

Cultivating Natural Resources

In this unit, we'll read about how our food resources affect us, and we'll think about the question "How do we decide which resources we should develop?" Here are some activities designed to continue the conversation about how we cultivate natural resources, and to build on the skills and concepts your child is learning in school.

Topic Connection

Planning a Garden

During this unit, students discuss the question "How do we decide which resources we should develop?" Discuss that question in relation to your own family. Plan with your child what kinds of foods you would plant in your own personal garden. Discuss vegetables that you both enjoy eating, as well as those that you feel would be important to grow and eat if only for their nutritional value. Research each plant to see if it grows well in your environment. If you have the time and space, consider planting the garden with your child.

Vocabulary Connection

Farming Charades Game

Your child is learning new words associated with cultivating food natural resources, such as **consumption**, **cultivated**, **depleting**, **dominate**, **emergence**, and **surplus**. Review the meaning of each word with your child. Then play charades together to act out each word. Write each word on a scrap of paper, then fold them and mix them up in a bowl or hat. Choose three for you to act out and three for your child to act out.

Comprehension Connection

Reading Food Labels

In this unit, your child will be reading about different ways that corn is used in America and throughout the world. To help explore this idea further, go to the grocery store with your child and look at food labels. Make a list of 10–15 packaged foods that have corn on the ingredients label. This can be in the form of corn syrup or other forms of corn.

Word Study Connections

Brainstorming Help for the World

Focus on the word *surplus* and work with your child to name as many things as possible that the world could do with a *surplus* of corn. He or she may name things mentioned in the unit, such as using it for biofuel or helping nations in need plant it for their own food supplies. Try to come up with many more options for the crop surplus.