

Grade 2

FARMER AT THE SCHOOLHOUSE – YEAR-ROUND GROWING

Georgia Performance Standards Covered:

- **ELACC2SL1** – Comprehension & Collaboration – Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups
- **ELACC2SL2** – Comprehension & Collaboration – Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or info presented orally or through other media
- **ELACC2SL3** – Comprehension & Collaboration – Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information, deepen understanding of a topic or issue, or clarify comprehension
- **ELACC2W3** – Text Types and Purposes – Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure
- **ELACC2W5** – Production and Distribution of Writing – With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing
- **ELACC2W6** (optional) – Production and Distribution of Writing – With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers
- **ELACCKW8** – Research to Build and Present Knowledge – Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question

Essential Question:

How does a professional grower interpret and manage seasonal changes in a farm/garden?

Objectives:

- Foster school-community relationship
- Provide additional context to the school garden
- Practice sequencing events and understanding processes
- Build speaking, listening & writing skills

Key Words & Terms:

- Temporal
- Annual
- Cyclical
- Growing operation
- Management

Abstract:

Ask a local farmer or Master Gardener to come speak to your class, specifically about the seasonal changes in a garden/ farm. Having an expert speak to the class will develop grade-level speaking and listening skills in an engaging, garden-related way. The green-thumbed speaker can also share knowledge and advice to help improve your school garden and share life stories with the students! After the presentation, students will complete a related graphic organizer (provided at the end of the document) and write narrative accounts of the farmer's presentation.

*See "Notes" section for help finding a speaker.

Materials:

- 1 copy of graphic organizer per student (or per pair/group)
- Pencil and paper per pair/group for students
- Optional: Computer access per pair/group of students

Procedure:

Preparing for the speaker –

1. Share with students they will have a special visit from a community farmer/ gardener who will speak about his/her year-round growing operation. Engage the class in a discussion of the visitor and the topic, relating both to the school garden, with questions such as:
 - What are some differences/ changes you have noticed in the garden in the different seasons? (Example answers – types of plants grown, presence of leaves in beds in fall, wetter soil from more rain in spring, less flowers in winter)
 - What are the different activities we do to take care of the garden and help it grow? (Example answers -- watering, planting, picking, weeding, adding compost, mulching)
 - What happens to the plants after all the food is gone? Do you remove the plants and put them in a compost pile, till them under, etc.?
 - What happens to the garden in the summer when you are on vacation?
 - What are some challenges associated with different seasons? When do the garden plants seem least healthy to you?
2. Explain they will have the opportunity to hear about an expert farmer/ gardener's seasonal land & plant care. Help them understand this is a great opportunity to gain knowledge and hear experiences that could make their own school garden better.
3. Let them know they will be able to ask the speaker any question they want after the presentation, but encourage them to focus on the different jobs he/she has at different times of the year that help take care of the land & products. Have them jot down prepared questions for the farmer/ gardener and/or make a list of the class questions.

Speaker presentation –

4. Set the presentation in the school garden to help students make connections between their own experiences gardening and the speaker's narration.
5. Encourage students to ask their prepared (and spontaneous!) questions after the presentation.
6. Ask students questions before the speaker leaves about topics that may have been confusing, or encourage students to ask the farmer to clarify or summarize difficult points.

Post- speaker activities –

7. Discuss the presentation in detail as a class. Be sure to ask what new information they learned that could be applied to the school garden.
8. Pass out a copy of the graphic organizer below to each student, or every other student for working in pairs, and/or copy onto the board to help class fill it in. This organizer will aid the students in their writing assignment. Try to do this while the presentation is still fresh in their minds.
9. Later, perhaps the next day, have students work in pairs or groups of 3 to write a one page narrative summary of the presenter's account of the yearlong cycle of the garden/ farm.
10. Optional: After drafting on paper (or in place of the paper draft), have the students type their composition on the computer and find one appropriate, descriptive image to illustrate each season's featured plants or activities.

Notes/ Tips:

1. All aspects of this lesson can be taught either in the school garden or the classroom.
2. Finding a farmer: Use the Georgia Organics Local Food Guide (<http://localfoodguide.georgiaorganics.org>) to find a farmer near you, or if your school participates in Harvest of the Month, ask the senior buyer in your school system from which farms the harvest of the month is being purchased and contact one of them. To find a Master Gardener, look for your local organization/ district director on the map at <http://georgiamastergardeners.org/gmgaDDs.htm> or refer to the "Speakers" section of the Georgia Master Gardener Association site (<http://georgiamastergardeners.org/gmgaspeakers.htm>).
*Request that he/she focus on the principal tasks & duties in maintaining the farm/ garden throughout the year, since the students will be asked to recall & narrate these events after the visit.
3. Use the sample letter to a farmer on the following page to reach out and contact a potential speaker.

Dear (Mr./ Ms. _____),

My name is (_____), and I teach 2nd grade at (_____) School. I have been focusing on incorporating garden-based learning and food literacy into the classroom (this year/ for several years), and I think a visit from a successful and experienced producer like yourself would be an interesting new way to expand the context of our school garden and include the community. Plus, I know the kids would love hearing from a real-life farmer!

If you are open to speaking to us, my colleagues and I were hoping you could focus on explaining how your plant and land care/ management changes seasonally throughout the year. We would also love to hear about your daily life, challenges of being a farmer, and any other stories or information you would like to share! If you have any pictures or tools/ visual aids you could bring in, I'm sure the students would really enjoy and appreciate that as well.

The other second grade teachers and I are very excited about the prospect of this special guest visit! We are confident this experience would help deepen our students' understanding of and appreciation for where their food comes from and your important role as a producer in our community. Please let me know if this sounds like something you could accommodate or if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support,

(Signature)

Winter



Fall

Spring

**YEAR-ROUND
GROWING**



Summer