



“Wisconsin gardens provide many food choices for us”

4-5th Grade Essay contest Lesson Plans and Activities

Teacher Lesson Plans and Activity Resource Packet

The following packet of lesson plans, activities, and presentation suggestions is to enable teachers, extension agents, home school parents and volunteers to help students learn about this year’s essay topic. The Essay Contest Brochure can be downloaded from www.wisagclassroom.org. Entries are due to county Farm Bureau essay coordinators (see website for where your county entries should be sent) postmarked by April 1. The brochure outlines all rules, deadlines and information that must accompany the essays. For more information, please contact Wisconsin AITC Coordinator Darlene Arneson at darneson@wbf.com or 608.828.5719. The contest is sponsored by Frontier-Servco FS, We Energies and Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation.

This year’s topic will be **“Wisconsin gardens provide many food choices for us”**. Our 2014 Book of the Year will be “First Peas to the Table” by Susan Grigsby. The book and essay topic will allow us to educate students about where food comes from, learn about Thomas Jefferson and his gardening research, understanding how plants grow, and making healthy food choices. We will again link the book, the accompanying lessons that we write for our Book of the Year, various Wisconsin educational resources, and other Ag in the Classroom lessons into resources for teachers, students and volunteers to use in promoting and preparing essays.

Students might consider, but not be limited to, these sub-topics to write about:

- The student’s experience with raising a garden or knowing someone that does.
- The student’s experience with a school garden or community garden plot.
- Discussing how various types of garden plants grow, mature and produce fruit and vegetables we eat.
- What are their favorite foods grown in a garden? Describing some of their experiences, recipes or raising the crop.
- How do garden crops fit into MyPlate in providing healthy food choices?
- I make healthy food choices by growing these crops in my garden and using them in my meals.
- Writing about historical people and their connection to gardens, crop research or agriculture.
- What are the different types of gardens people in Wisconsin might have?
- How do farmer’s markets, CSA’s, community gardens supply some people’s food supply?
- Discussing any experiments or garden trials the student might have conducted, read about or researched.
- Describe their visit to a garden center, farmer’s market, farm or someone’s garden.
- How can someone without much land or space raise a garden?
- Where can people learn how to garden? What resources or people are available to help?
- Describe the student’s experience in a 4-H garden project area.
- What scientific processes are related to gardening, growing plants, controlling pests and weeds, and other aspects of raising a garden?

Check out www.wisagclassroom.org for additional resources including:

- Full sheets of student entry form information (4 entry forms per sheet)
- Lesson plans and activity sheets related to this year’s topic

Need more information? Visit www.agclassroom.org and click on Teacher Center. The Resource Directory Topic & Media Search will be very helpful in linking you to a variety of gardening resources.