

Activity 2



A THRESHING COMPETITION



STUDY QUESTION:

How does a farmer collect seeds from a field of grain? Why does he have to hurry?

THE ACTIVITY:

In this activity the children separate seeds from the heads.

SUBJECT AREA:

Science

CURRICULUM CONCEPTS:

LANGUAGE ARTS

Retain information received verbally: follow instructions.

Read a variety of written materials: experience charts.

SCIENCE

Environment: identify changes in the environment resulting from man's activities.

AGRICULTURE CONCEPTS:

Harvest: time as a factor in harvesting.

PURPOSE

To introduce children to the concept of time and weather being a factor in harvesting.

To give children the opportunity to develop their reading skills and the ability to follow directions.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

A large supply of grain stalks, at least five per child. (Other plants could be used - e.g. pods of peas or beans, cobs of corn, or packaged sunflower seeds.)

Small cans or boxes for holding threshed seeds.

Diagram of grain stalks. Supplied in this activity.

Pictures of harvesting. Supplied in this activity.

TIME REQUIRED:

1 to 2 class periods.



PROCEDURE



Part One

Introduction

Have a person come to your classroom with the grain that you need. This person should say his combine broke down and he needs help.

Part Two

Preparation

Give each child a stem of grain. Demonstrate how to separate the seeds from the plants and let the children practice on their stems.

Organization

Form teams of 4 - 5 children and give each team an equal number of grain stems - at least 5 or 6. Identify groups as names of combines (John Deere/Case/International/New Holland/ Belaris). Set a limited time for separating the seeds from the heads.

NOTE:

The time should be short enough to ensure that not all the seeds can be separated.

Part Three

The Race

Time the children, encourage them to collect as many seeds as possible in their seed bins (little boxes or cans). The winners are the team who collect the greatest number of seeds. During which, change weather conditions sunny/ rain/cloudy/thunder. Use snow as the method of stopping the harvest.

Recording and Comparing Yields

When you call time, ask each group to count their yield and to record the number on a large chart such as the one illustrated below.

Results of Threshing Competition

Team 1 collected _____ seeds.

Team 2 collected _____ seeds.

Team 3 collected _____ seeds.

Team 4 collected _____ seeds.

Part Four

Conclusion

Read the chart and briefly discuss the results, emphasizing the importance of time to the farmer who is in a race with the weather. Relate the activity to grain harvesting by referring to the diagrams of grain plants and the photographs of harvesting.

FOR DISCUSSION

How did the change in weather affect your actions or feelings?

Why do you think the farmer is in a hurry?

Was it hard to separate the seeds from the head?

How do you think the weather affects the farmers?

EVALUATION STRATEGIES Have children draw a head of grain and a seed with the chaff still on. Then have them draw a seed after the chaff is removed.

Have children complete the following sentence:

One day Slide was helping a farmer with the harvesting by separating the seeds from the heads in a race against time.....

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Use construction paper or cardboard to make little bins for collecting the seeds.

Write a poem about harvesting; highlight words that suggest hurry.

Visit a grain elevator.

Chaff is the
outside cover
on the seed.



HARVESTING IN ALBERTA



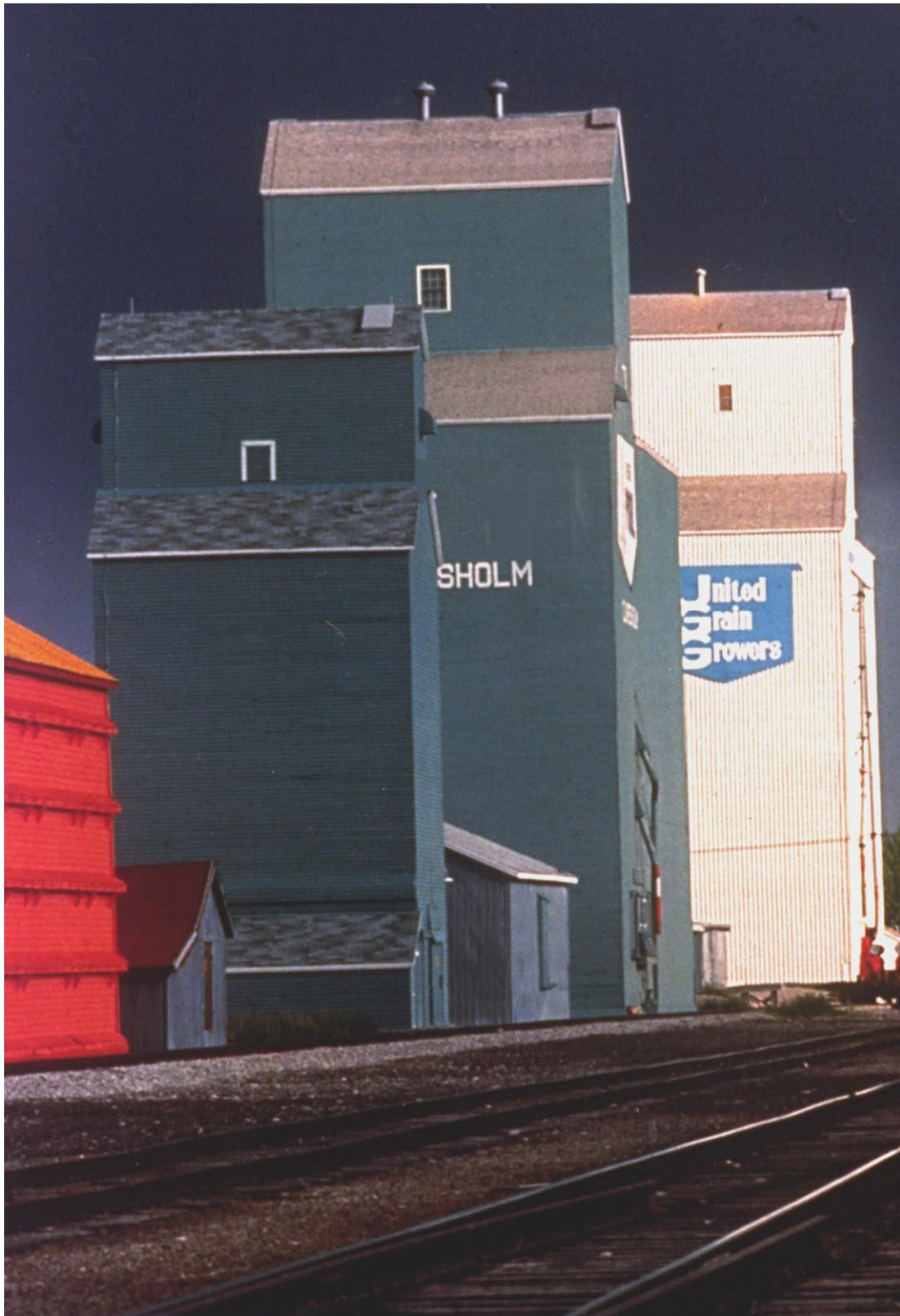
Swathers are used to cut the grain and lay it in rows with the kernels on top to dry.

HARVESTING IN ALBERTA



Combines collect the swaths and separate the grain from the straw. The straw is left on the field and the grain is collected in a hopper, then transferred to trucks.

HARVESTING IN ALBERTA



Elevators are used to transfer grain to trains and trucks which haul it to market