



Classroom in the Corn

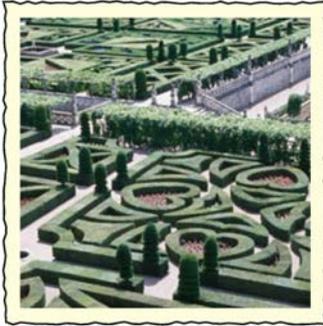
Teacher Resource Guide

An a-MAZE-ing Adventure into Learning

Welcome to one of the most fun and unique field trips you'll ever encounter! Your students will—quite literally—get an inside view of an authentic cornfield that's been carefully cultivated into a giant, living puzzle. In the process, they'll discover why we describe our incredible corn maze is a place "...where getting lost means finding fun!"

This Teacher Resource Guide will help you to bring that farm experience into the classroom with fun, engaging, and thought-provoking activities that will help your students get the most out of their farm field trip.





Maze History

People have been creating mazes for more than 4,000 years. In fact, archaeologists have discovered maze patterns and labyrinths in ancient Greek and Roman ruins. In more recent centuries, elaborate garden mazes (also known as "hedge mazes") were created for the entertainment of the aristocracy. Soon they became so popular, they were considered essential features of the most stylish royal palaces.

By the 19th century, garden mazes were no longer exclusive playthings of nobility. Parks and other public spaces around Europe and North America had begun featuring garden mazes that were open to average citizens. It wasn't until the last decade of the 20th century that the first modern corn maze (or "maize maze") was created, debuting in rural Pennsylvania. Nowadays, hundreds of corn mazes are created every year, entertaining and boggling adults and children by the thousands.



A Brief History of Corn

Humans have been growing corn or "maize" for at least 7,000 years, but you would barely recognize corn in its early form. Originally cultivated in central Mexico, primitive corn actually started as a wild grass. Over time, Native Americans across the Southwest began growing corn, which gradually was cross-bred to more closely resemble "modern" corn. For many centuries, corn served as one of the most important food sources for Indians throughout both North and South America.

Europeans had never laid eyes on corn until Christopher Columbus and other explorers came into contact with the natives of the "New World." Today, of course, corn has become a "staple cereal." But there are more than 3,500 commercial uses for corn besides human food and animal feed. In fact, corn is an important ingredient in products as diverse as soap, paint, photographic film, and chewing gum.



That's A-maze-ing

Creating a corn maze takes plenty of advance planning and effort. First, the farmers must choose the most appropriate variety of corn to plant for the purpose. They also must select or design a pattern for the maze and then transfer it into the cornfield in large scale using a grid pattern.

Care must then be taken in planting and fertilizing the corn so that the stalks will grow to the desired height, and special methods must be used to prevent the corn from growing in the maze paths.

If the farmer does all these things successfully, visitors to the farm can look forward to an a-maze-ing experience.



Is it Still a Corn Maze if it isn't Made of Corn?

All corn mazes are not created equal; some aren't even made out of corn! Some farmers create their mazes from crops other than corn. A few farmers create their mazes from crops such as: sunflowers, sorghum or hay grazer - a sister crop to corn. Some farmers even make mini mazes using hay bales.

If the farm your class will be visiting uses one of these corn substitutes, feel free to modify any of the activities in this Teacher Resource Guide as needed. By exploring with your class the differences between corn and other crops used to create mazes, you can turn the question "Is it still a corn maze if it isn't made of corn?" into a handy teaching/learning opportunity.



TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Introduction to Educational Materials



When you take your students on a farm field trip featuring The MAIZE, you know they can look forward to a fun and engaging experience. But amid all the “corny” entertainment and recreation, your students will discover a whole bushel of knowledge about a wide range of subjects, including corn, farming, agricultural products, farm animals, farming technology, and the important role that agriculture plays in the American economy and in their day-to-day lives.

In order to enhance and amplify the on-the-farm educational experience, we have created this Teacher Resource Guide, which features a collection of student activities that you can use in your classroom. As you’ll see, the activities are age-appropriate and are grouped among several “grade ranges”: pre-K through K, grades 1 through 5, grades 5 through 8, and grades 9 through 12. We have included both pre-visit activities and post-visit activities for each grade range.

The pre-visit activities are designed to assist you in preparing your students for their farm field trip and introducing them to some of the key ideas, facts, and concepts they will encounter during their visit. The post-visit activities, meanwhile, will provide you with an entertaining and creative means by which you can help your students recall, review, and retain the knowledge they gained in the course of their field trip.

Each activity is accompanied by the relevant national educational standards so that you can readily integrate the activities into your regular curriculum. You’ll find activities that address Life Sciences, Math, Geometry, English, Geography, Social Studies, Economics, and Technology. At the same time, we’ve taken into account your students’ different learning styles by featuring art-based activities, written/verbal activities, and group/interactive activities.

Feel free to use any or all of the activities that you feel are appropriate for your students’ learning needs. All of the activities are suitable for the classroom, and you’ll find several of them can also be given as homework.

You’ll notice we designed the pre- and post-visit materials in this Guide around four important topics related to our maze and farm:

Corn

Without corn, of course, there would be no corn mazes. But for many centuries, corn was also a critical crop for native peoples across North and South America. Today, corn is not just a valuable component of our food supply chain, but also a source of countless products your students use daily—from plastics, adhesives, and fabrics to medicines and biofuels.

Pumpkins

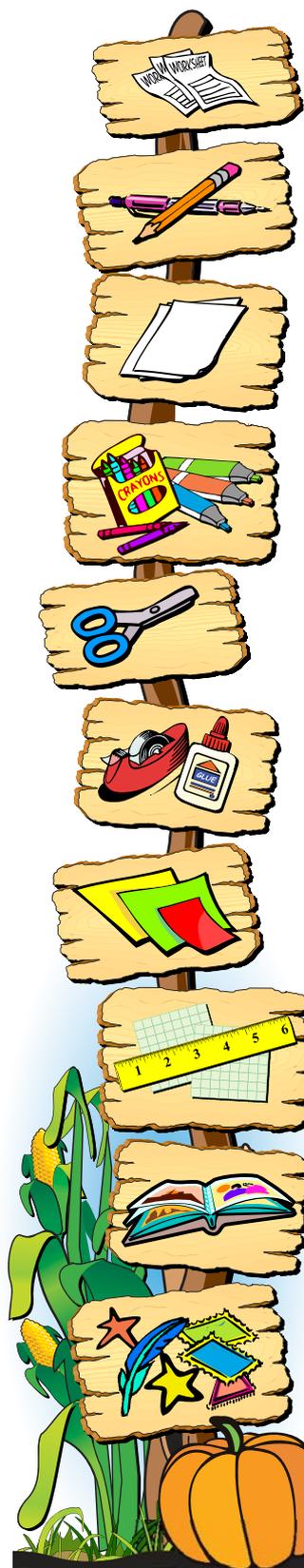
Pumpkins: they’re not just for Jack-o-lanterns and holiday pies anymore. In fact, on many farms, pumpkins serve a variety of uses—from a popular produce commodity to a key animal feed source.

Farm Animals

Though it would be mighty convenient, the fact is that farm animals do not raise themselves. It is up to the farmers to assure that each animal gets the proper care and attention it requires so that it grows up strong and healthy.

Where Does My Food Come From?

For many people, the answer to the question “Where does my food come from” is “From the grocery store, of course!” As your students will learn, there’s a lot more to the story of food and its journey to the dinner table.



WORKSHEET(S)

WRITING INSTRUMENTS

WRITING PAPER

CRAYONS, MARKERS

SAFETY SCISSORS

TAPE, GLUE, GLUE STICK

PAPERS:

CONSTRUCTION PAPER, POSTER BOARD, CHART PAPER AND/OR OTHER CRAFT PAPERS

1/4-INCH GRAPH PAPER, RULER

SUPPORTING IMAGES/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

MAGAZINES, BROCHURES, INTERNET RESOURCES

ADDITIONAL ART MATERIALS/EMBELLISHMENTS:

STICKERS, GLITTER, PIPE CLEANERS, FEATHERS, BEADS, FOAM SHAPES, BRASS BRADS, ETC.