

Student Handout 5.1

Terry and Sam Solve the Mystery of Where Fruits and Vegetables Come From



Terry woke up one fine April morning as the sun rose. He jumped out of bed. His mother didn't even have to tell him that it was time to get up. He pulled on his clothes and ran downstairs to breakfast.

"How come you're up so early this morning?" asked Mom.

"We're going on a field trip today at school. I'm really looking forward to it," said Terry.

"That is exciting! Where are you going to go?" asked Mom.

"We're going to a farm where they grow carrots and potatoes and kale and... lots of other vegetables! We had a farmer come to our class to tell us about his farm. Today we're going to ride a bus into the country and go see it!" exclaimed Terry.

"Well, you'd better eat a good breakfast, then. You'll need lots of energy to explore the farm," said Mom.

Across town, Sam was staring at her closet. She was trying to figure out what to wear on the field trip. Her big sister Jo told her that she'd better wear something that she wouldn't mind getting dirty. There's lots of dirt on a farm. Sam



picked out some jeans and a T-shirt.

"Better wear some sturdy shoes, too," said Jo. "You'll be walking a lot in the fields at the farm."

When Terry and Sam got to school, they and their classmates squirmed in their seats while the principal read the morning announcements. When he announced that the 3rd and 4th grade classes were going on a field trip to Farmer Brown's farm, the class members cheered. As soon as the announcements were over, Mrs. Jones lined them up. They marched out to the waiting school bus.

It was a long ride to Farmer Brown's farm. The farm was deep in the country, miles away from the town where Terry and Sam lived. Once they got to the farm, Terry, Sam, and the other kids were happy to see Farmer Brown once again. He welcomed them to his farm.

"On our farm," said Farmer Brown, "we grow lots of different vegetables. We also grow peaches and apples in the orchard. Today, we're ready to start planting carrots, tomatoes, and squash. We've been waiting to plant them until the danger of frost was over. If it gets too cold at night, the frost will kill the baby vegetable plants. We need to wait until the weather is warm enough to help the vegetables grow from seeds into plants."

"On the other hand, we've already planted the vegetables that like cooler weather. Those include spinach, kale, beets, Swiss chard, and lettuce. So you'll be able to see those vegetables growing and you can help us pick

some, too. Let's go take a walk and see what we find."

Mrs. Jones and the students followed Farmer Brown down a dirt path to the fields on his farm.

"We're lucky it's a sunny day for our visit," said Mrs. Jones.

"Yes, vegetables need lots of sunlight to grow," said Farmer Brown. Turning to the children, he asked: "What else do vegetables need to grow?"

All the kids eagerly raised their hands. After all, they had all worked in the school garden and knew a thing or two by now about what vegetables need to grow.

"Water!" shouted Pedro.

"Nutrients from the soil!" called out Diep.

"Worms," suggested LaKeisha. "They keep the soil from getting too hard."

"Compost," said Jacob.

"Well, you're all right," said Farmer Brown. "Plants need sunlight, water, and nutrients from the soil. Compost helps make the soil rich. And worms keep the soil from getting hard."

"Where do you sell your vegetables, Farmer Brown?" asked Sam.

"We sell some of our vegetables to a company called a distributor. They sell the vegetables we grow to grocery stores. We also sell to local schools for the cafeteria. And we sell some of our vegetables at farmers markets," replied Farmer Brown.

"What's a farmers market?" asked Terry.

"A farmers market is a place where local farmers come once a week to sell their products to customers. We take our vegetables to a

farmers market in the city square. People come to the market to buy fruits and vegetables that they know are grown locally."

"So farmers markets are a good way to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. And you get to meet the people who grow them!" exclaimed Juanita.

"That's right. And farmers markets help local farmers stay in business, too," said Farmer Brown. "Farming can be hard work. Farmers need lots of ways to sell their vegetables. They like meeting the people who like to eat their vegetables, too!"

By now, the students had come to a big field. It had row after row of spinach plants, their leaves shiny in the sunlight. Farmer Brown gave each student a plastic bag. He invited each student to pick some spinach leaves to take home to their families. But first, he asked everyone to taste the spinach right after they picked it and then washed it under the water faucet in a corner of the field.

"How's it taste?" asked Farmer Brown.

"Hmmm.... yummy," said Juanita.

"It's kind of crunchy and warm," said Tony.

On the bus trip back to school, Sam asked Terry what he liked best about the trip.

"I liked tasting the spinach. I didn't think I was going to like it, but I did! So I'm glad that I can take some home for my family to have, too," said Terry. "What did you like best?"

"I liked meeting Farmer Brown again and seeing all his fields planted with vegetables. I'm going to ask my mom to take me to the farmers market so I can introduce her to Farmer Brown. I bet she'll like knowing where her spinach and carrots come from and the farmer who raised them!"

Reading Comprehension Questions



Name: _____ Date _____

1. Where are Terry and Sam going on their field trip? _____

2. What are three vegetables that Farmer Brown grows on his farm? _____

3. What are two fruits that Farmer Brown grows in his orchards? _____

4. What are three things that vegetables need to grow? _____

5. Where are two places that Farmer Brown sells his vegetables? _____

6. How do Farmer Brown's vegetables go from the farm to the supermarket? _____

7. Where do fruits and vegetables come from? _____

Farms, orchards, and gardens grow fruits and vegetables that help you grow and stay healthy.

