Pairing Up With Pears

Objective
Students will read about pears and write creative narratives about the life of a pear. Students will read a folk tale about pears and answer comprehension questions.

Background

Pears are fruit that grows on trees. Pears as we know them have been bred and cultivated for thousands of years. They started out as wild forest fruits scattered across Asia and Europe. Early colonists were the first to bring pear trees to America’s eastern settlements. They thrived there until blights proved too severe to sustain widespread cultivation. By contrast, the pear trees carried west by pioneers to Oregon and Washington in the 1800s thrived in the Pacific Northwest.

Pears species are varied because the flower usually requires pollen from a different variety of pear to produce fruit. Each tree is potentially a new variety of pear, so pears are as unique as human children. Because of this, grafting techniques are important in pear production. Grafting techniques in pear trees have been traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Washington and Oregon are the leading pear producers in the US; however, pears are also grown in home gardens in Oklahoma. Pears can be grown throughout Oklahoma, except in the northwest, where water is limited and the growing season is too short. Pears grown in southeastern Oklahoma have more problems with fire blight, since it is promoted by rainfall. Pears are typically the remaining fruit trees found on old homesteads in Oklahoma because they are tough, resilient trees. Most early settlers planted a fruit orchard for personal use.

If planted as a sapling, a pear tree can take anywhere from 4-6 years to begin bearing fruit. A full-grown tree is distinguished by its brilliant white flowers in early spring. The pear harvest begins in August and continues through October. Pears are harvested when fully mature but not yet ripe to keep flavor at its peak.

Pears are an excellent source of fiber and Vitamin C. The edible skin of pears is an additional source of fiber.

English Language Arts

1. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
   — Using the background information and other print and online research materials, students will write descriptive narratives in which they pretend they are pears, starting as early as they like in the pear’s life cycle and giving the pears pretend personalities. They might be fearful at harvest time because they do not know what will happen to them but happy when they see all the other pears being harvested. Narratives should have a clear theme and the thought process must be organized.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

GRADE 1
Social Studies PALS — 2.2
Social Studies Content — 2.1,2; 3.2
Visual Art — 1.1; 3.1,2,3; 4.4
English Language Arts — 1.RL.1,2,3,10; 1.W.2,5
Math Practice — 1.MP.4,6,7
Math Content — 1.MD.C.4

GRADE 2
Science — 2.PS1.1
Visual Art — 1.1; 3.1,2,3; 4.4
English Language Arts — 2.RL.1,7; 2.W.3.5
Math Practice — 2.MP.4,6,7
Math Content — 2.MD.D.10

GRADE 3
Visual Art — 1.1; 3.1,2,3; 4.4
COMMON CORE
English Language Arts — 3.RL.1,2,3; 3.W.3,5

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Students will use descriptive words that describe color, texture, feel and taste.
—When rough drafts are completed, students will come together in pairs and trade papers. Each student will read the other’s paper and make comments about possible revisions. Comments should be helpful and should pertain only to the current assignment. Possible suggestions might be—“needs better organization,” or “wording is unclear.”

2. Pair of Pears Homonym Scoot
—Distribute pre-made numbered answer sheets to each student.
—Print and cut apart numbered activity cards ahead of time.
—Pass out numbered “Homonym Scoot Cards” so that each student has a card on his or her desk.
—Students will read and answer the question on their own cards.
—After a short wait, the teacher says “Scoot,” and all students move to another desk to read and answer another card.
—Continue until all students have time to complete all cards or until you run out of time. You may pair up students to help slow readers or to use fewer cards.
—Call on students one at a time to read aloud the card at his/her desk and give the answer so students can self-check their work.

3. “The Magic Pear Tree” is a folk tale from China found in many collections. Use an online search engine to find a version of the story, or find it in one of the collections listed in “Additional Reading.”
—Students will read The Magic Pear Tree independently or as a class.
—Students will discuss words or phrases that are unknown or difficult to understand.
—Students will answer the following questions referring to the text as needed...

• Who are the two main characters of the story?
• What is the main goal of the farmer?
• Why do you think the farmer would not give the monk a pear?
• Why do you think the monk wanted a pear?
• Why did the monk grow a pear tree?
• Why did the monk hand out pears to everyone in the market?
• did the farmer learn a lesson?
• What is the moral of this story?

4. Students will develop a play that will retell the story with dialogue for each character, including the farmer, the monk and the elderly man who buys the pear for the monk and the crowd of people.
—Students will practice and act out the play for another class or have parents and faculty come to see the play.
—Students will create costumes, sets and props, as time allows.

Vocabulary
blight—a plant disease
bred—grown in a specified environment or way
commercially—able to yield or make a profit
consumer—a buyer of goods or services crop—
cultivated—prepared and used for raising crops
distinguished—recognized as distinct or different
edible—fit to be eaten as food
fiber—coarse, ingestible plant matter
graft—a bud or shoot of a plant inserted in a groove, slit, or the like in a stem or stock of another plant in which it continues to grow.
harvest—a supply of anything gathered at maturity, such as crops
mature—complete in natural growth and development
orchard—area of fruit or nut trees
peak—the highest point of development
pollen—the fertilizing element of flowering plants, consisting of fine, powdery, yellowish grains, sometimes in masses
potential—capable of being or becoming
producer—a person, company, or country that produces goods or services for sale
ripe—fully grown and developed
sapling—a young tree
sustain—lasting in a healthy manner over a period of time
thrive—to grow well and be healthy
unique—to grow well and be healthy
varied—diverse in nature
variety—a group that is distinguished from other groups by a specific characteristic or set of characteristics.

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Math/Science
1. Gather one each of red, yellow, green, and brown pears, whole and quartered. Because pears will be quartered, there should be one of each pear variety for every four students in the class. Note: To reduce browning (oxidation), cut pears immediately before tasting.
   — Divide students into four groups (red, yellow, green, and brown pears)
   — Make four columns on the board and label them: red, yellow, green, and brown.
   — Each group will observe, smell, feel, and taste its assigned pear.
   — Students will note the different features in the columns on the white board.
   — Students will use descriptive sensory words like “sweet,” “fragrant,” “yellow,” “grainy,” “crunchy,” etc.
   — Discuss the similarities and differences in the four groups.
   — Students will sample all the varieties of pears using this method.
   — Students will design an organizational chart or graph that best describes the data they have collected. Students will color code their charts in order to highlight similarities among the different varieties of pears.
2. As a class, survey students to find out who prefers what variety of pear over the others.
   — Students will create a bar or line graph depicting the data from the survey.

Social Studies
1. Discuss as a class the reason people grow pears and other fruits in large orchards.
   Explain: Sometimes people grow fruit for personal use, but many people grow fruit in order to sell and make money to support themselves and their families. Farmers must work hard to ensure they have an adequate crop to sell at harvest time so they can pay for the things they need, such as food, clothing and shelter. Farmers are known as “producers,” and the people who buy their products are known as “consumers.”
   — Students will write short, informative pieces that show their understanding of growing and selling goods. Essays should include an introduction and details that are organized in an understandable way. They should supply some simple facts about producers and consumers. Examples of closure to the essay might be how part of the money made from the sale of the crop is used to buy supplies for next season’s crop.
2. Most pears in the US are produced in the states of Washington and Oregon. On a map of the US students will find and color in those two states.

Materials
red, yellow, green and brown pears
paring knives

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Visual Art
1. Bring several different kinds of pears to class. Arrange them in an attractive dish.
   —Discuss the genre of still life painting.
   —Students will create still life drawings or paintings of the pears.
   —Display the works of art in the hallway.

Extra Reading

Ag Career: Pomologist
A pomologist is a scientist who studies the growth of fruits and nuts. Often found in laboratories, orchards, greenhouses and on farms, pomologists can be employed by the government, colleges and universities, private research facilities and agricultural organizations. These scientists are responsible for ensuring the healthy growth and breeding of fruits and nuts, as well as the trees and bushes on which they grow. Many pomologists are also responsible for watering, pruning and transplanting crops when necessary.

Because pomologist must be knowledgeable in plants, trees, and soils, a bachelors degree in Agricultural Science with an emphasis in horticulture would be ideal for this interesting career field.
Homonym Scoot

ANSWER SHEET

Each time the teacher says “Scoot,” move to the next card. Read it and write your answer on the matching line below.

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Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom is a program of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma State Department of Education.
Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

I bought a ___________ of shoes.

PEAR  PAIR  PARE

1

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

I made a fruit salad using__________.

PEARS  PAIRS  PARES

2

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

Henry ___________ the race.

WON  ONE

3

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

She only had ________ pear left in her lunch bag.

WON  ONE

4

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

__________ dog ran away.

THERE  THEIR  THEY’RE

5

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

_______ going to the theater tonight.

THERE  THEIR  THEY’RE

6

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Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

When I asked to go to the dance, my mom said __________.

NO KNOW

7

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

Ask Susan. She will ________ the right answer.

NO KNOW

8

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

Can you __________ the pear tree from here?

SEE SEA

9

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

The small sailing vessel came back because the _____ was too rough

SEE SEA

10

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

Please do __________ homework.

YOUR YOU’RE

11

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

_______ invited to the party.

YOUR YOU’RE

12

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Homonym Scoot Cards

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

During the tornado drill, we all went to the ___________

   CELLAR             SELLER

13

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

The ________ wants $60,000 for the house.

   CELLAR             SELLER

14

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

Roy climbed the __________ to the second floor.

   STARES             STAIRS

15

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

Sometimes Annie ___________ at her baby sister with a look of amazement.

   STARES             SELLER

16

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

The recipe calls for 2 cups of ____________

   FLOUR             FLOWER

17

Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

The hummingbird was getting nectar from the ____________

   FLOUR             FLOWER

18

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Choose the correct homonym. Write the answer on your answer sheet.

The pear costs ninety nine _________.

CENTS   SCENTS

The strong boys ________ the boat back to shore.

ROAD   ROWED   RODE

The road crew was painting new stripes on the _________.

ROAD   ROWED   RODE

After the wreck, we had to call a _________ truck.

TOE   TOW

In the summer, when I go barefoot, I always stub my _________.

TOE   TOW

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