



# CELEBRATE WHEAT

## Overview

This lesson's purpose is to show the students a brief history of one of Kansas' most plentiful crops, wheat. The students will learn a few facts about the plant, where it came from and how it was brought to Kansas.

## Overview

1. Students will identify the countries of origin for wheat.
2. Students will compare and contrast einkorn, emmer, and wheat.
3. Students will place events in chronological order based on the history of wheat.
4. Students will compose a thank you letter to a fictional character using correct grammar and format.

## Materials

- Student Handout: Wheat History
- Student Worksheet A or B: Wheat Through Time
- Student Worksheet C: Write It!

## Preparation

There are two options for the history worksheet. The educator can decide which worksheet is appropriate for his/her class based on grade level. Make copies of the handout and worksheets.

## Instructional Format

1. Share background information from Student Handout with students.
2. Students will complete individual work.
3. Students will practice reading comprehension skills.
4. Students will answer conclusion questions.

**Suggested  
Grade Level:**  
3rd-5th

**Time:**  
40 minutes

**Subjects:**  
Social Studies  
Geography  
Human-Environmental  
Interactions  
Language Arts

# CELEBRATE WHEAT

## Procedures

### **Reading Comprehension Activity**

1. Give students 5 minutes to read through the Student Handout: Wheat History. (For younger ages, reading the information to them may be helpful.)
2. Have students underline or highlight the information they feel is important to remember.
3. Ask for questions about the reading to practice reading comprehension.

### **History Worksheet Activity (Option A)**

1. Students will complete this worksheet individually.
2. Have students place a number under the images in chronological order based on how the events took place in history.

### **History Worksheet Activity (Option B)**

1. The students will complete this worksheet individually.
2. Have the students use the events from the event bank to complete the timeline in the correct order.

### **Letter Writing Activity**

1. Students will write the thank you letter individually.
2. Have students use the sheet with directions to write a letter to a fictional character, thanking them for bringing wheat to Kansas for us to use. Try to encourage the students to use real events from the Student Handout: Wheat History in their letters.
3. Allow students to use their creativity by using a character. Their letters could be to a man, woman, child, or even an animal that might have brought the wheat to Kansas.

## Conclusion Questions

1. Where did wheat originate? What were the names of the two native species of wheat?  
**Iran, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey; einkorn and emmer.**
2. Who was the first person to bring wheat to North America?  
**Christopher Columbus**
3. What were the possible methods for bringing wheat to Kansas?  
**Boat, covered wagon, train**

# CELEBRATE WHEAT

## Celebrate Wheat Vocabulary

**Christopher Columbus:** A Spanish explorer who discovered North America in the West Indies.

**Chronological Order:** A list of events arranged by the order of time.

**Einkorn:** One of the original varieties of wheat that originated in Southwest Asia.

**Emmer:** One of the original red-seeded varieties of wheat that originated in Southwest Asia.

**Turkey Red wheat:** A hard red winter wheat brought by immigrants from Ukraine, Russia, to central Kansas in 1873. This wheat was suited to the climate. It is the variety of wheat that has helped establish the central United States as the “bread basket of the world.”

## **Wheat History**

Wheat hasn't always looked the way it looks today. The two ancient forms of wheat were called einkorn and emmer.

Scientists over the years have bred wheat to become the plant it is today.

The first wheat on record for being planted was around 8,000 B.C.

The first area we know where wheat was grown was Southwest Asia in countries such as Iraq, Turkey, Syria, and Iran.

In the late 1400s, the explorer Christopher Columbus brought wheat to North America when he discovered the West Indies.

In the 1500s, Spaniards brought wheat to Mexico by boat.

In the 1600s, Mexican settlers continued to explore north by covered wagon and finally wheat was introduced and grown in the United States.

The first record of wheat being grown in Kansas was in 1839 in the current day Johnson County area.

In 1873, immigrants from Ukraine, Russia, brought Turkey Red wheat to the U.S. by boat and to Kansas by train, where it flourished in the Midwestern climate and Kansas prairie soils. The two main types of wheat that are grown in Kansas today are hard red winter wheat and hard white winter wheat.



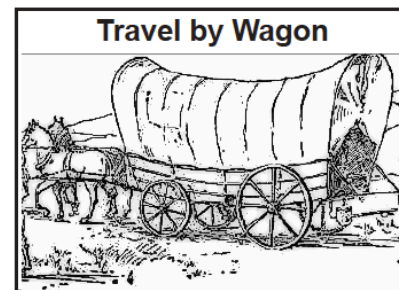
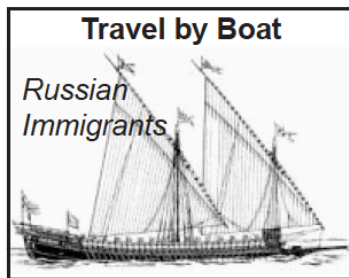
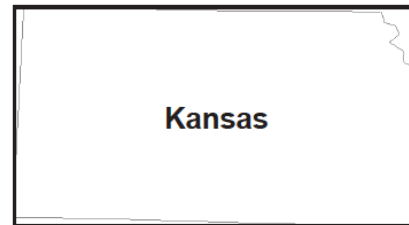
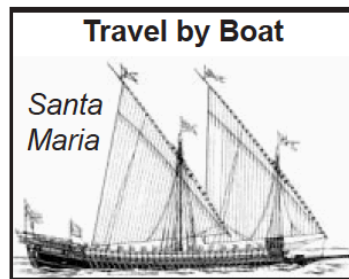
Wheat has changed over the years. Two ancient forms of wheat were called einkorn (left) and emmer (right).

# CELEBRATE WHEAT

## Wheat Through Time (Option A)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the Student Handout: Wheat History put the pictures in chronological order by placing numbers "1" through "8" in the boxes below the pictures.

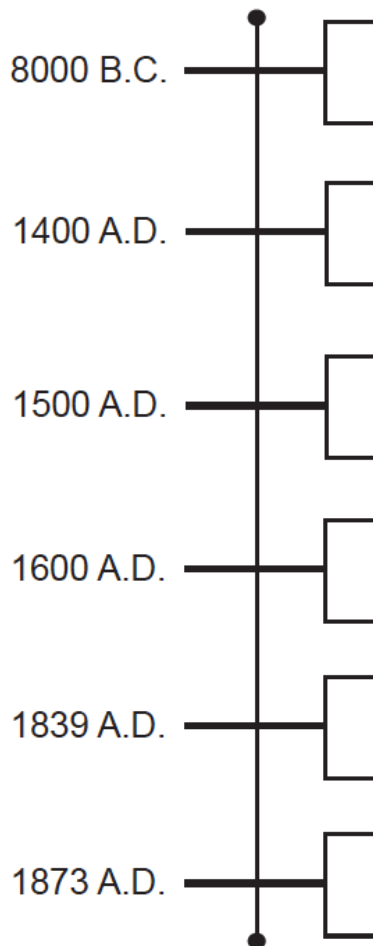


# CELEBRATE WHEAT

## Wheat Through Time (Option B)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the event bank options to complete the timeline of events from the Student Handout: Wheat History. Write the events in the brackets to the right of the correct year.



### Event Bank:

- Settlers brought wheat into the Eastern United States.
- The first wheat crop in human records in Mesopotamia or Fertile Crescent.
- Spaniards brought wheat to Mexico.
- Christopher Columbus brought wheat to West Indies.
- Wheat was planted in Kansas for the first time.
- Immigrants from Ukraine, Russia, brought by boat and train, planted and harvested Turkey Red wheat in central Kansas.

# CELEBRATE WHEAT

## Wheat Through Time (Option C)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Write It!

It's time to use your creativity! Using the correct format and grammar, write a thank you letter to a fictional character. This character can be a man, woman, child or animal that helped bring wheat from Ukraine, Russia, all the way to Kansas. Use your Wheat History sheet to discuss routes, possible transportation types, and other challenges.