



Lesson 7: Advocating for our Hungry Planet

Grade Level & Subject: 6-8 / Life Sciences

Lesson Duration: 50 minutes (with 10 and 25 minute extensions)

OBJECTIVES

- Students will explore various sources of agriculture that provide non-food products such as fuel, clothing, shelter, and medical supplies for their community, state, and/or nation
- Students will identify the various reasons for the choices people make about food, categorize the reasons why people eat the foods they eat (e.g., cultural, emotional, environmental, nutritional, religious, social), and explain how families, peers, and the media influence an individual's food choices and habits.
- Students will analyze how human and environmental factors influence sustainability in agriculture and make plans for an advocacy project that will improve agricultural and/or environmental systems in a way that is meaningful for them and/or their school community related to how food is grown, harvested, and used around the world.

Food Education Standards:	Content Area Standards:	This lesson also aligns to:
<p>FES4: Food behaviors are influenced by internal and external factors.</p> <p>FES7: We can advocate for food choices and changes that impact ourselves, our communities and our world.</p>	<p>NGSS MS.LS4.5 Gather and synthesize information about the technologies that have changed the way humans influence the inheritance of desired traits in organisms.</p>	<p>WIDA Standard 1 - Language for Social and Instructional Purposes</p> <p>WIDA Standard 4 - Language for Science</p>

LESSON SYNOPSIS

In this middle school lesson on agriculture advocacy, students are introduced to the importance of sustainable farming practices and their impact on food production and the environment. Through engaging activities and discussions, students explore various agricultural issues such as water usage, soil health, food waste, and pollinator decline. They research these issues using provided resources and discuss potential solutions to address the challenges. Working in small groups, students choose a specific agriculture-related issue they are passionate about advocating for. They create persuasive presentations using visuals, data, and statistics to raise awareness about their chosen topic and its significance in their community. The presentations culminate in an advocacy showcase where each group presents their findings and proposals, aiming to inspire positive change and promote sustainable farming practices among their peers and the wider



school community. By the end of the lesson, students gain a deeper understanding of the critical role agriculture plays in their lives and the importance of being advocates for a more sustainable future.

LESSON PREPARATION

Prep Steps	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the lesson and make adjustments as needed for your class. Pre-assign partners/groups (if desired, random works too). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer with internet connection and projector 1:1 student devices (optional) Teacher and Student docs (linked below)

VOCABULARY

- Advocate [**ad-vuh-kit**] (noun) - A person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy or a person who puts a case on someone else's behalf.
- Justice [**juhs-tis**] (noun) - Get rid of the problem altogether so all start at the same place.
- Diversity [**dih-vur-si-tee, dahy-**] (noun) - Understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences with a positive perspective.
- Empathy [**em-puh-thee**] (noun) - Understanding of or the ability to identify with another person's feelings or experiences.
- Empowerment [**em-pou-er-muhnt**] (noun) - Increase of the personal, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities.
- Equality [**ih-kwol-i-tee**] (noun) - The notion that all human beings are entitled to the same human rights without distinction.
- Exclusion [**ik-skloo-zhuhn**] (noun) - Marginalization of people and the imposition of barriers that restrict them from access to opportunities to fully integrate and participate with the larger society
- Human Dignity [**hyoo-muhn dig-ni-tee**] (noun) - An individual or group's sense of self-respect and self-worth, physical and psychological integrity and empowerment.
- Human Rights [**hyoo-muhn rahyts**] (noun) - The rights people are entitled to simply for being human and are those basic standards without which people cannot live with dignity.
- Privilege [**priv-uh-lij, priv-lij**] (noun) - A systemic set of benefits or advantages granted to a dominant identity group, such as greater access to power, resources, government, language, land, etc.



LESSON ACTIVITIES

Teacher note: These learning tasks and videos are available online for students with access to 1:1 technology, but they should use headphones when watching videos. If your students do not have access to technology, or you don't want them online, feel free to print off the documents. If students are working online. With all documents, please make a copy, do not request access.

Part I - Advocacy Project (35 minutes)

Objective: In this two-day culmination, students will work in groups to understand the importance of agriculture and advocate for sustainable farming practices. The goal is to reinforce agriculture issues, research potential solutions, and create advocacy materials to raise awareness in their community.

Day 2: Today, Lesson 7 - **This is a continuation and culmination of the previous lesson.**

1. Complete from previous lesson:
 - a. Have students get out their advocacy brainstorming from the previous lesson and review it. Give them a chance to add to it or revise it in any way.
 - b. Ask students to share their thoughts. Write them up on the board.
 - c. With student help, group similar topics together. Because advocacy in agriculture is such a broad issue, it would be too difficult to tackle all the topics at once. Group similar topics together.
 - d. Form groups as appropriate for your class. Explain that students are going to be working for the rest of the class period today and the whole class period next time to form their advocacy project. Some suggestions on grouping:
 - i. Form small groups of 5-6 students based on topic alone. Students have no choice about their group, but they've all expressed similar interests about their topics.
 - ii. Form small groups of students heterogeneously. Once in groups, students can talk to determine an advocacy topic.
 - iii. Form small groups of students homogeneously. Once in groups, students can talk to determine an advocacy topic.
 - iv. Students can self-select their groups. We suggest giving parameters (min/max number of students, no one is left out, etc.), but follow your established routines.
2. After groups are formed, have a short discussion about the role of agriculture in our daily lives. Ask students to review their thoughts on the importance of farming and its impact on the environment.
3. Agriculture Issues Brainstorming:
 - a. In small groups, ask students to brainstorm and identify specific agricultural issues (e.g., water usage, soil health, food waste, pollinators decline, etc.).
 - b. Provide a list of potential issues if needed to help them get started.
4. Issue Selection:
 - a. Each group will choose one agriculture-related issue from their brainstorming session that they are most passionate about advocating for.
5. Research Time:
 - a. Allocate time for each group to research their chosen issue using provided resources, books, and the internet.



- b. Encourage them to find data, statistics, and examples of the issue's impact locally and globally.
6. Solution Ideas:
 - a. After researching the issue, have each group brainstorm potential solutions and sustainable practices that could address the problem.

Part II - **(25 minutes)** - Presentations. Students (in small groups or to the class) will present their projects!

CONSIDERATIONS (What adaptations are needed for diverse learners and/or varying dietary needs?)

- Diverse readings, videos, and visuals were provided, but some students may need support in applying their learning. Support as needed.
- Make sure students have access to language support such as Google Translate.

STUDENT SHEETS AND ASSESSMENTS

- Available at the end of the student sheets on the next pages

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Extend presentations to the school or larger community.
- Put plans into action

REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Activities that worked	Topics to revisit	Community extension opportunities



Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDENT SHEET: The Four Pillars of AgEd & Advocacy

The Four Pillars of AgEd & Advocacy

<p><i>Each pillar becomes dynamic and fully alive through advocacy. The future of agriculture needs the ideas, actions, and experiences of young people.</i></p>			
Food Education	Growth for All	Environmental Action	Common Ground
<p>Agriculture is a defining facet of our food systems; it promotes informed decision making for healthy futures.</p>	<p>Agriculture is a changing industry ripe for innovation with a wide range of careers that provide economic pathways for individuals and communities.</p>	<p>Agriculture is both a cause and a solution for climate change that requires social, scientific, and community driven action.</p>	<p>Agriculture is an entry point for thinkers of all backgrounds to come together and bridge urban & rural divides.</p>

This lesson mostly approached Environmental Action, and Common Ground.. What challenges or issues exist within agriculture that we are interested in exploring?



Name _____ Class _____ Date _____ Student _____
Advocacy Project: Choose Your Issue - The Four Pillars of AgEd & Advocacy

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Food Education	Growth for All	Environmental Action	Common Ground
<p>Agriculture is a defining facet of our food systems; it promotes informed decision making for healthy futures.</p>	<p>Agriculture is a changing industry ripe for innovation with a wide range of careers that provide economic pathways for individuals and communities.</p>	<p>Agriculture is both a cause and a solution for climate change that requires social, scientific, and community driven action.</p>	<p>Agriculture is an entry point for thinkers of all backgrounds to come together and bridge urban & rural divides.</p>

Group Brainstorm: What challenges or issues exist within agriculture that we are interested in exploring?

Once your brainstorm is finished, as a group, choose ONE topic to focus on. You may do this any way you choose (vote, discussion, debate, etc.).but every member must agree before you can move forward.

Issue/Topic: _____



Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Student Advocacy Project: Plan Your Project

Group Members:

Issue/Topic: _____

Guidelines: As a group, discuss the following before starting

Step 1: Work together

- What are our group rules or expectations?
- How do we want to work together on this project?
- What skills are we each bringing to the group for this project?

Step 2: Learn more about our issue

- What do we already know about our issue? What information do we need to learn about this issue?
- Why is it important to us?
- What questions do we have?
- How do we want to divide our research and work?

Step 3: Define our solutions

- What are strategies we can use to confront this issue?
- What changes can we make as individuals as a solution to this issue?
- What changes can we make as a community as a solution to this issue?
- What do we need to advocate for change?

Step 4: Advocate

- How do we want to present our solutions?
- Who do we want to be our target audience?
- What information do we need to share? How will we get people invested in our solution?



Name: _____ Date: _____

PILOT LIGHT

Planning an Advocacy Project

After you set your norms, then choose your topic... *What comes next?*

Brainstorm

Suggestions: Set a timer for brainstorming time; have at least 1 notetaker.

What are all our ideas? _____

What tasks and work are associated with this? _____

Prioritize

Suggestions: Focus on the top 3 tasks instead of trying to get everything in order. Group non-urgent tasks for a later time and schedule for your main priorities first!

What are the most important tasks and work? _____

What is time sensitive? _____

(flip over for side 2)



Delegate

Suggestions: Split up work based on people's strengths and make sure the workload is equal. Be VERY specific about what the group's expectations are for completed tasks.

Who is in charge of what tasks? _____

What role do we each play? _____

Synthesize

Suggestions: Take a moment to share and give feedback on everyone's tasks and work. Set a timer for each person's share out and their feedback time to get through everything. Then identify what you need next—repeat the process!

How do all our pieces fit together? _____

What help or resources do we need? _____



Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Agriculture Advocacy Student Worksheet

Instructions: In this worksheet, you will explore agriculture-related issues and develop advocacy strategies to raise awareness about sustainable farming practices. Work with your group members to complete the following tasks.

Group Name/ Members:

Chosen Agricultural Issue:

Research Phase:

1. Describe the chosen agricultural issue in your own words (What are the key factors contributing to this issue? How does it impact the environment, local communities, and global food systems?)

2. Data and Facts (Gather data and statistics related to your chosen issue. Use reputable sources to support your research)



3. Local Impact (Investigate how this agricultural issue affects your local community. Are there any specific examples or case studies you can find?)

4. Global Impact (Explore the global implications of this issue. Identify any regions or countries that are particularly affected)

Proposed Solutions:

1. Brainstorming: List at least three potential solutions or sustainable practices that could address the chosen agricultural issue.



2. Advantages and Disadvantages (Analyze the pros and cons of each proposed solution. Consider the feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and potential challenges of implementation)

3. Ideal Solution (Choose one solution from your list that your group believes to be the most effective and feasible. Explain why you selected this solution over the others)

Advocacy Materials:

1. Material Creation (Decide on the type of advocacy material your group will create (e.g., poster, infographic, flyer). Describe the main message you want to convey through this material)



2. Design and Content (Outline the key points and visuals that will be included in your advocacy material. Ensure that the content is clear, concise, and visually appealing)

Presentation: See further guidelines below.

1. Presentation Structure (Plan the structure of your group's presentation. Include an introduction to the issue, your research findings, proposed solution, and advocacy material)

Reflection:



1. What have you learned about the importance of agriculture advocacy and sustainable farming practices through this project?
2. How do you think your advocacy efforts can impact your community and the environment?
3. How can you continue to support sustainable agriculture beyond this project?

	Excellent	Acceptable	Basic	Not Complete
Claim - An assertion that something is true	Makes a claim that is sufficient to answer the question and is coherent.	Makes a claim that is sufficient to answer the question or is coherent	Makes a claim but it is not sufficient or coherent enough to answer the question	Does not attempt to make a claim.
Evidence - Support for your claim	Sufficient evidence is provided to support the claim and it is coherently presented	Sufficient evidence is provided to support the claim or it is coherently presented	Evidence is provided to support the claim but it is not sufficient or coherently presented	No evidence is provided to support the claim
Reasoning - Explain how/why your evidence supports your claim and conclude the argument	Includes all of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Describes how the cited evidence defends the claim <input type="checkbox"/> Concludes the argument in a logical way <input type="checkbox"/> Reader feels compelled to accept your argument	Includes two of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Describes how the cited evidence defends the claim <input type="checkbox"/> Concludes the argument in a logical way <input type="checkbox"/> Reader feels compelled to accept your argument	Includes one of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Describes how the cited evidence defends the claim <input type="checkbox"/> Concludes the argument in a logical way <input type="checkbox"/> Reader feels compelled to accept your argument	Includes none of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Describes how the cited evidence defends the claim <input type="checkbox"/> Concludes the argument in a logical way <input type="checkbox"/> Reader feels compelled to accept your argument



Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Agriculture Advocacy Student Worksheet - Presentation Guidelines

Instructions

You will develop and share a brief PowerPoint, poster, video presentation, flier, or other media (with approval) for your class describing the following key points (each of which should be a separate slide/section). Include visuals and quotations whenever possible.

1. What agricultural issue are you addressing? Why is this issue important to you?
2. How does this issue affect you and your community?
3. Explain the details of your agricultural advocacy project, distinguishing actions related to each level of the advocacy continuum.
 - a. What did you develop and implement?
 - b. Who was your priority population? With whom did you collaborate?
 - c. How does your project impact the community?
4. Describe three aspects of your project that were most successful.
5. Describe three aspects of your project that you found most challenging or that you would do differently next time.
6. Suggest how your classmates, school, and/or community can become involved in this issue to further improve the health of your community.

Grading Rubric for Agricultural Advocacy Presentation

	5	4	3	2	1
Content	Content is accurate and all required information is presented in a logical order.	Content is accurate but some required information is missing and/or not presented in a logical order, but is still generally easy to follow.	Content is accurate but some required information is missing and/or not presented in a logical order, making it difficult to follow.	Content is questionable. Information is not presented in a logical order, making it difficult to follow.	Content is inaccurate. Information is not presented in a logical order, making it difficult to follow.
Mechanics	No spelling errors. No grammar errors. Text is in authors' own words.	Few spelling errors. Few grammar errors. Text is in authors' own words.	Some spelling errors. Some grammar errors. Text is in authors' own words.	Some spelling errors. Some grammar errors. Most of text is in authors' own words.	Many spelling and or grammar errors. Text is copied.
Presentation Skills	Well rehearsed. No pronunciation errors or other mistakes. All students involved equally.	General level of rehearsal. Few pronunciation errors or other mistakes. Most students involved equally.	Acceptable level of rehearsal. Some pronunciation errors or other mistakes. All students involved but parts are not equal.	Low level of rehearsal. Numerous pronunciation errors or other mistakes. Most students involved but parts are not equal.	No rehearsal indicated. Too many pronunciation errors or other mistakes. Not all students involved.



Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Agriculture Advocacy Student Worksheet - Next Steps

Instructions

It is important to consider what other steps can be taken to increase awareness about, sustain progress for, and/or expand your initial agricultural advocacy project. Thus, you will now draft a proposal that explains how you could accomplish the project long-term, if resources were available. This type of proposal could be presented at an open session at a school board or city council meeting, when council members or school administrators hear ideas from, and often act upon, suggestions from the school and community.

Your proposal that recommends next steps should address the following main points:

1. What agricultural issue are you addressing? Why is this issue important to you? How does this issue affect your community?
2. Briefly explain what you accomplished in your advocacy project (e.g., volunteer activity corresponding to service level: starting a vegetable garden at your school).
3. Suggest what additional resources (e.g., time, personnel, and financial) and action are needed to further your work to best enhance the community. Suggest how the school board or city council can assist in this effort (e.g., policy level at the activism level: expanding the school garden concept to other schools in your district and incorporating healthy eating at school and school events as part of the schools' wellness policies).
4. How will your proposed health advocacy project benefit the community?