



Advocacy in Agriculture

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- C. Vision
 - C1. Contemplate the future
- N. Decision Making

National Standards

- NL-ENG.K-12.4 – Communication Skills
- NL-ENG.K-12.8 – Developing Research Skills
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 – Applying Language Skills

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the students will...
- Recognize the significance that advocacy has in agriculture.
- As a result of this **lesson** the students will...
- Describe the influence of advocacy on the agricultural industry.

Content Outline

Objective 1: Describe the influence of **advocacy** on the agricultural industry.

- I. **Identify important events in the history of the American Farm Bureau**
 - A. Established in 1919 to further extension education efforts and provide information to farmers and consumers.
 - B. In 1922, The New York Times called the American Farm Bureau "The most forceful group of influence in national politics today."
 - C. Influential in creating the 1933 Agriculture Adjustment Act, which increased farm loans and provided funds to stop farm foreclosures.
 - D. Developed a soil conservation plan in 1935 to prevent overproduction of crops.
 - E. Pushed to open exports during World War II as many countries suffered extensive damage to farmland during the war.

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 45 minutes.

Resources

Create Rubrics for your Project-Based Learning Activities. Retrieved October 25, 2009, from Rubistar Web site: <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?ts=1257733161>
— National FFA Organization, Team Ag Ed, National Animal Identification System Instructional Materials. — National FFA Organization. (2009). LifeKnowledge Online. Retrieved July 9, 2009, from — <http://agedlearning.org>

Tools, Equipment and Supplies

Writing surface
Overhead projector/transparencies
Small ball/item to toss
MS.AI.3.2.TM.A – one per teacher
MS.AI.3.2.TM.B – one per teacher
MS.AI.3.2.ASSESS.A – one per student
MS.AI.3.2.RUBRIC.A – one per student

Key Terms

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

Advocacy

II. Describe current concerns of American agriculture

- A. Global trade
- B. Concern for the environment
- C. Providing a safe and efficient food supply
- D. Animal welfare
- E. Providing accurate information to the American public about agriculture

III. Summarize a current event relating to a current concern.

Interest Approach

We all have important decisions to make each and every day. Let's be reflective thinkers as we identify some of those decisions we make each day.

Distribute blank sheets of paper and markers to assist students in completing the activity. Get students to brainstorm the decisions they make daily. The Hieroglyphics e-Moment® challenges students to create an "icon" or symbol that represents a concept.



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When I say CREATE, draw five icons that each represent a decision that you make in a typical school day. For example, we all must decide what clothes we are going to wear. We will have two minutes to complete this activity. Be prepared to share. What questions do you have? CREATE!

Use the Me-You-Us e-Moment to process student responses. Me-You-Us asks students to reflect on a question posed by the teacher (Me), and then allows students to pair in order to share thoughts (You), finally the pairs share with larger groups or the entire class in order to combine all students' thoughts (Us).

Now that you have identified some of the decisions you make each day, share those decisions that you make with your neighbor.

Allow students to pair share, and then elicit the class for examples of decisions that are made each day. Record some or all of the class responses on the board. Possible responses include: abiding by rules; what clothes to wear to school; how to get to school; drive to school or ride the school bus; what to eat for breakfast, lunch or dinner; which friends to spend time with.

Great job! We have identified quite an impressive list of important decisions that we face each day. Now let's begin thinking about "how" we make those decisions.

Using our list on the board and the back side of your decision icon paper, categorize these decisions into two categories. 1. Decisions that you make by yourself; and, 2. Decisions that may require input from others. You may work with your neighbor to complete. We have three minutes.

Allow students to work for a few minutes, and then debrief the activity with the class.

As we have discussed, we make a variety of decisions each day. Many of them are minor and do not have a great effect on others. However, there are times when the decisions we make require the help and opinion of others. This assistance enables us to arrive at a sound decision that's best for us and those we impact.

Let's apply what we have just learned about decision-making back to how **advocacy** influences the agriculture industry.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Describe the influence of **advocacy** on the agricultural industry.

Just like we make multiple decisions each and every day, people form opinions every day as well. Unfortunately, not all opinions are created by fact or logic. The agriculture industry depends upon many different advocates to promote agriculture. One of the most influential advocates for American agriculture is the American Farm Bureau. Let's take a look at how the Farm Bureau has impacted American agriculture.

Show **MS.AI.3.2.TM.A** and ask students to capture the notes in their notebooks.

American Farm Bureau

Established in 1919 to further extension education efforts and provide information to farmers and consumers.

You may discuss how this relates to FFA/Vocational Education as the establishment of the extension service and vocational agriculture courses stimulated the formation of the Farm Bureau.

In 1922, The New York Times called the American Farm Bureau "The most forceful group of influence in national politics today."

With a large percentage of Americans being involved in production agriculture, the Farm Bureau created a method in which the opinions of the American farmer could be presented to political powerhouses.

Influential in creating the 1933 Agriculture Adjustment Act, which increased farm loans and provided funds to stop farm foreclosures.

The Great Depression obviously had a tremendous impact on agriculture. The number of farms decreased and many farms were foreclosed upon.

Developed a soil conservation plan in 1935 to prevent overproduction of crops.



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The start of the environmental concerns and the Conservation Reserve Program.

Pushed to open exports during World War II as many countries suffered extensive damage to farmland during the war.

This allowed U.S. farmers to take advantage of the hunger created in other countries because of their lack of production due to the war damage. Profit potential was increased with the world market.

Now that we are aware of how **advocacy** has impacted the agriculture industry in the past, let's take a look at what current issues are being advocated for or against and contemplate the future:

Show **MS.AI.3.2.TM.B** and have students capture it in their notes.

Using the Internet or magazines (depending upon what is available), students will locate a current event relating to one of the current concerns of the Farm Bureau. After securing their articles, they will read the article and summarize it by tracing around their hand and using each finger and the palm for the basic signal words: who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Now that we know what the current concerns are, let's take a look at a more specific item. When I say CURRENT EVENT, you will have the next 10 minutes to locate a current event that is related to the current concerns of today's agriculture advocates. You may use any of the resources located in the magazine rack to find your article. Think about the five items we just discussed as you search for ideas. What questions do you have? After locating your article, begin reading. While you read be sure to think about the six basic question words: who, what, when, where, why, and how. We will be working with these words as we continue. CURRENT EVENT!

As students are working, monitor their progress, offer ideas, and help them locate articles appropriate for their reading level. When they are finished reading, they will use their hand to summarize the article they selected.

Wow, I feel like I am in a room full of experts. On your paper, trace around your hand. You will be answering each of the basic question words on the fingers and the palm. For example, your pinky finger could be the "who," ring finger the "what," middle finger the "when," pointer the "where," thumb the "why," and your palm could be the "how." Don't forget to write your name, the name of the article, and the magazine title on the top of your page.

Review/Summary

Using a small ball (or any item that can be tossed), randomly toss it to students. When they catch it, they will share something they learned from today's class. After a student shares what they have learned, briefly share important details as a class. Then the student will toss the ball back to you, and you will toss it to another student.

I will toss this ball randomly to a student. When the ball comes to you, please share one thing you have learned today. After you have shared, toss it back to me and I will then toss it to the next student. Please remember the rule of no repeats is in effect: this means if someone has already said what you planned to say, you need to think of something else you learned.

Toss the ball to several students and debrief what they say.

Wow, today has been a great class! Thank you for all of your hard work and I look forward to seeing you during our next class period!



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Application

Extended classroom activity:

Invite a local Farm Bureau member to speak to the class and share the importance of the local organizations.

FFA activity:

Develop an interactive booth that could be displayed at parent/teacher conferences showcasing agriculture advocacy efforts.

SAE activity:

Develop a radio spot to highlight successful SAE programs and how they have a positive impact on the agriculture industry.

Evaluation

Using their notes, students will create a timeline on MS.AI.3.2.ASSESS.A.

Answers to Evaluation

MS.AI.3.2.RUBRIC.A



American Farm Bureau

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Current concerns of agriculture advocates:

- **Global trade**
- **Concern for the environment**
- **Providing a safe and efficient food supply**
- **Animal welfare**
- **Providing accurate information to the American public about agriculture**



Name _____

Directions: Using your notes, create a timeline showcasing three important decisions in which Farm Bureau has been involved. Show these decisions by using a solid line, and writing the date and decision below the line.

Time Line _____

Also make two predictions about two decisions you think will occur in the future, and include them in their timeline. Show your prediction by using a dashed line, and writing the date and decision below the line.

1. _____

2. _____



CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Content/Facts	Facts were accurate for all events reported on the timeline.	Facts were accurate for almost all events reported on the timeline.	Facts were accurate for most (~75%) of the events reported on the timeline.	Facts were often inaccurate for events reported on the timeline.
Readability	The overall appearance of the timeline is pleasing and easy to read.	The overall appearance of the timeline is somewhat pleasing and easy to read.	The timeline is relatively readable.	The timeline is difficult to read.
Dates	An accurate, complete date has been included for each event.	An accurate, complete date has been included for almost every event.	An accurate date has been included for almost every event.	Dates are inaccurate and/or missing for several events.
Time Use	Classroom time was used to work on the project. Conversations were not disruptive and were focused on the work.	Classroom time was used to work on the project the majority of the time. Conversations were not disruptive and were focused on the work.	Classroom time was used to work on the project the majority of the time, but conversations often were disruptive or did not focus on the work.	Student did not use classroom time to work on the project and/or was highly disruptive.