

Alternative Assessment: Explanation

The purpose of this alternative assessment is to address two Common Core Standards. The primary standard being addressed is 6.RI.7 “Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.” The secondary standard being addressed is 6.L.2 “Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.” These standards will be addressed as students work to answer the question “How do we get our food?” Students are to select a food product and trace its route to consumers, addressing initial production (agricultural base), processing, and distribution. The students will then synthesize this research to produce a paper and give an oral presentation on what they learned.

Research makes up a huge portion of the students’ workload and evaluation in this project. By developing research skills as sixth graders, these students will be much more prepared for high school and college academics. The required research topics in this project are the production, processing, and distribution of food and factors that influence the cost of the product to consumers. For students to gain an authentic understanding of how food goes from seeds to the shelves, the students will need to examine each of these areas closely. The rubric provides a detailed explanation of the expectations for this project which should help students to feel comfortable and confident in their work, because there is a solid structure.

It is important for students to not only research information, but to write papers and present their findings. The paper and the presentation are two major components of this project, both of which align with the standards that are being addressed. Students are asked to write a paper to demonstrate the fluent ability to correctly use capitalization, punctuation, and spelling in the writing process. This component also requires students to gather their researched information and compile their findings in a well-written paper. Presenting information is also an essential skill for students to attain at this grade level - not only for their academic career, but also their potential professional career in the 21st century.

This project will align with the standards in that the students will be able to research a topic of food how we get our food and compile that information in a format that can easily be shared with peers. Students will also be required to fulfill the standard of using correct English conventions in their writing and in their presentation. The multimedia aspect of this project will fulfill the need for 21st century skills within the classroom.

The topic is something that is relevant to students’ everyday life and something that is thought provoking for students to consider. The activity will take students through all the kinds of food preparation and will provide plenty of opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to fulfill the standards.

At the completion of this project, the results from the rubrics would be compiled and assessed by the teacher. Looking ahead, the teacher would use the results to alter future teaching. The teacher would first assess the standards specifically, taking a closer look into the mechanics of each of the submitted papers and deciding if these writing skills needed to be re taught and practiced. The teacher would assess the multimedia presentations of the students to determine where their skills sets are for this. Both of these standards will likely need continued practice, so the teacher will have to look carefully at what specific skills should be practiced the most. In addition, the teacher will have background knowledge for future teaching on how students work in group projects and if the learning target of expanding knowledge on food production, processing, and distribution.

This alternative assessment is being used to expose students to researching, awareness of food production, presenting learned information to an audience, and developing well-constructed academic writing. The results that the students find will also be presented to their own peers, which will be followed by educating the school, families, and the public on the process from seed to consumer. The scores from the rubric will be directly added to each student's grade at the completion of the project and presentation.

This project can be easily evaluated by the rubric that we attached. Students simply fulfilled the requirements or they did not. The assessment is somewhat authentic in that they are creating their own product that is the paper and the presentation. In order for the assessment to be more authentic, it could be furthered into making a movie documentary about the production of a food item or making song that traces the process of food production.

Driving Question: How do we get our food? From seeds to the shelves.

Project: Students are to select a food product and trace its route to consumers, addressing initial production (agricultural base), processing, and distribution. The students will then synthesize this research to produce a paper and give an oral presentation on what they learned.

Purpose: To expand student knowledge and appreciation on the trail of food products from the initial phase through the hands of the consumer.

Steps:

1. Select a food product. (Product needs to be approved by teacher, prior to beginning the research.)
2. Research and trace the production, processing, and distribution of your selected food product.
3. Research the factors that have an effect on the cost of food production, processing, and distribution. What will cause the prices for consumers to fluctuate?
4. Collect and synthesize your findings. Write a paper that covers the production, processing, and distribution of a food product as well as factors that affect the cost to consumers. See rubric for expected depth of information.
5. Give an oral presentation about what was learned in relation to the driving question: How do we get our food? Oral presentation should cover all information included in the paper. Again, see rubric for expected depth of information.

	3	2	1	0
Research on initial production and agricultural context	Students report on three aspects of agricultural production.	Students report on two aspects of agricultural production.	Students report on one aspect of agricultural production.	Students report on no aspects of agricultural production.
Research on methods of processing the agricultural products	Students report on three methods used to process an agricultural product.	Students report on two methods used to process an agricultural product.	Students report on one method used to process an agricultural product.	Students report on zero methods used to process an agricultural product.
Research on methods of distributing the processed goods	Students report on three methods used to distribute the process good.	Students report on two methods used to distribute the process good.	Students report on one method used to distribute the process good.	Students report on zero methods used to distribute the process good.
Research Cost Factors	Students include three different elements that could affect the cost of the product.	Students include two different elements that could affect the cost of the product.	Students include one different elements that could affect the cost of the product.	Students include no different elements that could affect the cost of the product.
Research Paper	Students demonstrate complete command of the conventions of standard English.	Students demonstrate partial command of the conventions of standard English.	Students demonstrate minimal command of the conventions of standard English.	Students demonstrate unsatisfactory command of the conventions of standard English.
Presentation	Students create a well-developed presentation that addresses all necessary components.		Students	Students do not present their findings.