Daily Agricultural Connections and Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom
Calendar 2018:
Agricultural Literacy Events and Important Dates

My goal to increase all students as well as English Language Learners (ELLs) comprehension of non-fiction expository text and provide opportunities for practice so that ELLs can identify and interact with the text can be easily and painlessly worked on with daily agricultural connections. The connections also provide opportunities for peer interaction with the content of the text in order to increase comprehension and will help to increase ELL students' English language production and peer interaction.

The MAC calendar is a perfect way for students to start to make daily agricultural connections especially using the Jigsaw Method, as explained in this lesson. Explain to students that calendar is a system of arranging days according to astronomical events for regulating everyday life. For example the traditional Chinese calendar is known as the Agricultural Calendar or Nongli, as the calendar divides the year into seasons for agriculture, which is the principal economy of the country.

First, introduce the strategy and the topic to be studied (Agricultural Connections).

How to use jigsaw-

This cooperative-learning reading technique gives students the opportunity to specialize in one aspect of a topic, master the topic, and teach the material to group members. Asking students to work together in a Jigsaw builds comprehension, encourages cooperation, and improves communication and problem-solving skills.

How to use jigsaw-
Introduce the strategy and the topic to be studied: Daily Agricultural Connections: Tell students that they will use a calendar day to find out what happened on that day that connects to agriculture using an online search.

Assign each student to a "home group" of 2-3 students who reflect a range of reading abilities. assign one day to each student or student group. Write their names down on the calendar. Students will write down their agricultural connection to that day once they have chosen one, under their names.

Next, create "expert groups" that consist of students who will read the same selection, or online page. Give all students a framework for managing their time on the various parts of the jigsaw task.
Provide key questions to help the "expert groups" gather information in their particular area.
Provide materials and resources necessary for all students to learn about their topics and become agricultural "experts."
I have included a few sites that are easy for students to understand as they include historic, important, noteworthy and famous events.

On This day:
https://www.onthisday.com/events-calendar.php

and Today in food history:

Note: It is important that the reading material assigned is at appropriate instructional levels (90–95% reading accuracy).
Discuss the rules for reconvening into "home groups" and provide guidelines as each "expert" reports the information learned.
Prepare a summary chart or graphic organizer for each "home group" as a guide for organizing the experts' information report.
Remind students that "home group" members are responsible to learn all content from one another.

Expert Group Panels
To work on students' discussion and presentation techniques in a larger group setting, have the expert groups present to the class. In turn, the whole class is responsible for asking questions and learning about each topic.

Examples of information for May 1 that students can research and choose from for their agricultural connection using the mentioned websites:

May 1 • UK: National Gardening Week: April 30-May 6, 2018 [Royal Horticultural Society]
Encouraging gardners to share their love of gardening.

-Garden ideas
-Build a bee hotel
-Bird boxes and hedgehog hibernators are great fun, but here's a less well-known home for wildlife: a nest for red mason bees.
-Build a compost cafe
-Compost heaps are wildlife attractors in their own right, besides being one of the most positive things anyone with a garden can do to reduce landfill and enrich their soil
-Build a mini stone wall
-In the countryside, well-maintained dry stone walls are a marvellous habitat for wildlife. Y
-Plant a night-scented garden: Flowers that release their scent in the evening are a big draw for
moths.

MA State and Common Core Standards (7th)

Language:

7.L.1  Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

7.L.3  Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCRA.L.6  Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Speaking and Listening

7.SL.1  Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

7.SL.1a  Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

7.SL.1d  Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.
7.SL.2  Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

7.SL.4  Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

7.SL.5  Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

7.SL.6  Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCRA.SL.1  Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Standards
CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

7.SL.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
7.SL.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
7.SL.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
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CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.