



Presenting on Agriculture Issues

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- B. Relationships
 - B2. Interact and work with others
- M. Communications
 - M3. Makes Effective Business Presentations

National Standards

- CS.09. Compare and contrast issues affecting the AFNR industry.
- AS.06.01.02.a. Explain the implications of animal welfare and animal rights for animal agriculture.
- BS.01.01.02.a. Investigate current applications of biotechnology in agriculture.
- ESS.04.02.01.b. Evaluate environmental hazards created by different types of solid waste, solid waste accumulation, and solid waste disposal.
- NL-ENG.K-12.5 – Communication Strategies
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 – Applying Language Skills
- NS.5-8.3 – Life Science
- NS.5-8.6 – Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the student will...
 - Evaluate current agriculture issues.
- As a result of this **lesson** the student will...
 - Develop an outline of an agriculture issue.
 - List the characteristics of quality presentations.
 - Give a presentation on an agriculture issue.

Content Outline

- I. **List Characteristics of quality presentations**
 - A. Components of Effective, Nonverbal communication
 - 1. Eye Contact: Direct, visual contact with every person or group of people for three to five seconds

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 90 minutes

Resources

National FFA Organization (2009). Retrieved October 1, 2009. From Team AgEd Learning Center website. http://www.agedlearning.org/files/scorm/Ag_Issues/HTML/issues/animal-examples.html — National FFA Organization. (2009). LK.HS.90 . Retrieved October 2, 2009 from LifeKnowledge Online at <http://agedlearning.org>.

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- Overhead projector/transparencies
- Poster board – one per group
- Markers – one set per group
- Sticky notes – three per student
- MS.AI.1.6.TM.A – one per teacher
- MS.AI.1.6.AS.A-AS.D – one per group (if needed)
- MS.AI.1.6.ASSESS.A – one per group

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in **bold italics**:

Nonverbal Communication

- 2. Gestures: Add impact and clarity
- 3. Movement/Posture – displays confidence
- 4. Facial Expressions – show your emotions

B. Creating an Outline

- 1. Presentation Title
- 2. Topic area/what it is or means
- 3. List at least three facts about the topic

Interest Approach

Lead students through the following exercise to get them thinking about effective quality presentations.

By a show of hands, how many of you watch TV at night once all of your homework is finished?

Wait for a show of hands.

What about on the weekends?

Wait for a show of hands.



Lesson Number: MS.AI.1.6

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Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Develop an outline of an agriculture issue.

It looks like the majority of us watch TV at some point during our week. Let's pull out a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Take 90 seconds to write down the name of a favorite TV show and list five characteristics that make the TV show you wrote down your favorite. What questions are there?

Allow students 90 seconds to write.

Wow, I am impressed with the quickness in which you work! Take the next two minutes to share our thoughts on our favorite show and the reasons with the person sitting next to you. Be sure to allow enough time for both of you to get through your lists during these two minutes.

Allow students to share for two minutes. Let them know when they have 30 seconds of time left to share.

Give your partner a high-five and tell them thanks for sharing.

Allow students time to give high-fives.

Great! Who will be the first to volunteer to share their favorite TV show and reasons?

Have three students share their favorite TV shows and reasons.

It sounds like we all have a variety of TV shows that we like to watch and many different reasons why we like to watch them. Some reasons I heard (summarize using information shared in your class) were that the shows were interesting, action packed, and kept your attention. Just as TV shows pique our interest or provide us a reason to keep watching, our presentations can provide the same experience to our audience. As we move ahead with our agriculture issue presentations today, we'll discover some **nonverbal communication** tips and techniques that you can use to keep the audience tuned in to your presentation.

If you have taught lesson MS.AI.1.1 or MS.AI.1.5, have students utilize the materials that they have gathered within these lessons for their outlines and presentations. If these lessons have not been covered you can utilize agriculture issue fact sheets **MS.AI.1.6.AS.A-MS.AI.1.6.AS.D**. After discussing the different components of an outline, have students split into presentation groups and assign appropriate topic areas.

Before we can give a presentation we must know the topic we plan to discuss and create an outline. What are some components that we should include in our presentation outline?

Solicit student responses and record these on the writing surface.

Great brainstorming, everyone! Here are the items that we will want to include in our presentation outlines for today:

- presentation title
- topic area/ what it is or means
- at least three facts about the topic area

What questions are there about the areas to include in the outline?

Answer any questions.

When I say MOVE you have 10 minutes to complete both the outline, with all of the items we discussed, and the poster. Your poster should only capture the key points that you wish to share in your presentation. You will be assigned to a group based your topic area for your presentation. What questions are there? MOVE!

Quickly move about the room assigning each group an agricultural issue topic by either letting the groups choose the topic or assigning topics from the activity sheets. Monitor the room for questions that may arise as the group work gets underway. Remind students when they have two minutes left to complete their work.



Lesson Number: MS.AI.1.6

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Presenting on Agriculture Issues

Thank you for working so hard on your outlines and posters. Please hold them both up so that I may see that each group has completed. Now that we have the posters created, we can focus on the delivery or presentation of the content.

Objective 2: List the characteristics of quality presentations.

Utilize **MS.AI.1.6.TM.A** to share the following information on the components of effective non-verbal presentation delivery.

Before we begin our presentations, let's list characteristics of nonverbal skills associated with successful and engaging presentations. You have important information to share, but as you know if you do not present it in an engaging fashion your audience is less likely to hear what you are saying.

- A. Components of Effective Nonverbal communication
1. Eye Contact: Direct, visual contact with every person or group of people for three to five seconds
 2. Gestures: Add impact and clarity
 3. Movement/Posture – displays confidence
 4. Facial Expressions – show your emotions

At this point, the class has been working approximately 25-35 minutes. If you have a 45-minute class, this would be a good time to conclude the day's lesson with the Voice Modulator e-Moment®. The next day's lesson should be devoted to allowing time for groups to review their material and then presenting. If you are stopping the class now, set up the Voice Modulator e-Moment in the following way:

Students will repeat key words or phrases from the content outline on **MS.AI.1.6.TM.A** but change their voices as they say these phrases out loud. Changes in their voice can be in the intonation, volume, accent or tone. One phrase might be a whisper and another might be as Darth Vader, for example. Determine, with the class, the key words or phrases. Gather student input on how the individual phrases should be spoken and make the final determination. Say the phrase in its new way and have the class repeat after you.

If you are not stopping the class, proceed to Objective 3.

As you present today, incorporate these components into your presentation. Remember: the goal is to gain and keep your audience's attention!

Objective 3: Give a presentation on an agriculture issue.

Allow students to work in their groups to discuss who will present each part of their presentations. Allot the appropriate amount of time needed for preparation; a recommendation would be three minutes. Provide each group with a copy of **MS.AI.1.6.ASSESS.A** in order to reflect on what their scores will be based upon.

You now have all the pieces you need to give a successful presentation. When I say TEAM you will have six minutes to work in your groups to finalize your presentations. Remember that your presentations should not be more than five minutes and should follow the suggested criteria on the sheet titled "The Score Card." I will then call each group up one at a time to present your knowledge. What questions are there? TEAM!

Provide the groups with a one-minute reminder for putting the finishing touches on their presentations.

Thanks for working so diligently. Remember when you are not presenting, it is your job to be active and respectful learners. Show me what this looks like.

Students should be attentive and ready to listen to the group presentations.

Great! Which group will volunteer to present first?

Rotate through all the groups allowing each one to present their agriculture issue in the five- minute time frame. Use **MS.AI.1.6.ASSESS.A** to score each group's presentation.

Great work, class! You have demonstrated to me that you know how to present and learn about agriculture topics. As we continue our unit on agriculture issues let's take the information we have and continue to build upon it.



Lesson Number: MS.AI.1.6

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Review/Summary

Agricultural issues surround us every day, and it's important to remember to stay informed of both sides of the issue. On a sticky note, write one thing you knew about agriculture issues before we started class today. Now write one item that you learned today. Finally, write one question you still have about agriculture issues. Be prepared to share what you wrote.

Have students post sticky notes on the board or at the front of the room. Go through a few comments generating discussion on agricultural issues and how students can be more informed on the events that are occurring all around them.

We still have so much to learn about agriculture issues and the new things coming in the industry. We know that agriculture issues touch every area of agriculture, and we must be knowledgeable about both sides of the issues in order to take the appropriate actions for which we believe.

Application

Extended classroom activity:

Have students give their presentation at an open house or for another class.

FFA activity:

Have students use their presentation as a recruitment tool for a younger class or for another school group.

SAE activity:

Have students list careers that are associated with the agriculture issues they researched and presented on.

Evaluation

Students should be evaluated on their presentation using the rubric on MS.AI.1.6.ASSESS.A.

Answers to Evaluation

Scores will vary among groups.



The Score Card

Name _____

Below is a rubric which tells you how the presentation will be graded. As you prepare for your presentation, make sure you aim for meeting the requirements listed in the Acceptable column. You will be graded on a scale from 1-5, 5 being the highest score you can receive.

Total ____ / 5

Content Points	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Points
Organization & Accuracy of Information	1. Organized 2. Accurate information presented	1. Unorganized 2. Inaccurate information presented	____ / 1
Eye Contact	1. Maintains appropriate eye contact for the duration of the presentation.	1. Makes eye contact two or fewer times with the audience during the presentation.	____ / 1
Gestures	1. Gestures add impact and clarity to the presentation	1. Gestures distract from the presentation	____ / 1
Movement/ Posture	1. Confidence is expressed in movements and exhibited by upright posture.	1. Lacking confidence in movements which is exhibited by slouching/ poor posture.	____ / 1
Facial Expressions	1. Appropriate facial expressions accompany the ideas presented.	1. Facial expressions are meaningless and distracting.	____ / 1



A. Components of Effective, Nonverbal Communication

- 1. Eye Contact: Direct, visual contact with every person or group of people for three to five seconds**
- 2. Gestures: Add impact and clarity**
- 3. Movement/Posture: displays confidence**
- 4. Facial Expressions: show your emotions**



Animal Rights & Animal Welfare

The issue of animal rights versus animal welfare has commonly been discussed and debated for a number of years. Animal rights is the idea that the most basic interests of animals should be same as the similar interests of humans and that animals should not be exploited or used for human purposes. These individuals and groups believe that animals should not be used for food, clothing, or even companionship.

Animal welfare refers to the overall humane treatment and well-being of animals, whether they are used for human use and consumption or not. Those concerned with animal welfare believe that there is nothing wrong with using animals as resources as long as there is no unnecessary suffering.

There are a number of concerns on the minds of animal rights groups. Commonly used and scientifically-based production practices are questioned by individuals and animal rights activist groups. Another issue these groups promote is the utilization of free-range production systems, where animals have more freedom to roam, instead of producing animals indoors, where they are protected from weather conditions and natural predators. Although the price for free-range meat and poultry products is typically more expensive, a small percentage of consumers are still willing to spend the extra money to purchase food produced in this manner.

To address consumer concerns regarding the welfare of animals used for agricultural production, livestock and poultry producers recognize and accept responsibility for the humane care of their animals. Producers understand the more moral and ethical obligation that they have to ensure animal well-being. They realize that consumers are increasingly interested in how the animals used to produce food are raised and trust that those animals were raised in a way that ensured their well-being. Also, good animal care provides an economic advantage. Animals that are cared for appropriately grow faster and more efficiently than those that are not. Good animal care practices promote good health, which reduces production costs associated with veterinary services and animal health products.



Biotechnology

Biotechnology is a constantly evolving technology. Through biotechnology, advancements are being made on a daily basis to continually improve the productivity and efficiency of agriculturalists.

Biotechnology refers to the application of physical, chemical, or engineering practices to living organisms. The following are examples of improvements that can be made as a result of biotechnology:

- Improvement of animal production's impact on the environment
- Reduce dependence on agricultural chemicals
- Pest/disease-resistant plants and animals
- Improved vaccines
- Increased milk production in dairy cattle
- Improvement of feeds to increase nutritional value
- Genetic improvement of livestock to meet consumer demand
- Genetically modifying fruits and vegetables to allow for transportation to all parts of the country and world

Even as this list continues to grow, there are a number of individuals concerned about the reliance on the use of biotechnology in agriculture. The following are common concerns:

- Labeling genetically modified foods for human consumption to allow consumers to choose how their food is produced
- Potential for genetic defects and increased risk of disease
- Adverse affects these genetic modifications in plants and animals may have on humans when consumed
- Foreign markets' reaction to plants, animals, and food products exported from the U.S. produced as a result of biotechnology



Waste Management

Areas where a large number of livestock and/or poultry are housed or maintained – such as swine operations, dairy farms, laying houses, and cattle feedlots – can often cause concern regarding proper waste management and their impact on the environment. These systems produce a regular flow of manure, therefore creating an issue for waste management and odor control.

Livestock and poultry producers are committed to managing their farms and feedlots in an environmentally responsible manner in order to protect the environment and conserve the natural resources for future generations. Today's operations employ waste treatment systems that capture, treat, and recycle the valuable nutrients produced in manure so they can be used as a natural source of fertilizer. Producers work to address environmental challenges by partnering with government, scientists, conservationists, and the communities in which they live and farm.

Odor management is a commonly discussed topic when it comes to livestock and poultry production's impact on the environment. Some states have put stipulations on farmers and farming operations concerning the odor coming from their facilities. Some are required to keep lagoons covered, while other states have enacted zoning ordinances to restrict the development of more of these types of operations.

Another impact of farming on the environment that is often discussed is the issue of waste runoff. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as other state and federal agencies oversee farming operations and ensure that that runoff levels are within a scientifically-based measurement considered safe for the environment.

While there isn't presently a clear solution to waste management, producers understand that the only way to ensure their operations will continue to exist is to minimize their environmental impact. Farmers are considered the first environmentalists and continue to strive to be on the forefront of technology, research, and best management practices in order to maintain natural resources.



Organic Agriculture

A production system known as organic farming came to be in the late 1960s and early 1970s when some became concerned about the amount of chemicals, such as pesticides and synthetic (or man-made) fertilizers, that were being applied to cropland. The solution for some was to use natural elements to fertilize crops rather than using products that had been manufactured. Organic farming also restricts the use of any chemicals such as herbicides, insecticides, or fungicides.

The idea of organic foods is growing to incorporate a larger group of producers and consumers for some of the following reasons:

- Some consumers believe organically grown food is more nutritious and wholesome
- Increased availability and awareness of organic food production
- Development of worldwide organic standards for food products
- Increased financial support and investments for organic food production
- Consumers are more financially able to afford additional premiums for organic foods

Meat and poultry can also be produced organically. This includes raising animals without the use of pesticides, growth stimulants, medications or hormones. These animals are also raised in open-air environments instead of barns and other production buildings.

Although this may be a growing industry, there is still controversy surrounding this type of farming. These concerns include:

- Organic foods are more expensive and of poorer quality
- Self-defense mechanisms in plants may often let off more toxins than those that would be applied in pesticides
- Some studies have shown that organic foods contain higher levels of unsafe bacteria and other organisms
- Organic production requires more land and labor to produce food