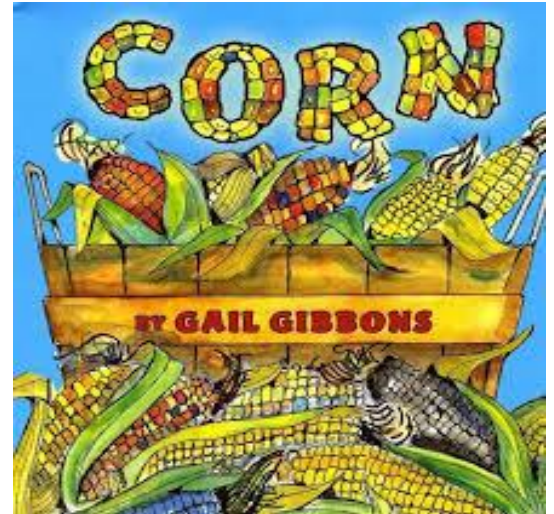


July 2015 Book of the Month

Corn

By: Gail Gibbons

Popcorn, corn on the cob, corndogs, cornflakes – corn is used in many favorite foods. This book offers up the history of corn as well as the details concerning planting, cultivation, harvesting, and its many uses – a cornucopia of information about a popular farm produce grown locally in North Carolina.



Vocabulary and Fun Facts:

- Corn is called maize by most countries, this comes from the Spanish word ‘maiz’.
- Corn is a cereal crop that is part of the grass family.
- An ear or cob of corn is actually part of the flower and an individual kernel is a seed.
- On average an ear of corn has 800 kernels in 16 rows.
- Corn will always have an even number of rows on each cob.
- A bushel is a unit of measure for volumes of dry commodities such as shelled corn kernels. 1 Bushel of corn is equal to 8 gallons.
- With the exception of Antarctica, corn is produced on every continent in the world.
- There are over 3,500 different uses for corn products.
- As well as being eaten by the cob, corn is also processed and used as a major component in many food items like cereals, peanut butter, potato chips, soups, marshmallows, ice cream, baby food, cooking oil, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressing, and chewing gum.
- Juices and soft drinks like Coca-Cola and Pepsi contain corn sweeteners. A bushel of corn can sweeten 400 cans of soft drink.
- Different varieties of corn are grown for human and animal consumption. Field corn is not the same variety as corn grown in gardens for human consumption.
- Corn grown in North Carolina was 5.2% in 2012 for total sales of farm income.

Activities

Hopping Corn – A Science Experience

Following this experiment will make corn hop and pop around. You will need: a clear glass container, popping corn, 2 ½ - 3 cups of water, 2 Tbsp. of baking soda, 6 Tbsp. of

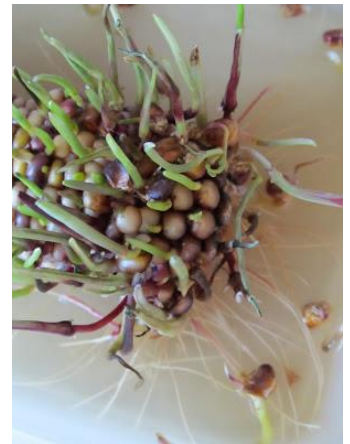
white vinegar, food coloring (optional) Instructions: 1.) Fill your jar with water and add a couple drops of food coloring. 2.) Add baking soda and stir until it dissolves. 3.) Add a small handful of popping corn. 4.) Add vinegar and watch corn start to hop up and down. This should work for over an hour. Incorporate math by having students measure the ingredients. After the experiment, students can write about the experiment in a science notebook.

Will It Grow?

Place an ear of Indian corn in a pan filled with ½ inch of water. Have students observe what happens! You can also try this with regular corn on the cob. Have students compare and make made predictions on what will happen with each type of corn.

A Corn Plant:

A common corn plant has tassels, leaves, ears of corn, a stalk and roots. Refer to the picture on page 12 of the book. Have students use construction paper or draw a corn plant and label each part.



What's Inside an Ear of Corn?

Have students share what they think is inside an ear of corn. Then let students work in small groups to 'dissect' an ear of corn. Have them identify the kernels, husks, corn silk, and the cob. Give students a plastic knife and let them cut inside the kernels. How does it feel? Taste? Smell?

The Many Uses of Corn:

Discuss the many uses of corn. (Cooking, fuel, food, dolls/toys, bedding). Have students invent or create a new use for corn and write about their new invention.

Lesson Plans:

Detailed and grade level specific lesson plans about this story can be found at:
<http://www.ncagintheclassroom.com/Curricula.aspx>

Sources:

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/food/corn.html>

http://onetimethrough.com/hopping-corn-science-activity/#_a5y_p=1752381

<http://www.thingstoshareandremember.com/will-it-grow-update/>