

How a Grain of Wheat Linked Two Worlds



An Integrated Teaching Unit For Grade 3

Integrated Outcomes: Health, Science, Social Studies

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Writing Team Acknowledgement

Saskatchewan educators on the writing team created this unit as an extension of their work on the Holodomor Awareness & Education Committee, a sub-group of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress – Saskatchewan. www.ucc.sk.ca ; uccspsc@ucc.sk.ca

Unit Overview

This teaching unit integrates related outcomes in Grade 3 Science, Health, and Social Studies. The overarching theme is the central role of wheat as a staple crop in Saskatchewan for over a century. Using an inquiry-based approach, students will learn about the amazing journey of one grain of hardy wheat from Ukraine to Canada in 1842. Students will have the opportunity to explore patterns of wheat growth, barriers to growth, and possible effects of grain shortages on the local and global food supply. Finally, students will learn how the tradition of bread-making connects various cultures and the wheat industry in Saskatchewan.

Time Frame: 3 weeks of instructional time. Additional time is required for the wheat-growing project.

Extended Integration: Outcomes from subject areas have been integrated in this unit. However, teachers will recognize opportunities in the *Integrated Wheat Inquiry Unit* to support Grade 3 English Language Arts, especially outcomes CC3.1 and CC3.4 of the provincial curriculum.

Enduring Understandings

Agriculture: Agricultural land allows us to actively participate in food production for our own needs and to share with others.

Culture: Cultural foods affect eating habits, nutrition, and food preparation, and carry symbolic meaning at celebrations or events within cultural communities.

Access: As much as possible, parents and caregivers should be able to access nutritional food grown or produced locally.

Hunger: A lack of access to nutritious food, such as grain(s), can affect personal health, community well-being, and survival over time.

Essential Questions

- a. How does the story of wheat in Canada reflect the benefits of migration from one country or location to another?
- b. In what ways does a global need for grain bring countries and cultures together?
- c. Is the term 'enough' the same for all people when thinking about food?
- d. How is the tradition of bread-baking reflected in various local cultures?

Outcomes and Indicators

Science – Grade 3

Life Science – Plant Growth and Changes (PL)

PL3.1 Investigate the growth and development of plants, including the conditions necessary for germination.

Students will be able to:

- PL3.1a Pose questions related to plant growth (e.g., How do young plants look different from grown plants? How much water do plants need to grow? Do all plants grow in the same way?)
- PL3.1j Estimate, record, and display relevant measurements of plant growth, using rulers, tables, and bar graphs.
- PL3.1k Suggest explanations for patterns and discrepancies in the growth rate of similar plants in varying conditions.

PL3.2 Analyze the interdependence among plants, individuals, society, and the environment.

Students will be able to:

- PL3.2d Examine the importance of agriculture in Saskatchewan, including the variety of plants and plant-related products.
- PL3.2i Examine the type and quality of plants and plant matter in the diets of people who live in various communities and/or represent various cultures.

Health – Grade 3

USC 3.1 Determine the role of a variety of healthy foods and physical activity on the health and development of the mind, body, and immune system.

Students will be able to:

- USC3.1c Predict and then investigate what happens if the immune system is not healthy/not working properly.
- USC3.1g Determine that foods provide essential nutrients for health (see introduction to Canada's Food Guide).
- USC3.1h Predict and recognize how food choices have a direct impact on the types and amounts of nutrients absorbed by the body.

Social Studies – Grade 3

IN3.3 Illustrate examples of interdependence of communities.

Students will be able to:

- IN3.3a Research the origins of products and items used by students in the local classroom.

RW3.1 Appraise the ways communities meet their members' needs and wants.

Students will be able to:

- RW3.1a Speculate upon various challenges faced by communities in meeting needs and wants, with evidence gathered from examining pictures, viewing media, and interpreting stories using a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- RW3.1b Identify how individuals and communities meet needs and wants.
- RW3.1d Describe how and why communities exchange goods with other communities.

Assessment Evidence

Performance Task (summative)

Students will prepare additional bottles of wheat during the “Wheat in a Bottle” project to be presented as gifts to community leaders or civic dignitaries (e.g., city counsellor, mayor, MLA, MP, newspaper editor, etc.). The guests will be invited to a special presentation at the school. Students will present information to highlight their knowledge of the history of wheat in Saskatchewan and its importance to good health. Students will also respond to questions at the end of the presentation.

Criteria

- Understands and explains the role of Red Fife wheat to the agricultural success of Saskatchewan (Understanding).
- Identifies growth patterns, conditions for healthy plant growth, and repercussions of grain shortages on the food supply. (Analyzing).
- Explains the role of wheat for personal health/energy, the preparation of flour for bread-baking, and the symbolism of bread across cultures. (Understanding)

Other Assessments

- Graphic Organizers: Concept map, Venn diagram, KWL chart, Timeline, T-chart, Cause-Effect
- Video or Audio recording (interview, presentation)
- Independent or Class Projects: Wheat-planting project, Wheat in a Bottle project
- Collection of Data, Graphing and Photo Collage (parent support/engagement)
- Matching Exercise (intercultural awareness)
- Family Journal, Bread-baking project with recipe (parent support/engagement)

Learning Activities

*NOTE: Classroom wheat should be planted, and its growth monitored 3 months prior to this teaching unit (mid-January to April). Ensure that the wheat has plenty of sunlight and is watered regularly. Take photos and record growth details for the learning task identified in **Week 1, Lesson 3**.*

It is possible to complete this integrated unit by omitting the wheat-growing project.

Week 1 Science & Social Studies

Indicators

PL3.2d Examine the importance of agriculture in Saskatchewan, including the variety of plants and plant-related products.

PL3.1a Pose questions related to plant growth.

PL3.1j Estimate, record, and display relevant measurements of plant growth, using rulers, tables, and bar graphs.

PL3.1k Suggest explanations for patterns and discrepancies in the growth rate of similar plants in varying conditions.

IN3.3a Research the origins of products and items used by students in the local classroom.

RW3.1d Describe how and why communities exchange goods with other communities.

A. Saskatchewan Wheat Lesson 1 – Introduction

- Concept map: Do you know anyone who grows their own food? What do they grow? Where do they grow it? (e.g., indoors, outdoors, back yard, greenhouse, garden, field).
- Venn diagram: Have students apply what they know to create a Venn diagram: garden plants, field plants, and those grown in both locations. Focus attention on field plants, particularly agricultural grains, with a focus on wheat.
- KWL: What do I know about the history of wheat in Saskatchewan? What do I want to know? At the end of this teaching unit, complete the final column “What have I learned”.

B. Saskatchewan Wheat Lesson 2 – Background

- Timeline: Explore the unique story of Red Fife wheat in Canada.
 - Include key dates and details about growing wheat on the prairies since 1842. (*See Appendix A*).
- Guest Presenter or Interview: Investigate a time in history when wheat was not readily available to feed people. Invite a guest presenter to your class or interview someone who was a *survivor* or a *descendent of survivors* from:
 - The “Dirty Thirties” on the Canadian prairies; or
 - The “Holodomor” in Ukraine (1932-33).

Prepare a video or audio recording of what you have learned.

- Story: Read the “Wheat in a Bottle” Story (*See Appendix B*). Explain to students why the wheat was hidden. For this, you will need to read the brief historical summary provided with the story.
- Student Project: Ask students to bring an empty bottle to school. Your teacher will provide wheat to fill the bottle. Tags will be placed on each bottle by the teacher identifying the source of the story “Wheat in a Bottle” (*See Appendix C*).

C. Saskatchewan Wheat Lesson 3 – Plant It, Grow It, Study It!

- Wheat Planting Project

This project can be conducted in both the classroom and/or at home.

- **Classroom**: Place 5* wheat grains in a roomy plant pot and position the pot in a well-lit corner of the classroom.
- **Home**: Have students conduct a similar home planting project using wheat provided in the “Wheat in a Bottle” project.

**Note: The connection to 5 grains of wheat is explained in the Wheat in a Bottle project.*

- Inquiry “Q and A”: Begin a class discussion about wheat growth. Following your interview with a farmer (see below), see how many answers have been provided to your questions.
 - How do young wheat plants differ from grown plants?
 - How much water do the plants need to grow?
 - Does too much water harm the plants?
 - Does wheat planted indoors in a pot grow in the same way as wheat grown outdoors in a field? Why or why not?
- Graph: Estimate, record, and display measurements as the wheat grows. Students may compare their records from home with the records in the classroom.
- Photo Collage: Create a photo collage displaying wheat growth in stages. (*See Appendix D*)
- Discuss/View Video clip: What is needed for plants to grow? (moisture, sunlight, nutrients in the soil).

- Interview: Interview a grain farmer to find out about favourable growing conditions, how much wheat is produced per acre, and where wheat goes after it is harvested. Inquire about other crops that are grown on Saskatchewan farms.
- T-Chart: Where Does Our Wheat Go?
 - Explain the words *export* and *import*.
 - What kinds of grain do we export and what do we import from other countries?
 - What is the purpose of trading grain and other agricultural products with other countries?
- Cause & Effect Template (If -Then):
 - If we produce an abundance of grain, then what is the result?
 - If we don't have enough grain, then what happens to people and their community?

Assessment – Week 1 (Formative)

Let students know how they will be assessed on each task and share assessment rubrics.

Observe whether students are able to classify garden and field plants. Observe student engagement with a guest presenter or during an interview.

To what extent can students organize dates, locations, and names of wheat in chronological order? For students who have difficulty with the task, review the locations on a map and revisit the names. Allow extra time to complete the timeline.

Are students able to complete the home planting project successfully? Use the photo collage, growth measurements, and any other data collected at home as evidence of success.

Note and record what students know and do not know for future lessons. Adjust teaching accordingly.

Week 2 Health & Social Studies

Indicators

USC3.1g Determine that foods provide essential nutrients for health. See the introduction to Canada's Food Guide.

USC3.1h Predict and recognize how food choices have a direct impact on the types and amounts of nutrients absorbed by the body.

USC3.1c Predict and then investigate what happens if the immune system is not healthy/not working properly.

RW3.1a Speculate upon various challenges faced by communities in meeting needs and wants, with evidence gathered from examining pictures, viewing media, and interpreting stories using a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts.

RW3.1b Identify how individuals and communities meet needs and wants.

A. Our Food Supply – Lesson 1: Energy and Carbohydrates

- Concept Map – How our body turns food into energy. Key words: carbohydrates, sugars, starches, glucose, stomach, intestines, absorption, bloodstream
- Video: “How do carbohydrates give us energy?”
 - What would happen to our bodies if we did not have carbohydrates? Would we become ill more often?
 - Personal Food Journal – What kind of carbohydrates do you eat? How often? Is bread among your favourites? What kind of bread?

B. Our Food Supply – Lesson 2: Having ‘Enough’

- Before Reading
 - Discuss the meaning of the term ‘enough’. What does it mean to you?
 - Explore the concept of ‘enough’ in relation to our food supply. How much food do we need each day to be healthy over time? What happens when there isn’t ‘enough’ and people are hungry or starving?
 - Consult the online teaching notes prepared by Author Marsha Skrypuch for a glossary of terms and information about the story.
- During Reading:
 - Read the book *Enough* by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch.
 - How do you think the people in Zhitya felt when they didn’t have enough grain? How did their bodies feel? How were their bodies weakened?

C. Our Food Supply – Lesson 3: Sharing Our Food

- After Reading
 - Cause and Effect: What was the real cause of famine in Zhitya? What was the effect? Could a situation like this happen today? Think-Pair-Share: Create an action plan for how your class or school can help those in need of food. In pairs and then small groups, decide what types of foods are good choices for food donations and which foods may spoil.
 - Extended Activity: Ask local charities (e.g., Food Bank, Salvation Army) if there are people in your community who are hungry and in need of food.

Together with other classrooms in your school, develop a plan to gather food donations and create food hampers for the needy.

Assessment (Formative)

To what extent are students engaged in the discussions? Have students understood key information presented in the video clip? To what extent were students able to comprehend and respond to questions in the before-during-after reading activities? To what degree were students engaged in the project related to food gathering?

Week 3 Health

Indicators

USC3.1g Determine that foods provide essential nutrients for health (see introduction to Canada's Food Guide).

PL3.2i - Examine the type and quality of plants and plant matter in the diets of people who live in various communities and/or represent various cultures.

A. Essential Nutrients Lesson 1: Canada's Food Guide

- Examine Canada's Food Guide to learn how much wheat or other grains should be consumed in a healthy diet. Infographic (available in various languages): <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/food-guide-snapshot/>
- Family Journal: With the help of a parent, record what your family ate in the past three days (breakfast, lunch, dinner/supper, snacks). Circle the items made with flour or grain.
- Essential nutrients:
 - T-chart: Compare the essential nutrients in wheat and one other cereal grain (e.g., rice, oats, barley, corn, wild rice, rye, buckwheat).
 - Guest Presenter: Invite a guest presenter to the classroom to describe how the body processes carbohydrates made from wheat flour.
- Sharing our food with others:
 - 5 W's: Think of a time when your family shared food with others. Answer the five W's: Who? What? Where? When? Why?
 - Breaking Bread: Search out the meaning of the phrase "breaking bread".

B. Essential Nutrients Lesson 2: Bread-Baking Brings Cultures Together

- Book/Video
 - Watch the video *Bread Comes to Life*.

- Read the book *Everybody Bakes Bread*.
- In pairs, have students summarize what they learned from either the video or the book.
- Cultural Links
 - Matching Exercise: Divide the class into two groups. Distribute names of various types of bread to one half of the class and countries of origin to the other half of the class. Have students match the bread with its country or cultural origin. (e.g., Pizza crust – Italian; Tortilla – Mexican; Baguette - French; Bannock – Indigenous ; Kolach – Ukrainian ; Bagel – Jewish, etc.)
 - Attributes: As a class, generate a list of attributes that describe bread (round, braided, long, hand-made, brown, white, flat, loaf, seeded, folded, rolled, baked, fried, delicious, warm, tasty, light, etc.) Orally or in writing, name three kinds of bread that you have eaten. Select and record several attributes for each type of bread.

C. Essential Nutrients Lesson 3: How is Bread Made?

- Bread-baking Project:
 - Bake bread with your class using the traditional method (by hand) and a bread machine.
 - Simple Survey: Ask at least 10 adults in the school whether they prefer bread made in a bread machine or kneaded by hand and why.
 - Recipe: Ask someone in your family for their bread recipe. Copy it on a template and share it with the class. (*See Appendix E*)

Assessment (Formative)

Observe to what extent students are able to name different activities that our bodies use for energy. Observe students acting out what their bodies would feel like with no energy.

Observe groups to see if they understand what types of food are appropriate for donations.

To what extent are students able to recall the steps in the bread baking process?

Provide more time for students who need to review the video or the book.

Observe engagement of students in the simple survey and family recipe activity.

Have students return to the KWL Chart from the Introductory lesson. They may now fill in the last column “What have I learned”.

Final Assessment (Summative)

Students in the class will prepare extra bottles of wheat during the “Wheat in a Bottle” project. These bottles will be given as gifts to community leaders or civic dignitaries (e.g., city councillor, mayor, MLA, MP, newspaper editor, etc.). The class will invite these guests to the classroom for a special presentation. Students will prepare segments of this presentation as assigned by the teacher. For example, students may present:

- (a) what they know about the history of wheat in Saskatchewan;
- (b) how Red Fife/Halychanka wheat linked two ‘breadbaskets’ on two continents;
- (c) how a shortage of grain (food) can affect families, communities, a province or an entire country;
- (d) the background to the ‘Wheat in a Bottle’ project and why it offers a vivid reminder of hunger/famine; and,
- (e) how sharing food across communities and cultures brings people together.

Resources

Resources Used for the Teaching Unit

Canada’s Food Guide. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en>

Dooley, N. (1996). *Everybody Bakes Bread*. Minneapolis: Learner Publishing Group Inc. Video available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqfKXhMt4Kk>

Forchuk Skrypuch, Marsha. (2000). *Enough*. Markham ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Forchuk Skrypuch, Marsha. (2020). Author Talk *Enough*. Retrieved from <https://www.calla.com/wordpress/enough-2/> OR

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=306&v=p5NOiEFkdhl&feature=emb_title

Forchuk Skrypuch, Marsha. (2011). Teacher’s Guide for *Enough*. Retrieved from <https://www.calla.com/wordpress/enough-teachers-guide/>

Light of Christ Catholic School Division. (n.d.) *Wheat in a Bottle Class Project*. North Battleford: Holy Family Elementary School. Used with permission.

<https://youtu.be/zb3vb3LGF98>

Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan. (2017). *Teaching Nutrition in Saskatchewan. Health Education Grades 1-3*. Retrieved from:

https://www.populationhealthunit.ca/mrws/filedriver/Nutrition/TNS_Grades_1-3.pdf

Recommended Video Available on R.O.V.E.R.

Bread Comes to Life. (Grade 3 Science). Narrated by Lily Tomlin.

Additional Resources

Good, Rhea. (2020). *Bottle of Grain. A Holodomor Story*. Saskatchewan: Independently Published. ISBN-13: 979-8555398918

Levinson, G. (2020). Bread Comes to Life. A Garden of Wheat and a Loaf to Eat. Read-Aloud. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXVxaiNq1P4> (7:49 min.)

Saskatoon Star Phoenix (18/11/2019). Special Feature: *Holodomor*. Pages B3, B4, B5.

Tesco Eat Happy Project. (2016). How do carbohydrates give us energy?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xto8ZqCYDvY>

Video Links

Wheat Farming

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2xQp9LzuHA> (Saskatchewan)

Making Flour

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8vLjPctrU> (Great Britain)

Red Fife Wheat Video clip (British Columbia)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBJUVAyLMcg>

References

Government of Canada. (2017). Statistics Canada: Saskatchewan remains the breadbasket of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/95-640-x/2016001/article/14807-eng.htm>

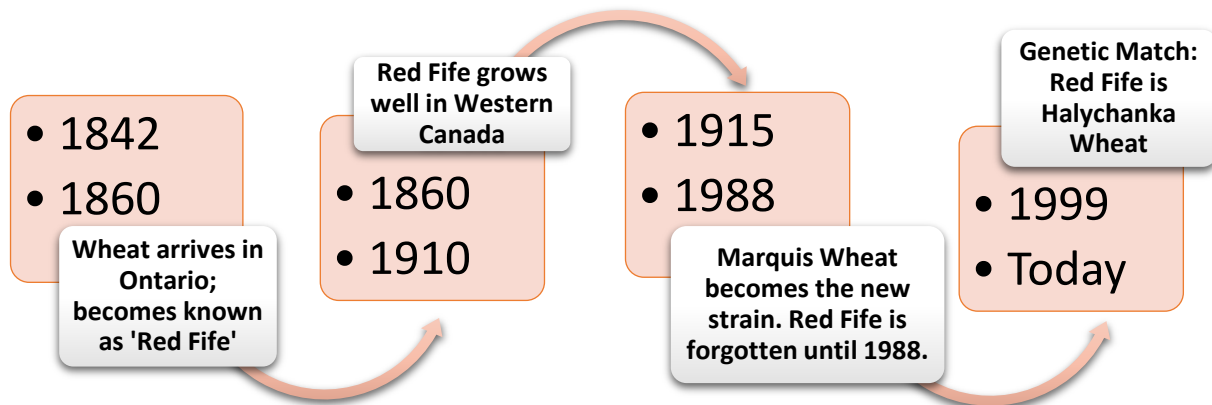
Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. (2017). *Responsive Teaching, Practice & Assessment in Early Learning Programs*. Government of Saskatchewan: Regina.

Symko, S.(1999). *From a single seed Tracing the Marquis wheat success story in Canada to its roots in the Ukraine*. Ottawa: Strategic Promotion, Research Branch, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada. Retrieved from: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.804661/publication.html>

Voices into Action. (2014, 2018). *Unit 2, Chapter 5: Exposing the Holodomor – How Starvation Was Used as a Political Weapon*. FAST. Fighting Anti-Semitism Together. Retrieved from: <https://www.voicesintoaction.ca/>

Appendices

A. Timeline: How a Grain of Wheat Linked Two Worlds



1842 - 1860: A small quantity of wheat is shipped to David Fife, a farmer in Otonabee, Ontario. The wheat was purchased from the port of Glasgow, Scotland, arriving earlier by cargo ship from Danzig, Prussia (now Gdansk, Poland). The origin of the Danzig shipment was unknown.

1860 - 1910: In the first year, most of the grain did not sprout. Only one seed produced three heads of grain. David Fife carefully harvested and planted these hardy grains. By 1860, there was enough “Red Fife” wheat to share with farmers on the Canadian prairies. Red Fife became the dominant wheat grown on the prairies for the next 50 years.

1915 – 1988: Red Fife becomes the male parent of a new strain, Marquis Wheat, which is even hardier for the prairie climate. Red Fife is forgotten until a ‘Wheat Heritage Project’ in British Columbia in 1988 begins a Red Fife revival. The wheat is considered more wholesome and nutritious (no GMO) than other types of wheat. Heritage wheat farmers begin growing Red Fife once again.

1999: A study conducted by S. Symko, a scientist at *Agriculture and Agrifood Canada*, confirmed that the genetic structure of Red Fife is identical to Halychanka wheat grown in Western Ukraine. The conclusion? Halychanka wheat grains were mixed into the wheat purchased by David Fife in 1842.

Today: Heritage (heirloom) grain farmers supply artisan bakeries and health food stores with Red Fife wheat flour. It is a rustic grain that has retained its original wholesome properties and simplified gluten content.

References

Fife, G. (2017). *David Fife and Red Fife Wheat*. Ingenium Museums of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://ingeniumcanada.org/channel/innovation/david-fife-and-red-fife-wheat>

*Symko, S.(1999). *From a single seed Tracing the Marquis wheat success story in Canada to its roots in the Ukraine*. Ottawa: Strategic Promotion, Research Branch, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada. Link: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.804661/publication.html>

B: “Wheat in a Bottle” Story

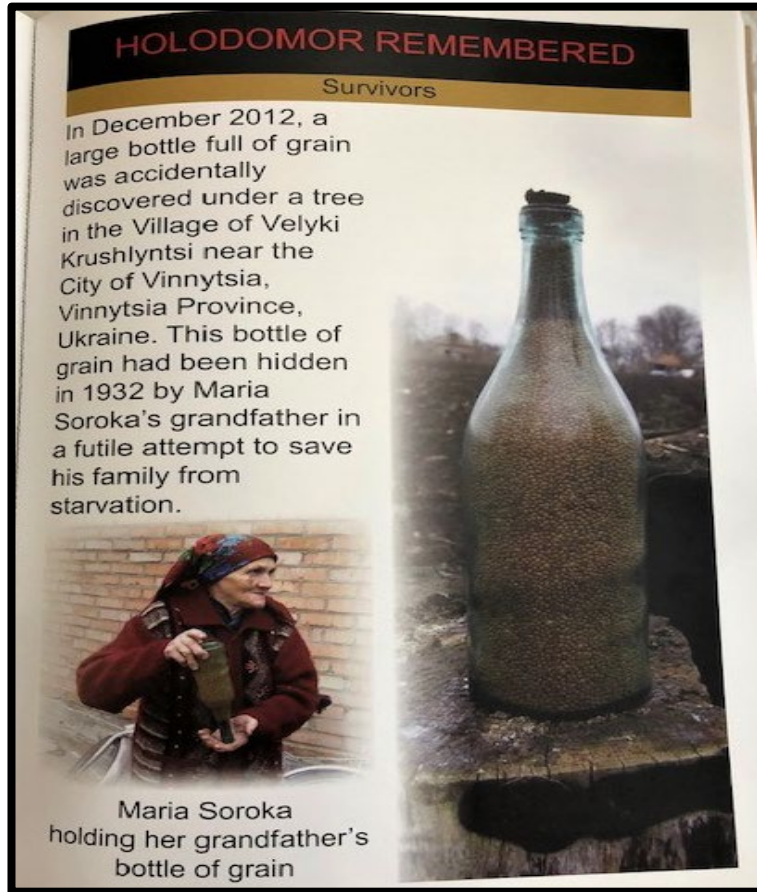


Photo Credit: League of Ukrainian Canadians. (2014). Holodomor. The Ukrainian Genocide 1932-1933. Ucrainica Research Institute. Toronto. Used with permission.

Holodomor: Background Information for Educators

Holodomor is the Ukrainian term for 'hunger by starvation'. This [artificial famine-genocide](#) was created by Joseph Stalin and led to the starvation of millions of men, women, and children in 1932-33. Why were the people starved? Ukraine's fertile agricultural land could produce large quantities of grain for export to Western countries. Money from the sale of this grain was needed for Stalin's plan to collectivize, industrialize, and forcefully amalgamate smaller nations into one powerful Soviet Union. Stalin was furious with the Ukrainians, who openly defied collectivization of their farmlands and the destruction of their national identity. Stalin gave orders to confiscate all grain, block entry into and out of the territory, and forcibly create conditions for the people who *produced* the grain to starve to death. The "Five Stalks of Grain" Law A law written on August 7, 1932, known as the Law of **Five Stalks of Grain**, threatened severe punishment, even death, for picking any food, including **grains**, from the fields.

As ghost villages emerged, Stalin resettled ethnic Russians and other minorities on Ukrainian territory. Primary historical sources and Holodomor survivors confirm this information. The Holodomor was recognized as a deliberate act of genocide by Canada's parliament in 2008.

For information on the Holodomor, see Unit 2, Chapter 5 of [Voices into Action](#), a Canadian online resource.

C: Student Project - Wheat in a Bottle



Identification card: Print the cards below and tie them to the neck of each bottle.

In December 2012, a large bottle full of grain was discovered under a tree in the Village of Velyki Krushlyntsi, in Vinnytsia Province, Ukraine. The bottle of grain was hidden there in 1932 by Maria Soroka's grandfather in a futile attempt to save his family from starvation. Remember the Holodomor by displaying this bottle of grain during the last week in November each year.

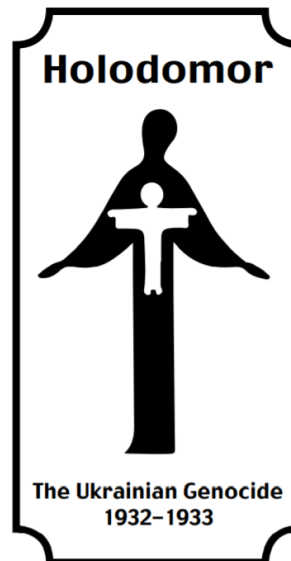


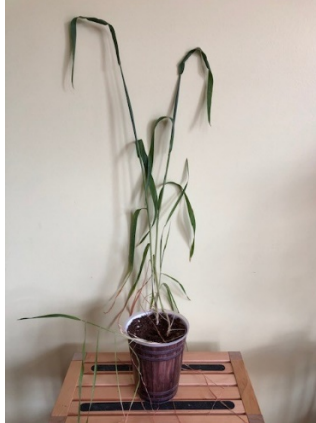





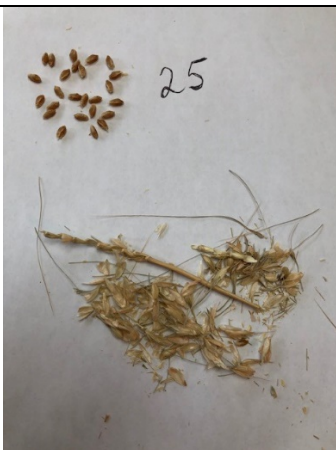


Photo and cards: Rhea Good

[Watch the video here](#) to learn how to implement this project with your class. Permission to use this video clip was granted by Light of Christ Catholic School Division.

D. Photo Collage: Wheat-Growing Project

Have students collect data and take photos for a 'wheat growth' journal.

Day 6	Day 8	Day 73
		
Day 77	Day 90	Day 125
		
Day 125	One Stalk	Yield from One Stalk
		

Photos: Nadia Prokopchuk

E. Bread-Making Project

Recipe for White Bread

Shared by: Kateryna Brychka

Quantity: This recipe makes about 2 loaves. Adjust ingredients as needed.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup sugar
- 3 c lukewarm water (cooled from boiling)
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ c butter or margarine
- 2 tbsp yeast (1 pkg.)
- Flour (as needed)

Directions:

Put yeast in 1 cup of the lukewarm water and let sit for about 10 minutes. Mix all ingredients, kneading dough well. Let dough rise for at least an hour (until double in bulk). Punch down the dough and put into a greased baking tin. Let the bread rise again for about half an hour. Bake at 350 degrees Celsius until bread is brown on the top.



Recipe & Photo: Kateryna Nakutnyy

Recipe Template

Recipe for _____

Shared by _____

Quantity _____

Ingredients

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Directions:

Photo:

