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## Getting Acquainted with an Iowa Farmer

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# Getting Acquainted with an Iowa Farmer

Created by: Anne Hoeper  
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Grade Level (Req.): 6th-8th grade	Content Area (Req.): Human Geography	Unit (Opt.):		
Connections to Other Disciplines (Opt.):				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>				
Time Frame (Req.): 1-3 class periods	Goal (Req.): To help students to become aware of farm life in the past and present.			
Objective (Req.): Students will compare and contrast past and present life on Iowa farms.				
Materials Needed (Req.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interview questions</li><li>• Farmers to interview or websites describing life on farms</li><li>• Video camera</li><li>• Computer</li><li>• Microsoft Movie Maker or another video editing program</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	New Vocabulary (Opt.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>			
Anticipatory Set/Introduction [Inquiry Question is required] (Req.): What is life like on an Iowa farm? How has it changed in the last 50 years?				
Instructional Sequence/Procedure (Req.): <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discuss the importance of obtaining oral history.</li><li>2. Discuss with students what can be learned about groups of people by exploring their daily life.</li><li>3. Create a list of questions to use when interviewing farmers. Students may use the questions that are included with this lesson plan, modify the questions, or create their own.</li><li>4. Schedule a time to interview a farmer.</li><li>5. Interviews may be videotaped and edited using Microsoft Movie Maker.</li><li>6.</li><li>7.</li><li>8.</li><li>9.</li><li>10.</li><li>11.</li><li>12.</li><li>13.</li><li>14.</li><li>15.</li><li>16.</li><li>17.</li></ol>				

18. 19. 20.	
Formative Evaluation (Req.): Class discussion	Assessment (Req.): 1) Students can share their results in small groups; they can discuss the similarities and differences that they see. 2) Using a Venn diagram students can compare and contrast life past and present life on Iowa farms. 3) Movies can be shared with other classes. 4) Analyze how the loss of family owned farms has affected the economy.
Iowa Core Curriculum Standards Used (Req.):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography, grade 6-8: Understand how geographic and human characteristics create culture and define regions.</li> <li>• Geography, grade 6-8: Understand how physical processes and human actions modify the environment and how the environment affects humans.</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Common Core Curriculum Standards Used (Opt.):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking and Listening, grade 6-12: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on specific grade level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
NGS Standards Used (Req.):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The physical and human characteristics of places</li> <li>• How human actions modify the physical environment</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Five Themes of Geography Used (Req.):	School District Standards and Benchmarks (Opt.):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Place</li> <li>• Human-Environmental Interaction</li> <li>• Region</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

21<sup>st</sup> Century Universal Constructs (Opt.):

Other Disciplinary Standards (Opt.):

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Other Essential Information (Opt.):

Other Resources (Opt.):

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## Interview Questions for an Iowa Farmer

1. Describe the nature of your farm (crop, livestock, combination):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Type of business:  Sole Proprietorship  Partnership  Corporation
3. How many acres of property do you farm? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long has this land been a farm? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Years at present business: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of employees: \_\_\_\_\_.  Salaried  Hourly  
If paid hourly, how much do the employees earn per hour? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Approximate hours you work per week: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you have seasonal employees?  Yes  No. If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you have more full-time or seasonal employees?  Full-time  Seasonal
10. What qualities do you look for when hiring employees? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Have you found owners of similar farms to be friendly? Competitive? Explain.  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Why did you select to become a farmer? \_\_\_\_\_
13. How did you determine the location of your farm? \_\_\_\_\_
14. What would you do differently if you were to start a new farm this year? \_\_\_\_\_
15. What impacts the decisions you make with regards to what and how much to grow or produce? \_\_\_\_\_
16. How do you promote your products? (circle all that apply)  

A) Brochure	D) Newspaper	G) Special events
B) Online directories	E) Television	H) Other
C) Personal websites	F) Signs	

17. What impacts your decisions with regards to where and how you sell your products? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Discuss the sale of your commodities. Who do you sell to? How is the price determined? \_\_\_\_\_

19. What do you do to make your profit margin the best it can be? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Using the following scale, how profitable are the following methods in selling your products (if they do not apply leave blank):

1 Very Ineffective	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Very Effective
CSA _____	Farmers' Market _____	Local Restaurant / Stores _____		Local Distributors _____
Road/ Farm Stand _____				Wholesalers _____

21. Of the products that you sell, what percentage do you sell locally?

A) 0-20%   B) 21-40%   C) 41-60%   D) 61-80%   E) 81-100%

22. Of the products that you sell locally, what percentage do you sell directly to the consumer?

A) 0-20%   B) 21-40%   C) 41-60%   D) 61-80%   E) 81-100%

23. What is your annual value of total sales? \_\_\_\_\_

24. What is your annual value of local sales? \_\_\_\_\_

25. In general, how do you feel about subsidies for farmers? What government subsidies are you receiving? \_\_\_\_\_

26. Discuss the use of various chemicals in your operation. Why are they used? What precautions are taken? What regulations must be followed? \_\_\_\_\_

27. What kind of sustainable agricultural practices do you incorporate into your work? \_\_\_\_\_

28. Describe two unique features of your business:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_

29. What is most rewarding about your career? \_\_\_\_\_

30. What is the biggest challenge in operating your business? \_\_\_\_\_

31. What prepared you to be a farmer, owner or employee of an agricultural-related business? \_\_\_\_\_

32. What are some political issues you are concerned about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

33. Where do you see farming in the future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

34. Describe some of the things you do as a farmer. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

