

Melon Madness

Objective

Students will read about melons and participate in activities using melons, including reading comprehension, creative writing, visual art activities, and map reading activities.

Materials

Assorted melons for tasting.

Procedures

1. Hand out the “Context Clues” worksheet.
 - Students will read the information and answer the questions on the worksheet.
2. Hand out the “Drawing Conclusions” worksheet.
 - Discuss the information about drawing conclusions.
 - Students will read the passages and answer the questions on the worksheet.
3. Students will sample a variety of melons to determine their favorites.
 - Students will create brochures, posters, etc., to promote their favorites, using the nutrition facts below:
 - Watermelon and cantaloupe do not contain any fat or cholesterol.
 - Watermelon is an excellent source of Vitamin C, a very good source of Vitamin A and a good source of potassium and B1.
 - Cantaloupe is an excellent source of Vitamins A and C, a very good source of potassium and a good source of B6, folate and dietary fiber.
 - Students will write letters to the school food service staff to request the addition of their favorite melons on the school menu.
4. Hand out the “Melon Family Reunion” worksheet. Students will work in groups and pretend the watermelon varieties are relatives at a family reunion and write descriptive stories explaining the place of each variety/character in the family (grandma, aunt, uncle, etc.)
 - How did they get their names?
 - What has happened to them since the last family reunion?
 - Students will perform skits based on the stories.
 - Draw pictures of the watermelon relatives.
5. Hand out the “Multitudes of Melons” worksheet. Students will read the descriptions of the different kinds of melon and draw pictures based on the descriptions.
 - Students will use internet search engines, seed catalogues or gardening books to test the accuracy of their drawings.
6. Students will sequence the information on the Watermelon Facts page included with this lesson and place it on a timeline. Students will use online or library references to find any missing dates (e.g., Civil War, Columbus’ first voyage, etc.)
 - Students will use a world map to trace the travels of watermelon around the world.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

GRADE 3

Speaking and Listening: R.1,2,3; W.1,2. Fluency: 1,2. Reading and Writing Process: 3. Critical Reading and Writing: R.6; W.1,2. Research: R.1,3. Multimodal: R.1; W.1,2. Citizenship: 2,3. Economics: 3. Geography: 1B. History: 1

GRADE 4

Speaking and Listening: R.1,2,3; W.1,2. Fluency: 1,2. Reading and Writing Process: 3. Critical Reading and Writing: R.6; W.1,2. Research: R.1,3. Multimodal: R.1; W.1,2. Regions: 2DE, 3

GRADE 5

Speaking and Listening: R.1,2,3; W.1,2. Reading and Writing Process: 1. Critical Reading and Writing: R.6; W.1,2. Research: R.1,3. Multimodal: R.1; W.1,2

Name _____

Context Clues

Melons are warm season crops that thrive in Oklahoma's long growing season. All kinds of melons grow in Oklahoma, but our watermelon crop is the most profitable. In 2015 Oklahoma produced 540,000 hundredweight of watermelon, adding about \$7 million to our state's economy.

Most of the watermelon produced in Oklahoma goes out of state. According to a study by the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Oklahoma exports 392.8 percent more watermelon than is consumed in the state.

Oklahomans began growing watermelon before statehood. At the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, Oklahoma exhibited three watermelons with a combined weight of 334 pounds. One, the largest of the fair, weighed 117 pounds.

In 2006 the Oklahoma Legislature declared watermelon Oklahoma's state vegetable. Most people think of watermelon as a fruit and eat it as a dessert, but watermelon is listed in US Department of Agriculture statistics as a vegetable.

Watermelon does not contain any fat or cholesterol. Watermelon is an excellent source of Vitamin C, a very good source of Vitamin A and a good source of potassium and B1. Watermelon also provides the body with fiber.

Context Clues

Fill in the blanks with answers from the reading above.



All kinds of _____ grow in Oklahoma, but

watermelon is the most profitable. In 2015 Oklahoma produced 540,000 _____ of watermelon.

Most of the watermelon produced in Oklahoma goes _____. Oklahomans began growing _____ before statehood. One of the largest watermelons exhibited at the St. Louis World's Fair weighed _____ pounds.

Watermelon does not contain any _____ or cholesterol. List 2 vitamins it provides: _____

Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom is a program of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Name _____

Drawing Conclusions

When readers draw conclusions, they use details from their reading and from what they know to come to a better understanding about characters or events.

What you read + What you know = Draw a conclusion.

If the question says, “from this passage,” you should base your answer on what you read, not other information you know. For example, watermelons do have seeds but that information is not mentioned in Passage # 3, below. Answer the following questions, based on what you read.

1. An agricultural researcher developed the first sweet melon that could be stacked. It was shaped like an oval, called oblong. About a century ago, watermelons were round. They were hard to stack and rolled around during the rough ride from farm to market. Today most watermelons are oblong. From this passage you can tell that
 - a. Today watermelons are oblong because they look better.
 - b. Today watermelons are oblong because they stack better.
 - c. Most watermelons today are round.
2. Watermelon does not contain any fat or cholesterol. It is an excellent source of Vitamins A, B6 and C. It also contains fiber, potassium and lycopene. From this passage you can tell that
 - a. Watermelon tastes good.
 - b. Watermelon is a healthy food.
 - c. Watermelon is red and green.
3. Watermelon crossed the Atlantic Ocean and made its way to North America with African slaves. Watermelon first appeared in the English dictionary in 1615. From this passage, you can conclude that
 - a. Watermelons have been around for a long time.
 - b. Watermelons have seeds.
 - c. Watermelons are a new food.

Name _____

Melon Family Reunion

There are over 1,200 varieties of watermelons. Some are round; some are long; some have red flesh; some have yellow flesh. Some have striped rinds; some are solid green. The watermelon varieties that grow well in Oklahoma are listed below.

MELON APPEARANCE	MELON VARIETY
Gray-green rind and round shape	Mickylee
Gray-green rind and oblong shape	Charleston Gray
Green-striped rind and oblong shape	Allsweet Jubilee Royal Jubilee StarBright Sangria Tendergold
Green-striped rind and round oblong shape	Crimson Sweet Royal Sweet Fiesta Madera
Green-striped rind and round shape	Petite Sweet
Green rind and round shape	Black Diamond Texas Giant Florida Giant Desert King

Pretend the watermelon varieties are relatives at a family reunion. Write descriptive stories explaining the place of each variety/character in the family (grandma, aunt, uncle, etc.)

- How did they get their names?
- What has happened to them since the last family reunion?
- Draw pictures of the watermelon relatives.

Name _____

Multitudes of Melons

The terms “muskmelon” and “cantaloupe” are often used interchangeably, but this is not accurate. All cantaloupes are muskmelons, but not all muskmelons are cantaloupes. Muskmelons include a variety of melons, which run the gamut from cantaloupes to casabas. There are two basic categories, netted and smooth. The skin of a muskmelon can vary in color from creamy white to rich green, while the flesh may be white, green, golden, orange, or even almost salmon colored.

cantaloupe—Cantaloupe is also referred to as netted melon because it has a ribless rind with a distinctive netted skin. Inside there is a hollow cavity that contains seeds encased in a web of netting. Cantaloupe is also known as “rock melon” in several parts of the world.

casaba—The skin of a casaba is pale yellow, smooth, but wrinkled, with longitudinal furrows. The flesh is white and sweet. It gets its name from Kasaba, Turkey.

crenshaw— The crenshaw is a hybrid melon with very sweet, juicy orange flesh. When ripe, crenshaws are roughly ovoid, with a greenish-yellow, slightly ribbed skin. Inside, the melons are a rich salmon pink, with a large seeded area in the center. In many cases, a ripe crenshaw melon will pull itself off the vine with its own weight.

canary—Canary melons have bright yellow rinds and an oblong shape. Inside, the pale, cream-colored flesh is juicy, and the flavor is very mild. The taste is slightly more tangy than a honeydew melon.

1. Draw pictures of the melons above, based on the descriptions provided.
2. Use internet search engines, seed catalogues or gardening books to test the accuracy of the drawings.

Name _____

Watermelon Facts

Number the following watermelon facts by time period, and place them in order on a timeline. Research to find the missing dates.

_____ During the Civil War the Confederate Army boiled down watermelons as a source of sugar and molasses.

_____ Horticulturalists believe watermelons originated in the Kalahari Desert of South Africa.

_____ Oklahomans began growing watermelon before statehood. At the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, Oklahoma exhibited three watermelons with a combined weight of 334 pounds. One, the largest of the exposition, weighed 117 pounds.

_____ The first record of watermelon harvest is found in Egyptian hieroglyphics on tomb walls dating back 5000 years.

_____ Columbus brought cantaloupe with him to the New World on his second voyage.

_____ Melons were grown almost exclusively in home gardens until the first half of the 20th century, when more disease- and wilt-resistant cultivars were developed by the USDA.

_____ The Rush Springs Watermelon Festival in Oklahoma has been an annual event since 1948.

_____ Archaeological evidence suggests that the muskmelon originated in Persia about 4,000 years ago.

_____ Watermelons were documented in China in the 10th Century AD.

_____ Watermelons were introduced to Europe by the Moors and were found throughout Europe in the 13th Century AD.

_____ The Oklahoma Legislature declared watermelon Oklahoma's state vegetable in 2006.

_____ The Greeks appear to have known about muskmelon in the 3rd Century BC.

_____ North American natives were growing muskmelons in the 17th Century.

_____ A watermelon was once thrown at Roman Governor Demosthenes during a political debate. Placing the watermelon upon his head, he thanked the thrower for providing him with a helmet to wear as he fought Philip of Macedonia.

_____ Cantaloupe got its name from the Italian papal village of Cantalupa, where it originated in the 17th Century.

