

Simple Outline

Overall Goal: Students will examine the most pressing issues facing agriculture and match each issue with reliable, accurate sources of issue-based information.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will list the largest issues facing agriculture from three perspectives: farmers, consumers and lawmakers.
2. Students will craft effective messaging for the most pressing issues in agriculture utilizing the message house template.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS:

Common Core English Language Standards-LITERACY RST.9-10. 2; RST.11-12.2, SLS.9-10.4; SLS.11-12.4

Common Career Technical Core: AG 1.2; AG 1.5; AG 1.6; AG 2.2; AG 2.3; AG 2.4

Common Career Technical Core Career Ready Practices: 01.I.A.04; 01.I.A.05; 01.I.A.06; 01.I.A.12

CONNECTION:

What?? There are issues in agriculture?

1. First, split students into two teams of 5 or more – as they will be playing Family Feud!
2. Ask students to volunteer for team captain positions.
 - a. The first two to raise their hand will be our “team captains”.
 - b. Select the first two and bring them to the front of the room and have the individuals introduce themselves.
3. Ask for at least eight more volunteers, run to the front to fill out these “families” or captains can have their choice.
4. Have the team leaders come to the front table where you will have set-up the two battery-operated click lights or easy buttons.
5. Summarize how the game is played or ask for another volunteer to summarize. Clarify game play, as needed, if you have a volunteer explain.
 - a. **Playing the Main Game:** The contestant (team leader) who buzzes in first gets to provide the first answer. If that answer is the number one survey response, his or her family gets control of the question. If not, the opposing contestant gets to try and provide a higher-ranking response to earn control for his or her family. The team who wins control of the question then provides more responses, one at a time. They are not permitted to consult with one another during this part of the game. If a given answer is not one of the most popular, the “family” gets a strike. If the team can guess all the most popular answers on the board before getting three strikes, they win. If a team does end up with three strikes, control goes to the opposing “family”. That team then has one chance to come up with one of the remaining responses on the board to win the round - if they fail, the other team gets the points.
6. Play the one-round game. Once finished and all answers on the slide, have the teams sit down and review the focus issues on the cover of agriculture tabloids. The issues are: Food Safety, GMOs, Water & Agriculture, Environment, Labor-Jobs, Animal Well Being & Antibiotics and Food Security.

Processing Questions:

1. Can you see any common themes in this list of issues?

2. *Why do you think we have challenges in these issue areas with agriculture?*
3. *Why is it important to think about an issue related to agriculture from someone else's perspective?*

We develop opinions about topics, based on our experiences, influences and research that we do. As you look at this list of issues, it becomes pretty apparent that these issues rise to the top because they are at the intersection of farming and consumers.

So, to help us dig further and understand more about these issues on the cover of ag tabloids we'll:

- *Walk a mile in someone else's shoes.*
- *Learn about the "Message House" – and how to use it to frame up a discussion about a topic*
- *Add it to the POA/" Real Life" – and find ways to weave this into our FFA Chapter activities/community activities*

OBJECTIVE 1: Students will list the largest issues facing agriculture from three perspectives: farmers, consumers and lawmakers.

Support: Perspectives – Students will use a sheet of paper with the shape of shoes on it to help them brainstorm the concerns/views about a current agriculture issue from the vantage point of a consumer, farmer and lawmaker. – 15 minutes

Point: Issues look different depending on your vantage point! – To be effective in discussing issues facing agriculture it is important to consider "where others are coming from" – 5 minutes

Application: Common Concerns = Common Ground – Students will individually identify concerns from different perspectives – farmers, consumers, lawmakers – and will then work as a team to identify common concerns/shared values and goals of the different perspectives. – 5 minutes

SUPPORT:

1. Split students into 6 equal groups.
2. Ask for one volunteer to come to the front of the room to get the issue card and envelope that members of their table will draw from to determine whose shoes they will WALK A MILE IN.
3. Before letting students dive into the activity and complete the handout on their own, do one together as a class first. Use the food security section on page 1 the blank shoe section on page 2. Read through the article and guide discussion as well as how to fill out the worksheet.
4. Put three questions up at the front of the room: How does this issue impact me as a farmer, consumer or lawmaker? What have I heard about this issue to form an opinion? What is "driving" my concern about this issue?
 - a. What concerns would a farmer have about food security – or the availability of food? What information do they have to form an opinion? What's their driving concern? [Audience response – farmers need to get the food to where consumers are both in and outside of the U.S. to stay in business and support their family. Copy into flipchart.]
 - b. What about consumers? What information do they have to form an opinion? What's their driving concern? [Audience response – they need to have wholesome, nutritious and affordable food to feed themselves and their family. Copy into flipchart.]
 - c. And what about lawmakers? What information do they have to form an opinion? What's their driving concern? [Audience response – they might be concerned about how we create tax incentives, and infrastructure to assure that constituents have food accessible regardless of where they live and constituent farmers can market their products overseas. Copy into flipchart.]

5. Next, in their respective groups have each student draw an audience card and brainstorm concerns from the person's point of view that they drew, about the issue on their table. Have students copy their answers onto page [redacted] of the handout.
6. Give students two minutes to record concerns.
 - a. Give time checks with one minute and 30 seconds left.
7. Call time. Give students another two minutes to share answers with our tables and fill in the other two sections of their shoe.
 - a. Give time checks with one minute and 30 seconds left.
8. Ask students to share the concerns that they generated; choose from each audience group (farmers, consumers, lawmakers) and at least two different issues!
9. Lead discussion on how despite these individualized concerns, there are several common concerns. As a large group, identify one common concern from farmers, consumers and lawmakers in regards to food security. Record on flipchart.
10. Have the students work back in small groups again to identify and record three common concerns of these three perspectives about their issue. Then record three common concerns on pages [redacted] and [redacted] of the handout.
 - a. If time allows, have students share what they wrote before moving onto the processing questions.

Processing Questions:

1. *Was it easy to think about someone else's perspective on an issue?*
2. *Why is it important to look at issues from multiple vantage points?*
3. *What process did we use to find the shared concerns?*
4. *How could this process benefit farmers, consumers and lawmakers when dealing with these issues?*

POINT:

1. Have students turn to page [redacted] of the handout and jot down some notes. On these pages students will also find basic information about the issues discussed earlier.
2. Start a conversation with students about how connecting on issues is complex and must be approached strategically.

Research tells us is that the only way we can really connect with others on a complex issue – and let's face it, many in agriculture are complex – is to first establish trust through shared values. When we identify the shared value, we can have a constructive conversation, versus one of defense or attack on an issue. Debating an issue might prove we're right, but in most cases, it will not win someone over to our side.

3. Reveal the three steps and explain why they are each important:
 - a. WALK A MILE IN THEIR SHOES, or view the issue from their vantage point like we did in our shoes on page [redacted]
 - b. Once we've identified other groups' concerns, we can identify COMMON CONCERNS like those on page [redacted]
 - c. And after we have common concerns, that's when we can make a real change and find a WORKABLE SOLUTION to the issue.

APPLICATION:

Share the remaining amount of common concerns brainstormed with the other groups in the class and record them on pages [redacted] and [redacted].

OBJECTIVE 2:

Students will craft effective messaging for the most pressing issues in agriculture utilizing the message house template.

Support: Putting the puzzle together – Students will be split into groups, given a blank message house page (no words). They will, by designated color, work as a group to find the pieces to their puzzle that have been hidden around the room. They will put their message house puzzle together. – 10 minutes

Point: Easy Message Outlines – Developing a message about an issue doesn't have to be difficult, if you use the Message House. – 10 minutes

Application: Mastering the Message House – Students will work in groups to take one of the prior issues discussed and diagram it into a message house to effectively convey information about that issue. – 5 minutes


SUPPORT:

1. Split students up into new groups.
2. Inform students that they will be going on a scavenger hunt for puzzle pieces around the room.
 - a. Each group should collect only one color of puzzle pieces [assign beforehand by placing a colored sticky note under the table of each group].
 - b. In their new groups they will assemble the pieces, the first team to finish, wins!
 - i. Spend no more than 3 minutes on the assembly. Cut off and award the group that's the closest if necessary. If it takes longer than 3 minutes, cut off the group and award the group that's the closest.
3. Ask the winning group to come to the front of the room and explain what they think they know about the Message House. Thank them when finished and then backfill information about the Message House.
 - a. The Message House is a great tool for organizing our thoughts about a topic, especially when we already know a shared value or concern to focus on. Whether we are preparing a speech, having a conversation about a particular topic or trying to organize a marketing message, the Message House is a great way to get our thoughts in order.
4. Work through one Message House diagram together using a simple topic like, "I need more data on my phone plan," or "I need to have a car to drive." Start off asking about shared values/concerns between the audiences – you and your parents/grandparents. Once you've worked through the Message House, ask some processing questions.

Processing Questions:

1. *What part of the diagram was easiest to fill in?*
2. *Why do you think it's easier to start with the evidence, proof points or support?*

POINT:

1. Stimulate discussion and go through the steps of building a Message House as shown on  of the handout.
2. Have students repeat this process with their own table's issue. Give them approximately 5 minutes as a table to complete the message houses on the posters by their tables using these questions:
 - a. What is the headline I want to make about this topic based on common concerns/shared values?
 - b. What core messages relate to my audience and support my headline?
 - c. What key points or evidence do I have to support my headline and core messages?
3. Ask for a few volunteers to share some of the highlights of their Message Houses.

4. Recap and discuss how useful the message house will be to keeping us on track to drive home our point or position.

APPLICATION:

Have other students spend another 8-10 minutes recording the information in each message house on pages _____, _____, and _____.

REVIEW AND CLOSE:

1. Have students take about 3-5 minutes to brainstorm news ways that their FFA Chapter or other peers and communities can benefit from the teachings in this lesson. Use some of the following discussion points if necessary:
 - a. Think about ways to utilize the message house to help chapter members grow their SAEs, develop leadership skills or encourage healthy lifestyles.
 - b. What ways can we use these techniques to help promote our chapter or recruit new members?
 - c. How can we utilize them to promote agricultural awareness and citizenship in our great communities?
 - d. Think about things your chapter already does and new ideas you could try.
2. Wrap up lesson with attention to any final details or questions students may have.