

Little Red Hen

Social Studies



Materials

- ◆ Little Red Hen story (from background information)
- ◆ Wheat stems and Wheat Kit (from Utah AITC)

Background

Once upon a time, a little red hen lived in a small cottage. She worked hard to keep her family fed. One day, when the little red hen was out walking with her friends, the goose, the cat, and the pig, she found a few grains of wheat.

“Who will help me plant this wheat?” asked the little red hen.

“Not I,” said the goose, “I’d rather swim in the pond.”

“Not I,” said the cat, “I’d rather sleep on the hay.”

“Not I,” said the pig, “I’d rather lie in the mud.”

“Then I’ll do it myself,” said the little red hen. And she did.

Time went by and the wheat grew, but so did the weeds.

“Who will help me pull the weeds?” asked the little red hen.

“Not I,” said the goose, “I’d rather swim in the pond.”

“Not I,” said the cat, “I’d rather sleep on the hay.”

“Not I,” said the pig, “I’d rather lie in the mud.”

“Then I’ll do it myself,” said the little red hen. And she did.

All summer the wheat grew taller and taller. It turned from brown to golden amber. And, at last, it was time to harvest the wheat.

“Who will help me harvest the wheat?” asked the little red hen.

“Not I,” said the goose, “I’d rather swim in the pond.”

“Not I,” said the cat, “I’d rather sleep on the hay.”

“Not I,” said the pig, “I’d rather lie in the mud.”

“Then I’ll do it myself,” said the little red hen. And she did.

At last, the wheat was harvested and put into a large sack, ready to be taken to the mill to be ground into flour.

“Who will help me take the wheat to the mill?” asked the little red hen.

“Not I,” said the goose, “I’d rather swim in the pond.”

“Not I,” said the cat, “I’d rather sleep on the hay.”

“Not I,” said the pig, “I’d rather lie in the mud.”

“Then I’ll do it myself,” said the little red hen. And she did.

The next day came and the little red hen was hungry.

“Who will help me bake this flour into bread?” asked the little red hen.

“Not I,” said the goose, “I’d rather swim in the pond.”

“Not I,” said the cat, “I’d rather sleep on the hay.”

“Not I,” said the pig, “I’d rather lie in the mud.”

“Then I’ll do it myself,” said the little red hen. And she did.

At last, the bread was baked and the little red hen called to her friends once more.

“Who will help me eat this bread?” asked the little red hen.

“I will,” said the goose.

“I will,” said the cat.

“I will,” said the pig.

“Oh, no you won’t!” said the little red hen. “I found the wheat, I

Time: 1-2 hours (depending on detail)

Grade Level: K-2

Grade 1, Standard 3:

Objective 1

Investigate plants and plant growth.

Grade 2, Standard 3:

Objective 1

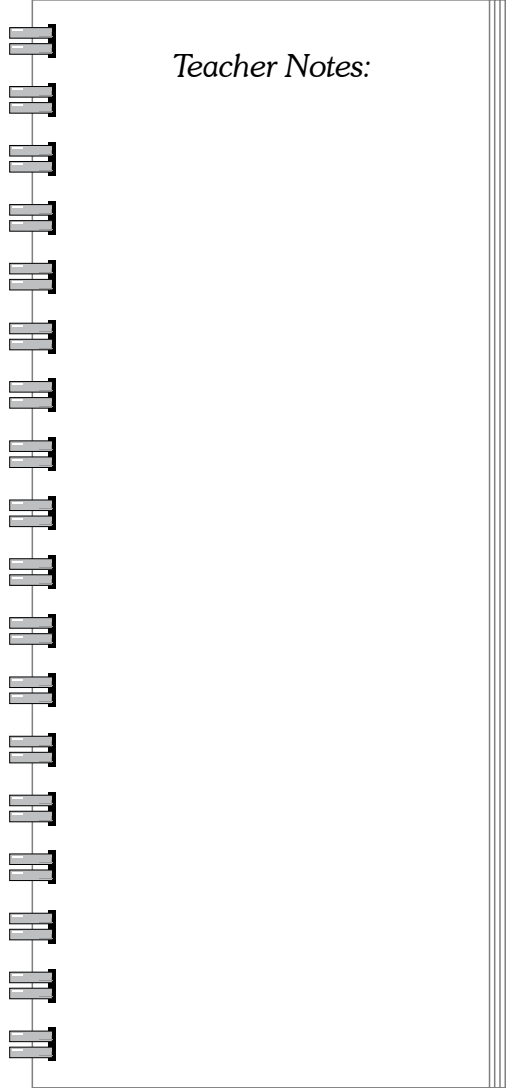
Investigate relationships between plants and animals and how living things change during their lives.

planted it, I weeded it, and when it was time to harvest it, I did that too. I took it to the mill to be ground into flour and at last, I baked it into bread.

“Now,” said the little red hen, “I’m going to eat it with my family.” And she did.

Activity Procedures

1. Read the story of the Little Red Hen to the students.
2. Divide the chalk or white board into three segments. Write “Beginning,” “Middle” and “End” at the top of the segments.
3. Ask the students to retell the story based upon the three different segments. Write their comments on the board. You may wish to have the students elaborate the emotions or feelings that may have been expressed by the Little Red Hen or the other animals in the story. Students may also enjoy acting out the different segments of the story.
4. Give each student a wheat stem (bundles of wheat are available from Utah AITC at <https://extension.usu.edu/aitc/cart/details.cfm?ProdID=167&category=0>).
5. Ask students to first predict the number of seeds in their seed head, then using the “threshing” directions (see sidebar), ask the students to thresh their wheat. Threshing means to remove the kernel from the hull and chaff of the plant.
6. Ask students to count the seeds they removed from their seed head. Were their predictions accurate? Ask them if they have enough seeds to make a loaf of bread. Ask the students to predict or estimate the amount of wheat necessary to make a loaf of bread (approximately four cups of flour is needed).
7. Optional: Grind the wheat into flour with a hand-grinder. A Wheat Kit can be borrowed from Utah AITC. For recipes to make bread or tortillas in a Ziploc® bag, visit the AITC website.
8. Ask students to describe the similarities and differences between what they have experienced and what the Little Red Hen did in the story.
9. Have the students complete the “From Seed to Harvest” worksheet as a homework connection.



Teacher Notes:

How To Do It!

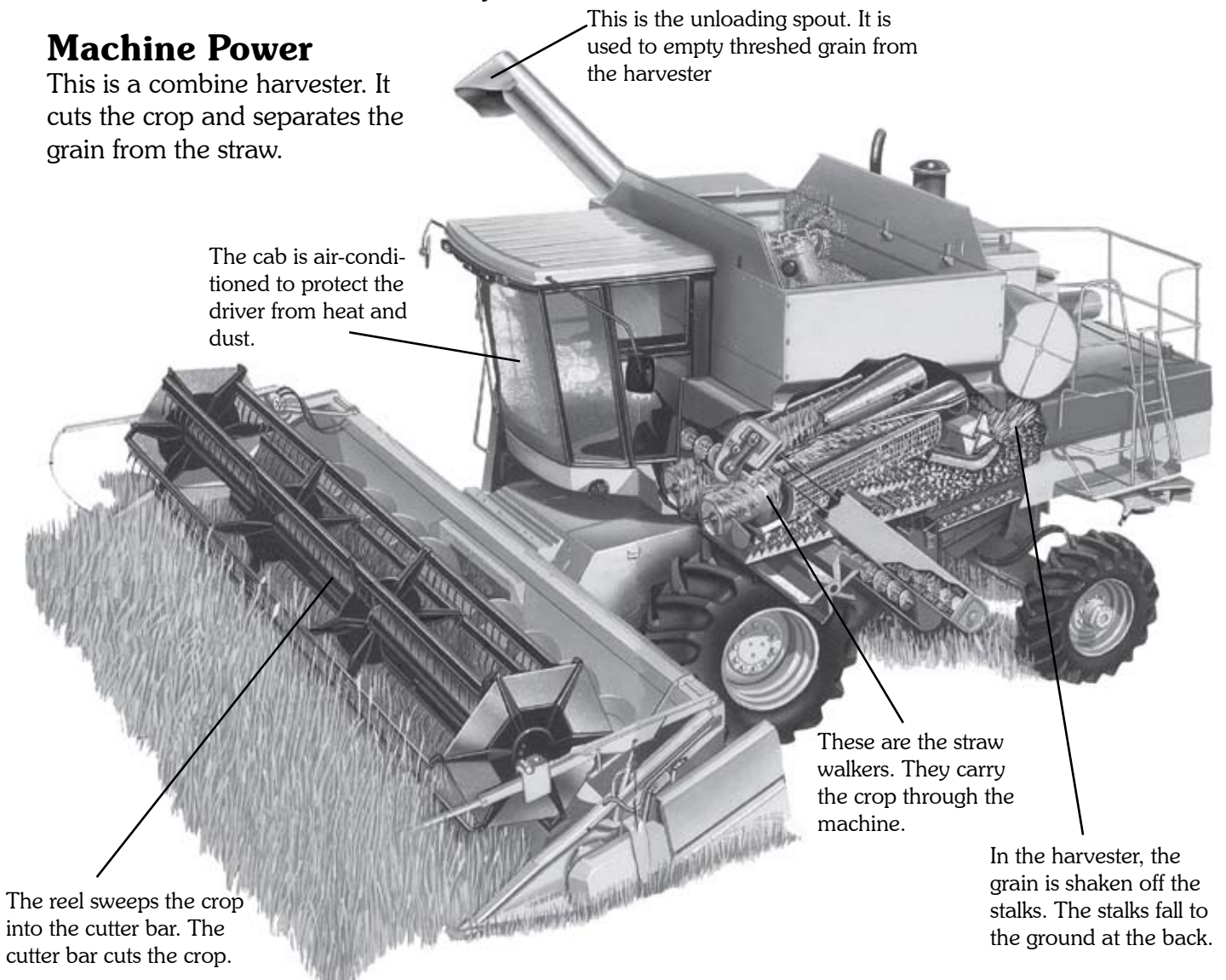
Threshing or Removing the Seed from the Plant

(A visual tutorial is also available online, visit <http://extension.usu.edu/aitc/teachers/elementary/food.html> see the Wheat Kit resource):

1. Place the seed head between both hands with the palms in a horizontal position and move the hands backwards and forwards repeatedly while applying pressure. This is similar to the threshing action in a combine.
2. After the grain has been “threshed,” shake the separate parts in the palm of one hand letting the bigger and lighter parts of the head float to the top and the heavier grain kernels settle to the bottom. The students can now skim the empty spike and some of the hulls off to the side and discard. This is similar to the separating action of the combine by the straw walkers and sieves.
3. Now clean the chaff (seed hulls) from the grain that remains in your hand. A combine completes this job by blowing air through the grain and chaff, removing the lighter chaff, and blowing it out of the rear of the combine. Stand near a waste paper basket and pour the grain from one hand to the other while blowing lightly on the material as it drops through the air from one hand to the other.
4. Remember that the trip through the combine for the seed head only takes about 15 seconds, and that there are thousands of heads going through the combine at the same time. Historically, farmers would have had livestock walk on the wheat heads on a hard surface to thresh the grain out of the heads, separate the straw and spikes by hand, and then throw the grain and chaff up into the air for the wind to blow the chaff away.

Machine Power

This is a combine harvester. It cuts the crop and separates the grain from the straw.



From Seed to Harvest

Complete the sentences below using words from the "Word Box."



Word Box

grass	strong wind	spring wheat	golden	irrigation	Utah
bushel	disk	flour	grasshopper	truck	Combine

- _____ is planted in the spring and harvested in the fall.
- A _____ is used to turn, loosen, and break up the soil before planting.
- Spring wheat is planted in _____.
- A _____ can flatten a ripe wheat crop.
- When wheat is ripe it is a _____ color.
- A _____ is a harmful insect in a wheat crop.
- The _____ cuts, separates, and cleans the grain.
- The farmer sells his wheat by the _____.
- A _____ is used to haul the grain to the elevator.
- Wheat is ground into _____ to make cakes, bread, and pasta.
- Some farmers use _____ to water their crops.
- Wheat is a _____ plant.

WHEAT SEED

