

Lesson III – Harvesting Wheat in Kansas History

Day 5 – Cutting Wheat

Day 6 – Threshing Wheat

Goal: To introduce the harvesting technology circa 1900.

Objectives for Students by Grade Level:

K-2 To recognize changes in harvesting in Kansas.

Day 5 – Cutting Wheat (15 – 20 minutes)

Materials to pull from trunk:

- John Deere combine model (1/16 scale)
- Photograph
 - #6 – Man sharpening cradle scythe
- Worksheet
 - “How the Combine Works”

Materials supplied by teacher:

- Photocopies of worksheet (one per student)
- Crayons

Day 5 – Cutting Wheat (continued)

Suggested Introduction:

Harvest is a time when the crops are cut and gathered. Winter wheat is harvested in the early summer, usually in late June, after you have finished the school year. Wheat is now harvested by machines called combines, which cut, thresh, and clean the grain in one operation.

A long time ago wheat was cut by swinging a sharp blade. Look at the picture of the man and his cradle scythe. He is sharpening the blade. As the wheat is cut, the cradle catches it.

Activity: “How the Combine Works”

- Show the class photograph #6 of the man sharpening a cradle scythe. Explain how wheat was cut with this tool. Would your arm get tired if you swung the wheat cradle all day to cut your wheat?
- Next, have children examine the model of the combine and look carefully at the work sheet with the diagram of the functions of the combine. Would cutting wheat be easier with this machine or with the scythe the man was sharpening in the photograph?
- Children are to color the combine and save it to add to the “Wheat in Kansas” booklet.

Day 6 – Threshing Wheat (15 – 20 minutes)

Materials to pull from trunk:

- Container of wheat with seed heads
- Tractor model (1/25 scale)
- Water tank model (1/25 scale)
- Separator model (1/25 scale)
- Horses and wagon model (1/25 scale)
- Exhibit
 - Photographs #7-10
 - Exhibit layout board
 - Case advertisement
- Worksheet
 - “Kansas Harvest About 1900” – steam tractor

Materials supplied by teacher:

- Copies of worksheet (one per student)
- Crayons

Day 6 – Threshing Wheat (continued)

Suggestions for introducing the dramatization:

Tell the children that they will make a classroom exhibit to show how wheat was harvested in Kansas in the past. They will learn about the machinery used about one hundred years ago in Kansas. Then they will set up an exhibit to show others how wheat was harvested in the past.

Threshing is separating the grain from its protective covering and from the plant stem. Look at the wheat on the stem and think how hard it would be if you had to take off each tiny seed.

Long, long ago people beat the wheat to separate the seed from the stem. People invented different kinds of machines to help with this work. One large machine was called a separator. It made a lot of banging and clanging noises as it threshed the wheat. Long ago Kansas farmers used these machines to help with the harvest work.

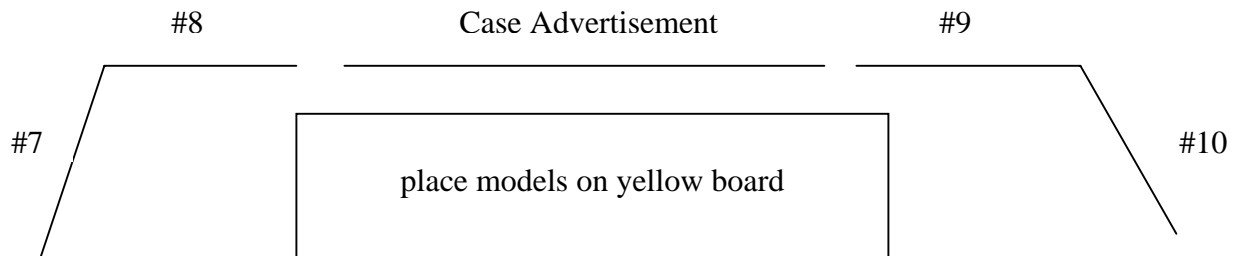
Day 6 – Threshing Wheat (continued)

Activity: Exhibit – “Threshing Wheat in Kansas in 1910”

On a large table place the tractor, water tank and separator, horses and wagon on the exhibit boards at the designated places to show the machinery used in threshing wheat long ago.

Arrange harvesting photographs #7 and 8, and threshing photographs #9 and 10, on either side of the models on the exhibit board. Place the large Case advertisement behind the exhibit. These photographs and the advertisement are mounted to stand alone and provide a visual frame for the models on the exhibit board. Have the students place the bags of grain in the farm wagon. Place a grain bag under the separator grain spout.

Use coloring page of the steam tractor for seat work. Have the class make up stories about the children in the photographs. Invite parents and other classes to view the exhibit.



Vocabulary –Lesson III

Binder	A reaper which cuts grain and ties together shocks of wheat.
Cradle	An implement with rod-like fingers attached to a scythe and used formerly for harvesting grain.
Disk	One of the concave circular steel tools with sharpened edge making up the working part of a disc harrow or plow. A tool for loosening the soil.
Drill	A planting implement that makes holes or furrows, drops in the seed and sometimes fertilizer, and covers them with earth.
Reaper	Any of various machines for cutting grain.
Scythe ('sith)	An implement used for mowing and composed of a long curving blade fastened at an angle to a long handle.
Separator	A large threshing machine for separating grain crops or seed into grain and straw.
Thresh	To separate seed or grain from the harvested plant.
Wheat	Any of various cereal grasses widely cultivated in many varieties for its commercially important edible grain.
Wheat stubble	The part of the wheat plant left in the ground after harvest.