

The Year of No More Corn

By HELEN KETTEMAN

The Year of No More Corn is an excellent addition to a classroom library. It offers many wonderful activities to enhance the learning in any classroom.

Science

The Year of No More Corn is a wonderful book to integrate into science lessons.

1. Children would really enjoy learning about the different aspects of farming corn.

A. Have the children go to the library to research corn. They should answer all of the questions on the enclosed sheet. It is important for the students to know why corn is an important crop, where it grows, and how long it takes to grow and harvest it.

B. If possible, take the class to a local farm where corn is grown so that they can see what it looks like and how it is grown.

C. Have a local farmer who farms corn come in and talk about his farming.

D. Bring in an ear of corn and shuck it in front of the class. Put the students in groups (or give each child an ear of corn if possible.) and let them shuck an ear of corn and see the silk and kernels. Have the children discuss what they learned and record it on chart paper.

2. The Year of No More Corn is a wonderful book for discussing the weather. Have the children answer the questions on the enclosed sheet during your study of the weather. Two other books by Helen Kettelman, Luck with Potatoes and The Christmas Blizzard, are also wonderful books for studying the weather.

3. Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5. Then, assign each group an actual part of the growing process of corn. The groups should work together to think of a creative way to present this process to the class. You may want to have each group make a model of their process (i.e.: planting the corn or a small corn plant) so that all of the model can be put together to really illustrate the process of growing corn.

4. Crows eat all the corn at the end of the book so that there is no more corn. Children usually love animals and might enjoy researching crows to find out more about their behavior. You may want to create a fun research project for you students.

5. In the book, it became so hot that the chicken eggs came out hard-boiled. You may want to do an experiment to see how hot water must be to hard-boil eggs. Then, the children can decorate the hard-boiled eggs and/or eat them.

GEOGRAPHY

The book *The Year of No More Corn* does a wonderful job of introducing students to several different states. It is very important for students to have a strong understanding of Geography. The library is a wonderful resource for class research projects. Take your class to the library to research Indiana and answer the questions on the enclosed sheet. Ask the students to write letters to the Chamber of Commerce in Indiana to find out more about this state. You may want to ask the students to find out particular information.

Go to the school and/or local library and check out as many books on Indiana as possible. Have these available to the students so that they can learn more about the state of Indiana. Have the children locate Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois on the class map. Ask the children if the kernels really could have blown to the ocean. You should ask them to name the closest ocean and how far it is from Indiana.

Integrating Technology

Children really benefit from using the computer during class research projects. Depending upon the grade level of your class, try to let your students use the computer as much as possible. Computer CD Rom like Compton's Encyclopedia or Grolier's Encyclopedia are wonderful tools for research.

It is nice to reward students for good work with time on the computer. Some excellent educational geography games include the Oregon Trail, The Oregon Trail 11, and Where In the World is Carmen Sandiego.

3. Students benefit greatly from using the computer during Writing Workshop to enhance their writing. Using a word processor helps the children learn how to edit their writing. There are also many wonderful programs that allow children to add graphics to their writing. Children love technology!

Art

Children ALWAYS ENJOY ART ACTIVITIES. The book *The Year of No More Corn* LENDS ITSELF TO MANY FUN ART ACTIVITIES.

ASK EACH CHILD TO CHOOSE A STATE THAT WAS MENTIONED IN THE BOOK (INDIANA, ILLINOIS, OHIO). THEN, HAVE THE CHILDREN CREATE A MODEL OR PICTURE OF THIS STATE SO THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN WHAT THE STATE IS LIKE.

ASK THE CHILDREN TO THINK OF ANOTHER DISASTER THAT COULD HAVE PREVENTED THE CORN FROM GROWING. THEN, HAVE THEM ILLUSTRATE THAT DISASTER.

GIVE EACH CHILD A PAGE FROM THE BOOK TO ILLUSTRATE. ENCOURAGE THEM TO JUST READ THE WORDS AND DRAW THEIR OWN ILLUSTRATIONS RATHER THAN COPYING THE ILLUSTRATOR.

USING VARIOUS MATERIALS, ASK THE CHILDREN TO CREATE THEIR OWN EAR OF CORN. ENCOURAGE THEM TO BE CREATIVE!

IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL TO TEACH OLDER CHILDREN HOW TO WHITTLE! YOU MAY WANT TO BRING IN A WHITTLES OR SOME SAMPLES OF PIECES THAT WERE WHITTLED. CHILDREN WOULD LOVE IT!

Creative writing And Language arts

1. Ask the students to write about another disaster that could have kept the corns from growing in 1928.

2. The children could write a creative story about what it would be like to be without a major crop such as wheat in the present. How would it affect people? Ask older children to tell how it might hurt the economy.

There are many wonderful clichés in this book! Ask the students to create their own cliché and then illustrate it.

Assign students a cliché to explain. You may want to divide the children into groups or partners.

Ask the children to read the book and look for any words that they may not understand. Then, have them use the dictionary to look up the meaning of those words.

Ask the children to define the following vocabulary words using context clues in the book or dictionary:

Whittling

Hail

Solitary

Elements

Kernels

Hard-Boiled

Tuckered out

If at all possible, ask someone who whittles to come whittle for your class.

Have a class popcorn party to celebrate the end of your study on this wonderful book!