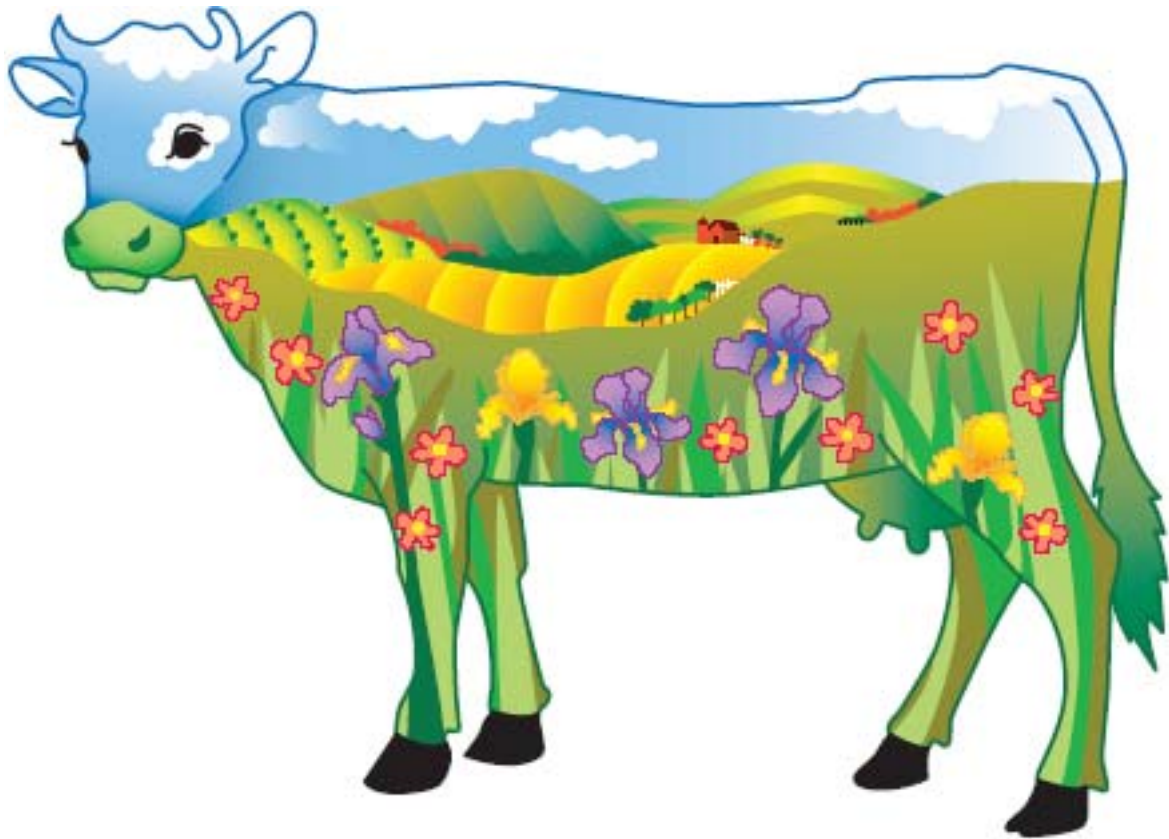


SOLE
Sciences of Life Explorations:
Through Agriculture
Grades 4 and 5



Teacher Guide
Unit: A Seed of Knowledge

UNIT PLAN

UNIT TITLE

A Seed of Knowledge

MONTH

February

GOAL

Students will learn how to write letters

Objectives

Students will:

1. Write letters to friends, relatives, and businesses to keep in touch (NYS Learning Standard 4: Language for Social Interaction, Elementary 2)
2. Use the process of drafting, revising, and proofreading to develop a well-constructed business letter for requesting garden supply catalogs (NYS Learning Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding, Elementary 1)
3. Present information in a variety of written forms such as a letter or brief report explaining what they have learned about agriculture (NYS Learning Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding - Speaking and Writing Elementary 2)
4. Express opinions in the form of letters to the editor or to legislators regarding issues concerning them such as education or the environment (NYS Learning Standard 3: Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation - Speaking and Writing, Elementary 2)

TERMS

communicate - To share information with someone or something else through the eyes, hand gestures, writing, speaking, or other ways.

signature - A person's own name written by hand, to show who wrote a document such as a letter.

Integrated Pest Management is a specialized form of environmental management wherein scientific research and real world application work together to reduce pests such as insects, diseases or weeds.

- 1. Proper identification of pests*
- 2. Learn the pest/ host biology*
- 3. Sample the environment for pests*
- 4. Determine an action threshold*
- 5. Choose the best tactic*
- 6. Evaluate results*

SAFETY

Follow general safety procedures.

Standards Matrix for this Lesson:

Standards:

Month	Unit	Math/Science/and Technology	English Language Arts	Social Studies	HEALTH	ARTS	Food & Fiber Literacy	CDOS	Other Languages	Interconnectedness
2	Healthy Eating Habits		4:5 e2							
			1:3 e1							
			1:3 e2							

Matrix Key:

NYS Learning Standards arranged by Standard: Category, Level

e = elementary i = intermediate

Categories:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Career Development | 10 Science |
| 2 Universal Foundation Skills | 11 Technology |
| 3 Language for Information and Understanding | 12 Interconnectedness: Common Themes |
| 4 Language for Literary Response and Expression | 13 Interdisciplinary Problem Solving |
| 5 Language for Social Interaction | 14 History of the United States and NY |
| 6 Communication Skills | 15 World History |
| 7 Analysis, Inquiry, and Design | 16 Geography |
| 8 Information Systems | 17 Economics |
| 9 Mathematics | |

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

http://www.readwritethink.org/student_mat/student_material.asp?id=5

<http://bostonteachnet.org/sparrow/Button1.htm>

<http://www.cornell.edu/outreach/programs/learning.cfm>

<http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/pp/summerscience/index.html>

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

crayons or colored pencils.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Winter is the time to begin preparing for planting. Seeds are some of the necessary ingredients.

Encourage your students to write a business letter requesting gardening and/or seed catalogs.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

How do I write a letter?

What are the parts of a letter?

Why should I write a letter?

INTEREST APPROACH ACTIVITIES

Building a Business Letter

Before the Internet, and cell phones, people wrote a lot more letters. A letter is a way of communicating with others by writing down what you want to say on paper and then sending the message to people you want to read it.

Whether it's typed or handwritten, a business has six basic building blocks. Skip one line between each section.

1. Heading

In the upper left-hand corner of the page, enter your own street address, city, state, zip code, and the date of the letter so that the person knows when you wrote it.

The heading is important in a business letter because the person reading the letter might not be the same person who opened it, and he or she can't look at the envelope for the return address.

2. Inside Address

Skip a line and write the name and address whom you are writing to. You may not know the name or job title of the person you're writing to, but it's best to include them if you do. Then list the company's name, street, city, state, and zip code.

3. Greeting

This is where you say "hello" as if you were talking to the reader face to face. In a business letter, some formal ways of greeting the reader if you don't know his or her name are "Dear Sir/Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern." The greeting is capitalized like the title of a book, and followed by a colon and another skipped line.

4. Body

This is the message you want to send to the person reading the letter. In a business letter, it should be brief, courteous and to the point. This is the middle of the letter, and contains three paragraphs. Each paragraph can be as short as one or two sentences. A very traditional letter will have indented paragraphs (where the first line starts with a few spaces before the first word) but this style is not used very often anymore.

A. The first paragraph tells who you are, and may give some background about you.

B. The second paragraph is where you get to the point and say why you're writing. If you're asking for something, this is where you do the asking.

C. The third paragraph thanks the reader.

5. Closing

This is when you say "goodbye" and end the letter. Common closings are "Sincerely," "Sincerely yours," or "Yours truly." Notice that when there are two words in the closing, only the first word starts with a capital letter. "Sincerely" is a way of saying that your message is honest and truthful. The closing ends with a comma

6. Signature

This tells the person who wrote the letter. It also shows that you take responsibility for everything the letter says. Write your name underneath the closing.

See the next page for a sample letter.

John Doe
123 Example St.
Anytown NY 00000
February 1, 2007

1. Heading

Harris Seeds
355 Paul Rd
P.O. Box 24966
Rochester NY 14624

2. Inside Address

To Whom it May Concern:

3. Greeting

My name is John Doe. I am in Mrs. Chen's fourth grade class at Anytown Central School, and we are studying plants this spring.

I would like a copy of your latest seed catalog. Our class will use it to research different seeds and possibly order some for our garden.

Thanks you for your time and attention.

4. Body

Sincerely yours,

John Doe

5. Closing

6. Signature

SUMMARY OF CONTENT

I. A Friendly Letter

- A. The differences between a freindly letter and business letter.
- B. Students are asked to read a friendly letter and circle the heading, greeting, body, conclusion, and signature.

II. Writing a Class Letter

- A. Asks students to write a letter as a class to a local business in order to describe all of the new knowledge they have gained about agriculture and science.
- B. Students must take the steps of choosing what to discuss, which business to send the letter to, and developing the letter.

III. Review and Vocabulary

- A. Reviews the key concepts of letter writing.
- B. Definitions for the vocabualry terms are also provided.

TEACHING-LEARNING ACTIVITIES

I. A Friendly Letter

- A. Students should complete this page individually.

II. Writing a Class Letter

- A. As a class, discuss what the students would like to discuss in their letter, and who they would like to send the letter too.
- B. Students can either send individual letters or one class letter. Either way each student should practice writing his own letter.

III. Review and Vocabulary

- A. This page is provided for student reference.

Student Lesson: A Seed of Knowledge A Friendly Letter

After you have read about how to build a letter, read the letter below that Susan wrote to her friend Roberto. When you are done, answer the questions. Unlike a business letter, a friendly letter has no inside address. This is because the reader of a friendly letter usually already knows the person writing to him or her, and opens the letter himself. Also, the greeting ends with a comma instead of a colon. A friendly letter is hardly ever typed.

*123 Same St.
Anytown, NY 12345
February 4 2008*

Dear Roberto,

I miss you a lot since you moved. How do you like your new school? I am having a birthday party next Friday at 6:00 pm. Can you come to it? Angela, Jim, and Keisha will be there. Please write back and let me know!

*Your friend,
Susan*

1. Circle the heading in red.
2. Circle the greeting in blue.
3. Copy the first sentence of the body:

4. Copy the last sentence of the body:

5. Circle the closing in green
6. Circle the signature in orange.

Student Lesson: A Seed of Knowledge Writing a Class Letter

Write a real business letter together as a class!

There are a lot of reasons to write a business letter, but the three main purposes are usually:

1. To ask someone to do something
2. To express appreciation for something someone has done
3. To express an opinion about something that's important to you and to the person receiving the letter



You have been learning about science and agriculture. Now it's time to use that knowledge! Some people or businesses you could choose to write to are:

- Local newspaper Local television station
- Garden center Farm or political representative
- Scientist Farmer
- Gardener

You might ask your State Senator to support science and agriculture in schools; ask a scientist at a local college for more information on a topic you're studying; thank a farmer who came to speak to your class; write a letter to the newspaper editor about the importance of good nutrition in school; or tell a seed company how well the plants you raised from their seeds are doing. There are lots of possibilities!

Decide what you want to talk about. Think about or look over the lessons you have done during the last few months. Choose something that you have learned or that was interesting. As part of your letter, you will want to explain why it is important to learn about science and agriculture.

Practice creating the body of your letter below (or on a blank sheet of paper).

Student Lesson: A Seed of Knowledge Review

- There are 5 parts to a friendly letter: heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature.
- There are 6 parts to a business letter: heading, inside address, greeting, body, closing, and signature.
- The heading is in the upper left hand corner and it includes the return mailing address and the letter's date.
- The inside address is underneath the the heading and it this is the address you are sending the letter to.
- The greeting is the opening of the letter. It can be worded as "Dear _____" or "To Whom it May Concern." All first letters are capitalized.
- The closing can be worded as "Sincerely," or "Yours truly," meaning the letter is honest.
- The signature is the name of the person writing the letter or a representative of a group.



Vocabulary

Communicate - To share information with someone or something else. It can be with the eyes, hand gestures, writing, speaking, and other ways.

Signature - A person's name written in their own handwriting, or with a keyboard to show who wrote the letter.

Teacher Information for Student Worksheets

Student Worksheet 1

A Friendly Letter

Answers:

Heading - 123 Some St
Anytown, NY 12345
February 4th, 2007

Greeting - Dear Robert

Body - I miss you a lot. How do you like your new school?
I am having a birthday party next Friday at 6:00pm.
Can you come to it? Angela, Jim and Kelly will be there.

Closing - Sincerely Your Friend. Please write back and let me know!

Signature - Susan

Student Worksheet 2

Writing a Class Letter

This is an opportunity to review. Students may be directed to look through past lesson activities, or to recall specific new knowledge they developed. Use this page as a practice sheet for students to list ideas, or form a paragraph that they will polish into the final product. Again, we hope this activity is flexible enough to be used by individual letter writers or entire class.

Student Worksheet 3

Review and Vocabulary

This page is provided for student reference. It reviews the key concepts of letter building and the important vocabulary terms.