

## 47. Farmer Hank

**Overview:** After touring the antique farm equipment display, students will write a letter making inquiries about a specific piece of machinery.

**Objective:** Students will visit the antique farm equipment exhibit at the Yuma Conservation Garden and write a friendly letter.

**Time Needed:** One class period. (If used as a station activity, students may choose one item and write a description of an item to be used later in the letter writing activity. Pictures may also be taken)

**Group Size:** Any group size

**Age Appropriateness:** 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

**Site:** Yuma Conservation Garden areas containing antique farm equipment.

**Background Information:** This activity provides an opportunity to write a friendly letter, by brainstorming and applying the use of descriptive adjectives.

“Farmer Hank” is a regional farmer whose real name is Hank Czajkowski. He is sponsored by Farm Bureau and the Conservation Garden and makes presentations to classrooms about farming.

Farming equipment has evolved as technology becomes more sophisticated. By examining old equipment, innovations can be observed over time.

**Materials:** Pencil paper and clipboard or camera

**Preparation:** See above

**Pre Activity:** Review sentence structure and paragraph writing and friendly letter format.

**Procedure:**

1. Students choose an item of farm equipment
2. Write a description of the item using as many descriptive words as possible (hint: if pictures are not taken of the item and the letter will be written later away from the equipment, that description will be extremely important)
3. Have students write a prediction of what the item was used for
4. Write a letter to “Farmer Hank” with a prediction of use and an adequate description that will allow him to identify the piece of equipment you are writing about
5. Send letter to the Conservation Garden and wait for a reply

**Modifications:** This activity could be done as a class activity, especially by younger students with the teacher guiding the letter writing.

**Extensions:** Research or inquire why the piece of equipment has become obsolete or no longer used. What inventions or improvements caused the piece to become obsolete?  
Create a timeline of farm equipment innovations and analyze the effects of those changes on the economics of the industry.  
Invite “Farmer Hank” come to the classroom and do a presentation. He can be contacted by contacting the Conservation Garden.

### Reference List:

[http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/students/history\\_det5.shtml](http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/students/history_det5.shtml)

Interactive web site

[http://www.deere.com/en\\_US/compinfo/history/](http://www.deere.com/en_US/compinfo/history/)

The history of the John Deere Company

<http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/blfarm1.htm>

This site has a lot of information about the history of farming.

**Time of Year:** any

2245 Arizona Ave.  
Yuma, Arizona 85365

October 2, 2004

Dear Farmer Hank,

Our class is visiting the Yuma Conservation Garden. Although, there were many different things to look at, my favorite area was the antique farm machinery. My family and I have driven by the Conservation Garden many times and have often wondered what these odd pieces of history were used for.

There was one piece which peaked my interest and I would like to know what it was used for and what name it was called. Here is what it looked like: [Describe piece of equipment here]

I have wondered often since our visit what this piece of equipment was used for. I believe [predict what the machine was used for].

Yours truly,

[Name]