

MATERIALS

- Book: Bread is for Eating by Gershator
- Color photos of wheat being processed
- Blank paper or journal for each student
- Pencil and colored pencils for each student
- Mortar and pestle
- 1 cup wheat berries
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- Bread (and jam) sample for each student

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with wheat processing.
- Pre-cut bread (if serving).

PROCEDURE

Part 1: Read Bread is for Eating

Gather students together so they can see the book. “Now we’re going to read a story about a little boy and his mother who love to eat bread. In this story you will also hear a Spanish song. This is how to sing the song.” Looking at the music in the back of the book, practice song together two or three times. Explain the words of the song (or have student do this). Read the book aloud. (15 minutes)

While students are still seated from reading, recap the seed to bread process mentioned in the book. “Now we’re going to see who remembers how wheat grows and is processed into bread. What did the farmer plant in the ground early in the book? What happened next?...” Open book to the pages that show each stage.

Part 2: From Wheat to Bread

“What was once a grass that early people loved to eat, so they began to grow it on purpose. It used to only grow in a small part of the world called the Middle East, but today wheat covers most of the farmland in the world! The wheat we eat today looks a lot different from the wheat grown long ago – farmers can change nature by planting and caring for their crops just like this. We call this process **domestication**.”

Now, use the printed photos of **wheat seeds, threshing, winnowing** and **grinding** one-by-one to reiterate the process and provide additional vocabulary. Incorporate sequencing words such as first, then, next and last. Have students stand in front of the class hold the printed pictures up in order, then call on a different student to recap the process by looking at the photos. (An example: “First, wheat grows in the fields, then people thresh it to remove the stem, next people winnow to remove the chaff and last, grind it into flour. New wheat grows from a seed.” (15 minutes)

Part 3: Writing, Grinding Wheat

“Think of your favorite food that is made with wheat. Complete these two questions: 1. My favorite food made with wheat is _____ because _____. 2. Wheat is made into flour by _____. After you finish your sentences, draw a picture of your food!

While you are writing and drawing, I will call the hardest workers over to me where you will get a chance to use a mortar and pestle to grind wheat into flour.” (15 min)

(If time and resources allow, sample bread with butter, cheese or jam while students write and draw).

ENGAGE

Ask: “Have you eaten wheat today? Raise your hand if you have. If so, what food did you eat which contained wheat?” Call on a few individuals to share. If you wish to go a step further, ask students what form wheat is usually in when added to these foods. Is it put in whole or ground up? What is ground up wheat called? (Flour)

If working with students unfamiliar with wheat-based foods, have students raise their hands if they have eaten the food as you list some common items: bread, bagels, cereal, cake, crackers.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will demonstrate understanding of wheat growth and processing from seed to flour through writing samples.
- Students will use sequencing to describe the seed to bread process.

EXPLAIN

Domestication of Wheat

Humans have been farming grain for over 10,000 years. Before that, humans were all migratory hunter-gatherers. Wheat is one of the first cereals known to have been chosen by early people as a staple crop they planted with the intent of planting and eating. This allowed for societies to begin forming cities, no longer needing to live nomadically following their food. The word “domestication” in terms of wheat describes the process by which farmers, throughout thousands of years, adapted wheat from a wild grass into a stable food crop.

Today, wheat is the third-most consumed cereal with corn being first and rice being second most consumed. This grain is grown on more land area than any other commercial crop in the world. Wheat is the highest source of vegetable protein in the world and is therefore very important for human survival.

Where early people once ate the whole grain wheat and a variety of other grains, today we have highly processed wheat in abundance. The global diet has been drastically changed by the domestication of wheat.

Bread is for Eating by David and Phillis Gershator

This book details the process of wheat from seed to bread. Intertwined into the wheat information is the narrative of a Spanish-speaking boy and his mother who enjoy eating bread and think of all the individuals involved in making the process possible. There is a simple song throughout the book (music on the last pages) which students enjoy hearing/singing along with as well. Ask confident and willing Spanish-speakers to help explain the words of the song to classmates.

ADDITIONAL CONTENT INTEGRATION *(see previous page)*

If time allows, make bread with students from the flour they ground using the mortar and pestle. While eating, discuss how bread is eaten by nearly all cultures of the world.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- Bread ingredients
- Oven
- Plates

EVALUATE

Journal prompt: How did farmers “domesticate” wheat? What else has been “domesticated?”