

Ag Literacy Script

Spring 2019

“Compost Stew”



Materials to take: *Book, Compost Item Images, Two boxes (one with a Trash Can on it and one with a Compost Bin on it), and a Chef Hat cutout for each student. The Book will be used for the presentation and then given to the teacher to keep as part of their classroom library. If you are doing additional presentations, you will want to take the Compost Item Images and boxes with you.*

INTRODUCTION (at story carpet)

*Introduce yourself and tell the students what you do. I'm excited because in the next 30-minutes we get to talk about my favorite thing! Who in here has ever heard the word AGRICULTURE before? [Let the students raise their hand. Chances are only a few will know]. Ok, so it's a new word for a lot of us. When I think about agriculture, I like to think of FARMERS and RANCHERS. Who in here has ever heard of a RANCHER before? [Let them raise their hands]. Ok, now who in here has ever heard of a FARMER before? That's what I thought! We've all heard of farmers before. So, when you hear the word AGRICULTURE I want you to think of FARMERS and RANCHERS. Now, let's talk about what these people do. Our RANCHERS here in Arizona are sometimes called cowboys and cowgirls and it is their job to take care of 3 different types of animals. Can anyone tell me one of them? [beef cattle, horses and sheep...ask why our ranchers take care of these animals...meat, byproducts, transportation, wool, etc] Do our FARMERS also take care of animals? Yes, but different animals than our RANCHERS. What animals do you think our FARMERS take care of? [let students name them...dairy cattle, pigs and chickens]. Do our farmers do anything besides take care of animals? YES, they grow plants and we call these plants CROPS. Can anyone think of a crop (fruit, vegetable, or grain) that a farmer grows? [allow them to raise their hands and name some crops] Very good! Now, when farmers grow crops, do you think there are ever leftover pieces of the plant that we don't use for food? [Let the students answer... yes] Wouldn't it be cool if we could find a way to use those leftover pieces to help the plants grow? Thankfully, our farmers and ranchers have already come up with a way to do just that. It's called COMPOSTING! Composting is when we take all those leftover materials and use them to make fertilizer, or food for plants! Today, we are going to be doing something very special. We are going to become Compost Chefs and come up with our very own compost recipe! In order to do that, we will be reading the book...**Compost Stew by Mary McKenna Siddal!***

BOOK (at story carpet)

As you read, find ways to engage the students. After you've said, "Compost Stew" more than once leave a little time for students to guess what you're going to say leading up to it (i.e. "into... Compost Stew"). You can also use designated motions for "Moisten. Toss Lightly.

Cover Let Brew” for the students to learn the process of making compost in a fun way. Make special note that a lot of these things can be found at home or in our day-to-day lives and reinforce some of them with students (i.e. vegetable trimmings, laundry lint, Tree needles).

Now that we know how many different ingredients can go into our Compost Stew, let’s try making one of our own. Do you think all things can be composted? No.. we can’t compost animal products like chicken wings or milk can we? No, we can’t. What about plastic? Although we can recycle it, plastic doesn’t belong in our compost pile. Let’s see what we CAN compost... *Show students different pictures of items that either can or can’t be composted and have them guess if it would go in the compost bin or the trash [As students answer place each item inside the box it would go in. One box should be labeled with a Compost Bin picture and one should be labeled with a Trash Can picture].*

ACTIVITY (have students return to their assigned seats carefully and quietly)

Now that we know what items CAN and CAN’T be composted, we are each going to receive our very own Chef Hat. Once we receive our hats, we’ll draw five leftover items we might find in our lunches or around the house that could go in our compost stew [*Examples: Apple core, lawn clippings, banana peel, clothing lint from the laundry, etc.*]. *Pass out a Chef hat paper to each student and instruct them only to draw and color. Once everyone has drawn the items on their hats, ask them to pull out their scissors and begin cutting along the lines. You will use glue or tape from the classroom to put them together.*

Wow! We’ve learned a lot about composting today. We learned how compost is food for plants, how we can become compost chefs by filling our very own compost bins, and how farmers and ranchers care for the land by reusing their leftover materials. Composting is just one of the many ways agriculture can help the environment!

Thank them for having you and give the bag of gummy worms to the teacher to disperse out to students! Leave the book with the teacher as well. 😊