

# Writing a Plant Biography

## Standards

ELACC3W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
- c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.
- d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

ELACC3W4: With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

ELACC3W5: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

ELACC3W6: With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

ELACC3W7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

ELACC3W8: Recall information from experience or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

## Objectives

### Students will learn:

- that each plant has a unique history related to its region of origin and its discovery and use by humans.
- how to use the internet to research a topic.

## Central Concepts

- Plants have been used for many different things throughout history -- as food, medicine, shelter, aesthetic ornamentation, and as raw materials for the manufacture of products such as paper and furniture.
- Human life is completely dependent on plants.

## Materials

- Paper
- Pencils
- Computer with Internet access, or library/reference books

## Discussion Topics

What are some of the ways we use plants? (*For food, shelter, clothing, aesthetics, and so on.*)

Can all plants grow anywhere in the world? (*No, different plants grow in different places and have specific growing conditions.*)

Do different plants come from different places on earth? (*Yes, each plant has a native region, though humans have moved them around the globe.*)

## Activity

1. Just like people, each plant species has its own story. To explore this concept, ask students to write biographies of common fruits and vegetables. Here are some questions to help them start their research:

- Where did your plant originate?
- What environmental conditions does it need to grow?
- How have people used it throughout history?
- How do we use this plant today?
- Are there any interesting or unusual stories about this plant?
- What is the plant's scientific name?

These websites are useful references:

[Our Vegetable Travelers](#)

[The Food Timeline](#)

[Plants for a Future](#)

[Food Plant Life Stories](#)

[Plants with a Purpose](#)

2. When students have completed their research, ask them to compose a short book about their plant, complete with illustrations (e.g., drawings, collages, pictures cut from catalogs/magazines).

3. To share their stories with the rest of the class, have students create posters to display in the classroom featuring highlights of each plant's history and uses.

## Extensions

**Geography:** Create an international plant collage. Cut out pictures of common plants from seed catalogs. Research their origins and then attach the pictures to appropriate locations on a large world map. Try to find pictures of plants from all continents. (You may not be able to find all of them in common catalogs, so if necessary, supplement with photos from the Internet.)

<http://www.kidsgardening.org/activity/writing-plant-biography>