

# **Tortilla Factory**

**Grade:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Season:** Fall/Winter

**IGS Unit:** Farms, Food Systems

**Essential Question:** Where does corn come from? How does eating corn affect the world?

**Objective:** Students will understand the process of seed to fork through the lens of corn. Students will learn about the origins of corn, the overuse of corn in so many products today, how to process corn, info about GMO's vs local corn, pollination and cross-pollination, and the history of corn as it relates to their Spanish/Social Studies class.

**Materials:**

- Corn Display (see photos)
  - o books about corn, masa, items made from corn, maps of the historic journey of corn to The Americas, tortilla press, metate grinding stone and fact sheets
- Timer
- Ingredients for tortillas: Masa Harina, salt, water
- Griddle
- Spatulas
- Presses
- Saran Wrap
- Plates
- Cups
- Ingredients for salsa: tomatoes, garlic, lime, onions, peppers, salt
- Cutting boards, knives, garlic press, bowls
- Corn grinder
- Small rug for the grinding table
- Gloves

**Introduction:**

Review history of corn, and how it arrived in the U.S.

Ask students if they ever eat tortilla chips. Students describe the process from seed to fork.

Facilitator explains steps to making tortillas, and introduces each station.

**Activity:**

There are 5 stations:

- a) Corn kernel sorting and cleaning with small cups

- b) Grinding station with small bowl under the grinder
- c) Mixing station with masa harina, water, and salt
- d) Griddle with spatulas, presses to make tortillas and plates
- e) Salsa making table with local produce

Students wash hands.

Each student has 5-10 minutes per station (depending on time available). Ring bell to switch stations.

Gather together at the end of class to share thoughts, descriptions of the tortillas, surprises, etc.

**Assessment:** Students create a written recipe for tortillas, using measurement

**Tips:**

- Have a volunteer take photos and write candid comments from students as they come up
- Kids may grind extra corn which can be made into cornbread in the cafeteria with the class as a follow up lesson
- Keep the display up for open school night so parents and community members can see. You can also include a slide show for people to watch.