

Explore an ear of corn

What do you know about this familiar plant?

Materials

- Ear of dried corn
- Corn plant pulled from field, including ear
- Bushel of corn
- Electronic scale
- Corn photos

Instructions

1. Hand out corn and corn plant. List terms and see what students know. Identify gaps in knowledge.
 - Identify roots, stalk, ear, kernel, silks, tassels, husk, and shank.
 - What growth stage is it in? V (vegetative), VT (tassling), or R (reproductive)?
 - If there are kernels on the cob, what reproductive stage is it in?
2. Lift the bushel, how much does it weigh?
3. Pop off kernels. How much does a kernel weigh?
4. How many kernels are there in a bushel?
5. Use a photo of corn and answer the following questions:
 - What are some things that may have altered these ears (pests, drought, water)?
 - What stage are they in (vegetative or reproductive)? Can you go into more detail about the stage?
 - Explore your ear—how many rows, how many kernels per row, how many kernels per ear?

Label the images.



Reflection

1. Name the parts of a corn plant.
2. What new knowledge do you have about the corn plant? List at least five things.

Answer key

Answers, from top to bottom:
tassels, kernel, shank, husk, stalk,
silks, ear, root