



Perceptions vs. Reality

Middle School Food and Agriculture Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- L. Spiritual Growth
- L2. Respect and be sensitive to others' beliefs

National Standards

- CS.01.05.01.c. Articulate current issues that are important to the local, state, national, and global communities.
- CS.01.05.03.b. Engage in activities to help develop personal awareness of diversity.
- CS.02.06.02.c. Demonstrate respect and sensitivity to others' beliefs.
- NL-ENG.K-12.4 – Communication Skills
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 – Applying Language Skills
- NS.5-8.6 – Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the student will...
- Analyze common agriculture perceptions.
- As a result of this **lesson** students will...
- Differentiate between **perceptions** versus **reality**.
- Cite three examples of how views or opinions are created.

Content Outline

Objective 1. Differentiate between **perceptions** and **reality**.

1. **Perceptions:** A result of an observation or a mental image
2. **Reality:** The quality or state of being real

Objective 2. List three ways views are created: Sources of our **Perceptions**

1. People: friends, family, teachers
2. Media: radio, advertisements, movies, Internet

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: two 45- minute periods.

Resources

Demographics. (n.d.) Retrieved from http://www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_about.stats
National FFA Organization. (2003). LifeKnowledge Precepts and Signs of Success.

Tools, Equipment and Supplies

Playdoh Canisters – one per student
Writing surface
Transparencies/Projector
MS.IAS.5.1.AS.A – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.AS.B – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.AS.C – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.AS.D – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.AS.E – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.AS.F – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.TM.A – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.TM.B – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.TM.C – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.TM.D – one per teacher
MS.IAS.5.1.ASSESS.A – one per student
Ball/ Paper ball

Key Terms

Perception
Reality

3. Experiences: Where we live, places we have gone

Interest Approach

Before students arrive, post the six questions from **MS.IAS.5.1.AS.A** through **MS.IAS.5.1.AS.F** around the room. Students are going to play the roles of detectives in solving some mysteries in class. Play some mystery themed music as students enter the room.

Questions Include:

- What is the best kind of music to listen to?
- Who is the best teacher in our school?
- What does this picture look like? (Optical)
- What kind of agriculture do cities have?
- What does a person with a job in agriculture
- What does FFA stand for?

Today we are going to become detectives and



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solve a few mysteries! When you hear the words SOLVE IT, grab a writing utensil and answer all six questions that are posted around the room by writing your answers on the paper. We have two minutes to complete this task. Questions? SOLVE IT!

After the two minutes, allow student volunteers to share the six posters and their responses with the class. Talk about each poster. After students share, follow up with questions relating to perception and opinions:

Let's take a look and see if we got to the bottom of any of these mysteries! On which poster did we all get the same results? On which poster were we the most different?

We learned that everyone has their own opinion on things in this world. We all see things in a different way. In fact we all have different beliefs. We have many different viewpoints on religion, social situations, and even the food we eat. The most important thing to keep in mind is that even though someone has a different belief from ours, it doesn't make it wrong. Let's think of something that we can do to show respect for other people's beliefs. Share this thought with someone at your table.

Allow students to share with a partner.

Who will share a cool idea that they heard?

Sometimes we need to take a second look at some things to really see them, like with the optical illusion. Let's follow up these leads on some **perceptions** that people may have about agriculture and how they got those opinions.

Objective 1. Differentiate between **perceptions** versus **reality**.

Students will use the Michelangelo e-Moment® to introduce them to some of their agricultural perceptions. Set up the next activity with a few expectations/rules for students as they work with Playdoh.

When you hear CREATE, sculpt the first thing that comes to your mind when thinking about the word agriculture or FFA. We will have four minutes to complete our sculpture. How can I clarify the task? CREATE!

Keep students updated on time. After two minutes, inform them that half of their time is gone.

After four minutes, allow students to share their creations, or do a gallery walk of all the sculptures. Most students will focus solely on traditional aspects of farming. Lead them away from those perceptions by asking them the following questions:

What are some of the agriculture sculptures that we have in this room? Why do these objects represent agriculture or FFA? In addition to the traditional farming objects that we may think of, what else could we sculpt?

Provide the following information for the students. Write the information on the writing surface, have listed on a poster, or show **MS.IAS.5.1.TM.A**

- **Perceptions:** A result of observation or a mental image
- **Reality:** The quality or state of being real

Looking at these definitions, how do we describe our **perception** of agriculture?

Students will more than likely talk about livestock, farming, pitchfork, a farmer in overalls, etc.

Let's take a look at a few scenarios. Once again we will be detectives and try to solve the question: How is this scenario agriculturally related?

Use MS.IAS.5.1.TM.B to display the scenarios of the three students. Have students volunteer to read the scenarios to the class. After each scenario is read, give the groups a few minutes to talk about how they think the scenario is agriculturally related and share with the class.

Who will read the first scenario for the class?

A. Scenario 1

Brynley has decided to go to the grocery store and do some shopping. She makes it a quick trip and ends up with a few things in her shopping cart. She picked up a gallon of milk, some eggs, a pizza, and a candy bar.

How is this scenario agriculturally related?

Be sure that the students arrive at the conclusion that milk comes from a dairy cow, not the grocery store. Eggs come from chickens, all the ingredients in pizza can be tied back to agriculture, and the chocolate in a candy bar comes from cocoa beans.



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B. Scenario 2

Cooper cannot wait until his trip to Tampa. He will be going golfing with his dad, tour a strawberry processing facility, and he will also get to see a baseball game!

How is this scenario agriculturally related?

Talk about how agriculture is still alive in the city even though we don't realize it. Anything from the baseballs at the game, to the turf on the field, even the hotdog he ate at the game.

C. Scenario 3

Kami has lived on her family's diversified farm all her life. She really enjoys helping plow the fields and driving the combine during harvest.

How is this scenario agriculturally related?

Talk to the students about how this is production agriculture which makes up just a portion of the agriculture industry.

Earlier in the lesson we discovered what the difference is between how we perceive things versus how things really are. We talked about how agriculture can be both rural and urban. Keeping this in mind, let's discover how we get our **perceptions!**

Objective 2. Cite three examples of how our opinions are created.

For this activity we break the myth that FFA is Future Farmers of America. Facilitate a discussion around perceptions of FFA and FFA members.

Let's talk about FFA again. When we hear FFA, what immediately comes to mind? What kinds of students join FFA?

Expect answers such as a group for farm kids, or that it is all about farming.

That is many people's **perception** of FFA. In actuality, FFA no longer even stands for Future Farmers of America. They changed the name in 1988 to emphasize the variety of agriculture-related careers in addition to production agriculture or farming. Here are some interesting facts that may surprise us.

Show **MS.IAS.5.1.TM.C**

II. FFA Membership Statistics

- A. 41% of FFA members are female; women hold more than 50% of state leadership positions
- B. 77% of our membership is Caucasian; 17% is Hispanic and 4% is African-American
- C. 89% of FFA members are in grades 9-12; 6% are in grades 7-8; 5% are high school graduates
- D. 27% of FFA members live in rural, farm areas; the remaining members live in rural non-farm (39%), and urban and suburban areas (34%)
- E. FFA chapters are in 11 of the 20 largest cities, including New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia
- F. The top five membership states are California, Texas, Georgia, Oklahoma, and Ohio

Those facts that we just read may go against some of our **perceptions** of what FFA is all about.

Conduct a Me-You-Us e-Moment to generate ideas and lead into how we create our viewpoints.

Picture in your mind how we create these **perceptions**. We know that FFA doesn't stand for Future Farmers of America anymore, but why did we think otherwise? What leads people to believe things that are not necessarily true? Be prepared to share your thoughts...

Give students a few moments to think about the questions. Encourage them to jot down their ideas on a piece of paper or a post-it note. Tell them to be prepared to share their answer.

Now share your thoughts with your shoulder-partner. With your partner, come up with one idea that you both really like to share with everyone. It could be combining both of your ideas or just using one that you both agree on.



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Give each partner-group time to share and come up with an idea. One minute should be plenty of time. Anticipate hearing ideas such as things we hear our parents or friends say, things we see on TV, or things we read about.

Let's share our ideas with everyone. Who will volunteer their answer or an answer they heard from their partner?

After discussing their ideas, reveal at least three ways we typically get our perceptions. Students will most likely come up with other answers that are correct. Show **MS.IAS.5.1.TM.** D Students can capture this information down on a piece of notebook paper.

II. Sources of our Perceptions

- People: friends, family, teachers
- Media: radio, advertisements, movies, Internet
- Experiences: Where we live, places we have gone

Let's remember that just because we perceive things and hear about different subjects through these means, that it doesn't always make things a **reality**.

Review/Summary

This review requires a ball, paper ball, or some sort of object that can be tossed about a circle of people. Students will need to form a circle facing each other. In a large classroom, it may be helpful to have more than one circle and ball. The object of the review is for each student to tell one thing they learned in this lesson. They can only go once and can only talk when they have the ball.

We learned a lot about **perceptions, reality**, FFA, and agriculture today! Let's play a review game to process what we know.

Everyone stand up! Let's form ourselves into a circle. When you catch this ball, you will have 12.2 seconds to let us know the most important thing you learned today. Once someone in the circle has related his or her idea, you can't repeat it. Everyone in the class must share once. Remember, we are throwing this ball underhand.

Application

Extended classroom activity:

Show a clip of the movie "Barnyard." The main character is a bull; however, it is drawn with an udder. Talk about the **perception**, that many people hold, that everything in a field is a cow and how media helps support that false **perception**.

FFA activity:

Create posters to help students at their school see that FFA members are not just farm kids. Have students pose in different types of clothing. You can use showcase FFA members in their sports gear, or everyday clothes. Have catchy slogans on the posters. Example: "Overalls and pitchforks aren't for me, but FFA is."

SAE activity:

Have a career showcase of rural agriculture versus urban agriculture. Invite in people from the community to share how their job is related to agriculture. Suggestions include a greenhouse owner, farmer, veterinarian, landscaper, or an agricultural extension agent.

Evaluation

Give students **MS.IAS.5.1.ASSESS.A.**

Answers to Evaluation

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. False
6. Answers may vary



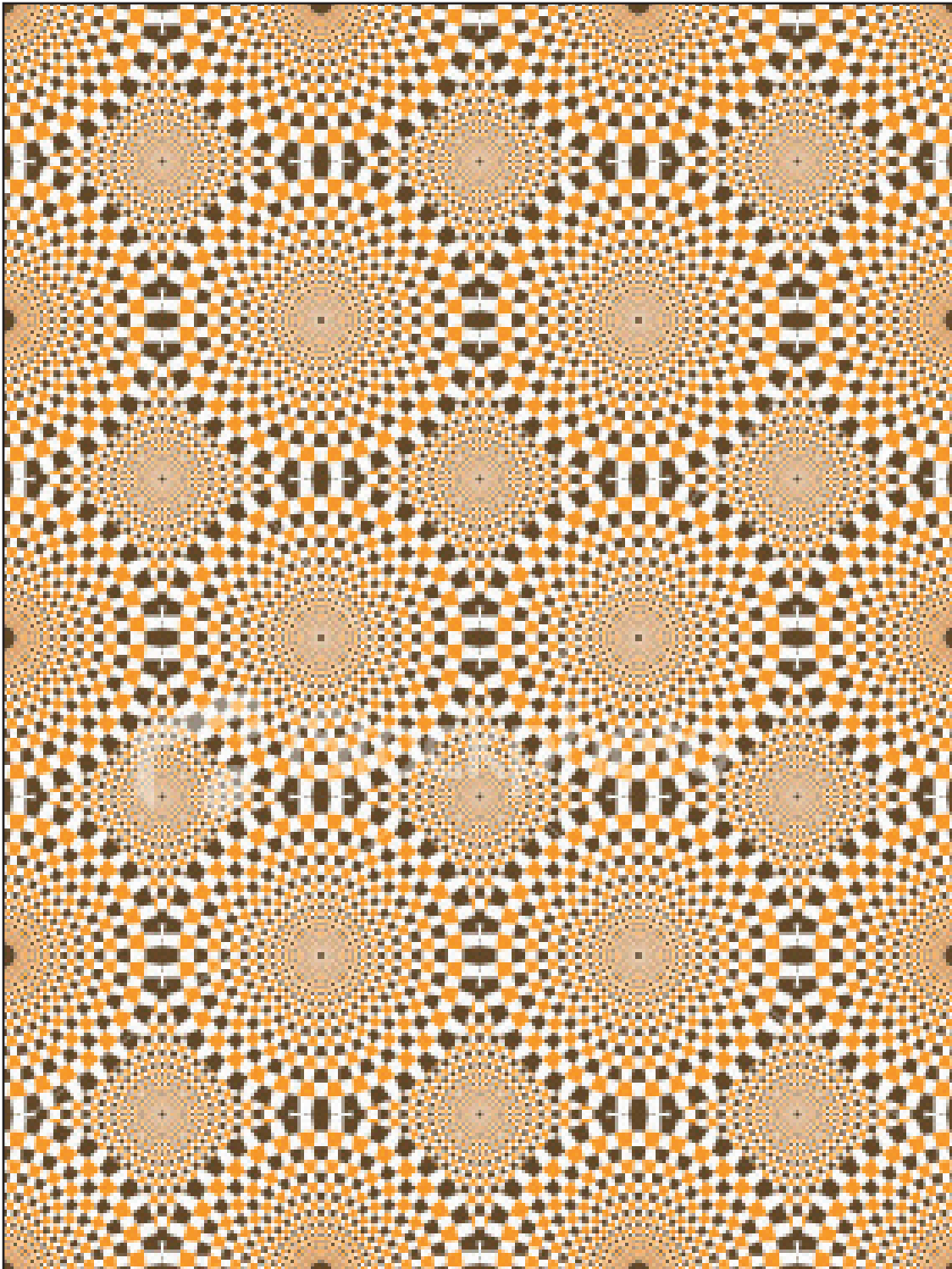
What is the best kind of music to listen to?



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What does this picture look like?





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What does a person with a job in agriculture wear?



What does FFA stand for?



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- **41% of FFA members are female; women hold more than 50% of state leadership positions**
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Name _____

True or False. Write out the word True or False on the line by the statement.

_____ 1. Your perceptions of different things are always correct.

_____ 2. Reality means the quality or state of being real.

_____ 3. FFA stands for Future Farmers of America.

_____ 4. What we hear from our friends and families is one way we form our perceptions.

_____ 5. Agriculture is not in urban parts of our world.

6. Provide three examples of opinions or how they are created.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____
