Author of original ABCs of CORN. 2016 is Lois F. Roets Ed.D.
Lois collaborated with her two sisters, Norma Kennebeck and Jean Thelen, for some alphabet verse entries.

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SECOND EDITION – IOWA
First Edition was the “Schelle Edition” distributed in July & August, 2016, to family of Charles and Mary Schelle.
A is for agriculture, the
   Art of farming
   And cultivating the soil.
   Acres of corn growing tall.
   All will be food for
   Animals and people
   After harvest in the fall.

April plantings of
   Acres of corn, grow
   A lot of green corn that becomes
   Ablaze with golden stalks, ready for
   Autumn harvest.
   AWESOME SIGHT.

Corn Fact :  An ear of corn averages 800 kernels in 16 rows.

Question: Which is bigger: an acre of corn or a football field?
Answer: They are about the same. An acre is 160 square rods or 4840 square
   yards. That's the size of a football field from one goal line
to just inside the 10 yard line at the other end.

Field Research. In late spring or early summer, locate a field with growing corn.
Observe the field three different times to watch it grow.
Record your observations: date, description, sketch of what you saw.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sketch of what you saw.</th>
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Fun Fact: Baby diapers often contain corn
starch to absorb moisture and odor.
Bushels of dried corn
Become
Bags of popcorn for people.

Buckets of corn
Become feed for pigs, chickens, and
Beef cattle so they grow
Big and healthy
Norman
Borlaug, was a
Brilliant humanitarian,
Born in Iowa, who
Brought to the world a
Branch of Agri-Science, that saved
Billions of lives worldwide.
Borlaug was the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1970.

Internet Research: How did Borlaug save lives?

Corn Fact: Corn proteins are unable to combine with yeast to make leavened bread. That's why cornbread is thicker and will not rise like the breads of other grains.

Field Research: Compare corn flakes and another corn cereal.
Compare 3 factors: shape, taste, nutrition value.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corn flakes</th>
<th>corn ______ cereal</th>
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Shape:

Taste:

Nutrition value:
The whole corn plant is used; nothing is wasted.

**Corn to eat:**
- Cornbread
- Corn chips
- Corn flakes
- Corn dogs. Yum!

**Corn to use:**
- Corncob pipe
- Cobs for kindling,
- Corn husks for bedding.

**Corn cribs store corn.**

**Corn Fact:** "Corn Belt" states of Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska and Minnesota account for over 50% of corn grown in United States according to a 2010 report.

**Your Drawing of corn crib**

- **Corn cribs** are structures that hold corn.
  - Air flows through open spaces and corn dries. Drying corn prevents mold.

**Internet Research:** Crafts from or related to corn.

**Internet Research:** What is a "cover crop?"

**Internet Research:** Crayons are made with cornstarch. How is this done?

**Fun Fact:** Corn varieties grow from two to twenty feet high. Stalks have eight to 48 leaves and produce one or multiple ears.
Doors can be decorated with ears of corn and ribbon.
Designs of corn decorate clothes, blankets and dishes.

South Dakota’s Corn Palace is decorated with corn scenes - a dynamic example of using corn for decoration.

Dangers to corn plant during corn growing season may be deadly hail storms that can demolish a corn crop, or dynamic winds that break the stalk and cut off its food supply from the roots.

Question: What is Dent Corn?
Answer: Dent is a variety of corn that, when dry, has a dip or dent at the tip of each kernel. It is also called field corn. Dent corn is used for cornmeal flour, corn chips and taco shells.

Equipment:
Corn Dryer is a machine that produces heat which flows through corn to lower the moisture of the corn seed

Internet Research: What other equipment and machines are used in growing corn?

Corn Fact: “Dry-milling” a bushel of corn will produce
- 10 one-pound boxes of cereal and
- 15 pounds of brewers grits (enough for one gallon of beer) and
- 10 eight-ounce packages of cheese curls and
- 1 pound of pancake or other mix and
- 22 pounds of hominy feed for livestock and
Ears of corn show
Even rows from
Eight to 22

**Energy** from the sun helps corn grow.

**Corn Fact:** *Embryo* or *germ* of a corn kernel contains most of the fat, vitamins and minerals in corn. For a seed to germinate, grow, it must contain a living embryo that stays alive 3-5 years. If kept in cool dry storage, corn seeds can live 25 years or more.

**Elevators** help move corn from one place to another.

Elevators have “shelves” linked together with a chain with space between the shelves. The motor pulls the chains and that moves the shelves of corn along a path to where corn needs to be. Draw an elevator.

**Internet Research:** What does a "corn snake" look like?

**Your opinion?** Do you like popcorn balls?

**Fun Fact:** Different corn plants have different number of ears. Most Iowa corn is bred to develop just one large ear. This approach gives bigger yields.
How to enjoy fresh corn-on-the cob:
Buy fresh corn at the grocery store or roadside stand.
Free the ear of husks, silks, boil in water or roast on grill. Add fresh herbs, butter, salt and pepper, and enjoy.

Your opinion? What seasonings do you like on sweet corn?

**Fuel from Corn: Ethanol**
Corn can be converted to ethanol fuel to run motors.

Internet Research: How is ethanol made?
Your opinion? Do you use ethanol in your car?
Give reasons for your choice.

**Corn Fact:** *Flint Corn* has a smooth kernel with no soft starch in the endosperm. It ranges in color from white to deep red. Flint corn grows well in high altitudes, cool climate and wet soils.

Corn cobs can be burned as fuel for warmth. Dried cobs are good kindling.

**Haiku** poetry has 3 lines: 5 syllables in first, 7 syllables in second, 5 syllables in third line.

**Haiku on Corn Cobs**
Silent corn cobs wait
For a match to light a fire
To warm a cold night.

Your haiku: Topic: __________________________
(5 syllables in first line) __________________________
(7 syllables in second line) __________________________
(5 syllables in third line) __________________________

**Fun Fact:** Corn cobs make good corks (stoppers).
To **grow**, corn needs:
- fertile ground (soil),
- healthy seeds,
- appropriate moisture,
- warm sunshine,
- proper cultivation,
- time to grow to maturity.

When you harvest corn, leave some kernels to feed, and stalks to protect wildlife during winter's cold and storms.

**Corn Counts:**
A pound of corn has approximately 1300 kernels.
In 2010, a single U.S. farmer provided food and fiber for 129 people: 97 in the United States and 32 overseas.

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### Genes and Genetics

**Gene:** basic unit of heredity.
**Genetic:** relating to genes
**Genetics:** the scientific study of genes and heredity.

**Two scientists worthy of study:**
- **Gregor Mendel** (1822-1884) established basic rules of genetics and heredity through cross pollinating plants and recording what grew.
- **Barbara McClintock** (1902-1992) discovered that some genes do not behave as predicted but they transpose, jump over, regular patterns of heredity.

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**Definition:** Gluten is a sticky protein substance found in corn and other grains.

**Internet Research:** Why do some people avoid eating gluten?

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**Field Research.** Purchase or bake "regular" and gluten free bread.
What differences do you **see** and **taste**? Other comparisons?

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**Have you noticed?** Grocery stores now have many choices for gluten-free products.

**Corn Fact:** In batteries, cornstarch is often used as an electrical conductor.

**Fun Fact:** Glue on envelopes is made of cornstarch that becomes sticky when moistened.
Heaps of Heavenly popcorn keep you Healthy and Happy.

Your opinion: Do you prefer "plain" popcorn or seasoned popcorn?

**Definition:** Hybrid - a plant formed by cross-pollinating two select plants.

**Plant Botany:** The tassel is the male part of the corn plant. The ear is the female part.

For corn kernels to develop, the pollen of the tassel must fertilize the silks of the corn ear.

For every single grain of pollen that follows a silk to the corn ear, a kernel of corn can grow. For most corn, wind blows the pollen and the silks capture the pollen grains.

Some characteristics for which corn hybrids are developed:
- disease resistant
- sturdiness of stalk to resist wind and hold ears.
- length of growing season, length of ear so more kernels are produced

**Question:** Can I create a hybrid corn plant?

**Answer:** Yes. To create a hybrid, the pollen of one selected plant is used to fertilize the silks of another selected plant. To control pollination of the silks, the tassel of the plant is removed so that no pollen falls on its own silks. This is called "detasseling." In test plots, the silks are covered to keep out pollen from itself. To "cross/hybrid" the plant, the selected tassel is shook over the silks, several times over a few days. This cross pollination creates hybrid corn that carries the genes of both plants.

Corn is harvested. when it is just right for the intended use of the corn.

"Just right" for drying as seed means kernels are hard and moisture is just enough to keep the germ alive but not too much moisture that the seed will rot.

"Just right" for human consumption means shells on kernels are soft and juicy.

Your Opinion: "Cornucopia" represents overflowing abundance. What "fullness and abundance" is in your cornucopia?

**Corn Fact:** Corn is produced on every continent of the world with exception of Antarctica.

**Fun Fact:** The number of leaves in the husk is a direct result of the number of joints in the corn stalk.
Iowa’s rolling hills and flat floodplains grow lots and lots of corn.

Iowa’s fertile land was formed by the Ice Age and rivers, and wisely used by insightful farmers who industriously farm the gift of land.

Iowa State University (ISU) in Ames provides information, research, test plots on growing corn.

**Question:** What is "Indian corn?"
**Answer:** Corn with colored kernels. It can be eaten and is often used for decorations.

**Internet Research:** Recipes for "Indian Corn Pudding" and "Indian Corn Bread."

**Field Research.** Visit a processing plant that cans or freezes corn.

**Question:** What is "Immature corn?"
**Answer:** Corn that is not fully grown (matured) for its intended use.

**Field Research.** How many styles of corn can you find at a grocery store? List the name and description of each (examples: whole corn, creamed corn…).

**Corn Fact :** Plastics made from corn are less expensive than those made from oil.

**Question:** What happens when you add cornstarch to hot liquid, like gravy?
**Answer:** Ask a cook. Watch the cook add cornstarch to a hot liquid.

**Fun Fact:** Corn grows well in Iowa because:
- growing season is long and warm enough for corn.
- rainfall is usually enough.
- soil is fertile and deep.
- farmers know how to grow and harvest corn.

*Other factors?*
**Johnny** cake is made from corn and other baking ingredients.

**Jelly Beans** are NOT made from corn but can be made to taste like popcorn.

**July** in Iowa brings hot days and slightly cooler nights - ideal for corn growing.

**Jelly** from corn cobs (white or red) is made from, you guessed it, corn cobs.

**Internet Research:** How many recipes for corn cob jelly can you find?

**Field Research:** Visit specialty markets to find a jar of corn cob jelly. Do you like it? What does it taste like? If you couldn’t find corn cob jelly, match a batch of corn cob jelly.

**Internet Research:** "*Paintings of Corn Fields by Grant Wood*"
Enjoy the paintings of Iowa’s artist, Grant Wood. What do you see? Can you sketch one of his drawings?

**Have you noticed** – the rolling hills on the landscape of Iowa?
Iowa is not flat except on some floodplains*.

*Define:* What does a “floodplain” look like? Describe or draw it.

**Corn Fact:** Cornstarch is a common ingredient in cosmetic and hygiene items.
K

Kernels on cobs,
Kernels stuck in our teeth,
Kernels your body will eat and convert
into energy and endurance.

Internet Research: Find a picture of a cross-section of a corn kernel
Draw it and label 3 parts:

Endosperm,

Pericarp,

Germ.

Corn Fact: The ear located closest to the top of the stalk becomes the largest ear.

Internet Research: Illustrate the difference between a corn stalk and a corm.
Leaders bring
Laughing
Lads and
Lassies to the Land and
Lakes to
Learn the basics of
Long ago
Living off the
Land.

Your idea: What does “living off the land” mean?

Your ideas: If you had to “live off the land” like the pioneers did, what 21 items would you like to take with you?

Compare your list with lists of others.

1. __________________ 2. __________________ 3. __________________
4. _________________ 5. _________________ 6. _________________
7. _________________ 8. _________________ 9. _________________
10. _________________ 11. _________________ 12. _________________
13. _________________ 14. _________________ 15. _________________
16. _________________ 17. _________________ 18. _________________
19. _________________ 20. _________________ 21. _________________

Internet Research: What does "Corn Rows" hairdo look like?

Corn Fact: Sweet corn syrup is a main ingredient in cough drops and hard candies.
Maize Mazes can be fun,
    Making your way through

    Marked paths,
    Making wrong turns, but finally
    Mastering the corn field puzzle.

Maize is another name for corn.
Maze is a pathway puzzle you enter and find your way to the end.
   Caution: Don't go into a maze alone. Have a cell phone with you.

Your idea: Design a corn maze.

=================================

Corn Science: Corn is a monocotyledon.
A cotyledon is the first leaf grown from a seed.
"Mono" means one. Corn plants sprout with one (mono) leaf and produce a single stalk and one tap root.

Your Research: Loosely roll corn kernels and beans in a moist towel.
Keep the roll warm and damp until seeds sprout.
Corn kernels will have single sprouts (monocotyledons.)
Beans will have a double sprout because beans are dicotyledons.
   Notice how the sprouts go towards the water or wet part of the towel.
   What else did you see?

Question: What is the "milk stage" of an ear of corn?
Answer: Corn has a milk stage before the kernels harden or dry.
         Cream corn includes much of the milk of young corn.

Corn Use: Corn pellet stoves are used for heating.
What do "corn pellets" look like? How are they made?
November gray skies,
Nippy winds
Nudge us to finish harvest of
corn and root vegetables.

Question: Are you a "noshers?"
To "nosh" means to eat or nibble at food. If you are a "noshers" you like to nibble and eat.
Answer -- only you know the answer to this question!

Field Research: What foods for noshing are made of corn? Read the labels.

Internet Research: What is the nutrition value of your favorite corn?

Internet Research: Which state is called the Cornhusker state? Why?

Have you noticed? Look at the skies in November.
Write or draw a description of “November skies”
3 days in a row, at about the same time of day.

Time: Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Corn Fact: The root system of a healthy corn plant grows into
the soil 5 or more feet until it reaches the water table.
Oil from corn tastes good so it is used in foods, salads, stews, and dressings.

Compare the taste of corn oil and other oils.

**Organic corn** is corn raised without use of pesticides or fertilizers.
Some people think organic corn is more healthy to eat.
Some people think organic corn is more subject to disease since no pesticides are used.

**Internet Research:**
- Read about organic foods.
- Learn what organic means.

**Research:** Listen to opinions of others.

**Your opinion:**
What do you believe about organic foods?
- Based on your opinion, which foods do you prefer to eat?

Have you noticed? Can you tell the difference between regular corn
and organic corn just by looking at it?

**Field Research.** Prepare organic and regular sweet corn in the same way.
Can you taste the difference?

**Internet Research:** In 2007, Iowa corn growers averaged 182 bushels per acre.
What was the average number of bushels, per acre, in these years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bushels per acre</th>
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<tr>
<td>2007/</td>
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<td>2008/</td>
<td>______</td>
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What is a "corny" joke? Do you know corny jokes? Share them with friends.

**Opinion Poll:** Conduct an opinion poll using kernels of corn.
Display the question and provide a jar for each choice.
Participants “vote” by dropping one kernel of corn into the jar of choice.

*What did you learn by doing a “Kernel Poll?”*
POP - POP - POP
Popping
Popcorn on the
Porch for
Parade of players,
Parents and
Pets at the Park.

Playful
Poems about
People
Pets
Pickles and
Puzzles
Promises a
Pleasant
Program [performance].

**Corn Science: Pollen** from the tassel falls on the silks and travels to the ear.
This is pollination. When pollination takes place, corn kernels can grow.

**Field Research.** Plant a few corn seeds in spring. Watch the plant grow, produce tassels and silks, and watch the breezes blow pollen to the silks. Then, when the ears of corn are just right, pick and cook the corn, then eat!

What did you learn by doing this research?

**Corn Fact:** Popcorn pops because heat causes the starch and moisture in the endosperm to expand and "pop" out of its hard flint kernel coat.

**Internet Research:** Is a "peppercorn" a corn product?

**Question:** If you or your achievement is described as a "corker," are you being praised or criticized?
Corn plants **quiver** and **quake** in summer prairie breezes.

**Quick-freeze** is a method of preserving corn to retain its freshness and taste at the peak of harvest.

**Internet Research:** What does the **Corn Row quilt pattern** look like?

**Your idea:**
Can **YOU** design a quilt block using the corn theme?
Sketch and color your newly designed quilt block.
What will you call your Corn Block design?

**Your opinion?** *In the quiet of the night, you can hear the corn grow.*
Is this true? Not true? If true, what makes the "growing sound?"

**Haiku** poetry has 3 lines: 5 syllables in first, 7 syllables in second, 5 syllables in third line.

**Haiku on Drones**
High above drones fly
To see buildings, fields, livestock.
Drones help farmers farm.

**Your haiku:**

<table>
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<td>(5 syllables in first line)</td>
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<td>(7 syllables in second line)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5 syllables in third line)</td>
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</table>
Radiate joy when you
Reminisce memories of corn.
Raise your hands and clap,
Recognize the multiple use of corn.

Regard farmers with honor. Learn from them.
Regale good cooks. Will they share their recipes?
Relax while you eat.
Rejoice that corn is a part of way of your life.

Field Research. How many places did you see corn at the State or County Fair?
Don't forget the food stands that use corn or corn meal in preparing the food.

Internet Research: Do a search for "corn recipes" on Internet.
Study Index to see how many recipes for corn are in a cook book. Use several cook books.

Field Research. Ask relatives to see their recipes that use corn.
Do they use a "written down" recipe or cook by memory, look and touch?

Your idea: Create your own recipe that uses corn.

Your opinion: What is your favorite way to eat corn?

Watch how fast corn grows in warm sunshine!

Corn Fact: Corn has one tap or main root that holds the plant in place.
As the corn stalk grows, the plant grows "threads" that grow into the soil to help the tap root anchor the plant.
Corn is consumed as a vegetable and as
Starch in foods,
Syrup and sweeteners,
Snack foods, like corn chips.
Grocery
Shelves are
Stocked with
Salsa.

**Definition:** Salsa: a mixture of vegetables and seasonings added to sandwich, meat or fish dish, or eaten with chips or crackers.

**Internet Research:** How many recipes for corn salsa can you find?

**Your opinion:** Your favorite salsa?

**Field Research:** How many varieties of SALSA does your local grocery store have?

**Your idea:** Pretend you have developed hybrid seed corn.
Design a seed sack for your hybrids.
Or, create an original **corn salsa** recipe and design a label for it.

**Internet Research:** What is a **corn shock**? What was its purpose?

**Safety in the field:** if you get lost, follow one row until you come to the end of the row. Stand or sit outside the corn where you are visible. Call for help. **DO NOT go back into the field.**
Tassels produce pollen,
Then release it
To land on the silks.
Then kernels develop on the ears.
   An A"maize"ingly
Tasty
Treat
That
Tickles
Taste buds of
Theatre Patrons [popcorn]

Your idea: How would you illustrate or describe
   “popcorn tickling your taste buds?”

Internet Research: There are many Testings and Tastings in growing corn.
   How many can you list or describe?

Your opinion: Does a hamburger made of “organic” beef taste
   better or different than a hamburger of “regular” beef?

Fun Fact: Corn descended from a plant called teosinte
   that still grows in Mexico.
Under the ground,
Under the watchful eye of Mother Nature,
Unseen, a corn kernel sprouts, and
 sends up a shoot that grows
Up,
Up,
Up, to become a very tall
 Stalk, ready to produce corn.

Corn leaves
Unfold and
Unfurl to create an
Umbrella for wildlife.

Your idea: Write a story of life that lives under
the umbrella created by corn leaves.

Internet Research: Regular corn grows in one season.
 Is there a "perennial" corn plant that grows
 more than one season?

Have you noticed? The color of corn leaves varies because of type of corn,
 amount of water and sunlight the plant receives,
 and stages of growing season.

Other things you noticed?

Fun Fact: First known ears of corn were tiny,
 only a few inches long.
Village schools shut down for
Vacation [corn picking] time is here again.
Vital to the harvesting of corn as
Vast majority of kids help out with
Vim and
Vigor and fun to gather
Varieties of corn in the fields for
Very happy farmers to fill the corn cribs.

**Definition: Corn Picking Vacation.** This was 1-2 weeks out of school to help pick corn. Corn was hand-picked from the stalks before there were machines to pick it. Also, if there had been a powerful wind, corn would have fallen to the ground. This corn needed to be picked up - as much as was possible.

**Corn Fact:** Corn is rich in Vitamin C.

**Internet Research:** Corn has been found at archeological sites 7000 years ago. Do all sources agree, or do sources suggest other timelines?

**Your idea:** How would you organize a “Corn Festival” for your community?

**Guidelines:**
- Some activities for many ages,
- Safety of activities,
- Budget for supplies and prizes,
- Prizes and recognitions,
- Hold interest of participants and on-lookers,
- Date and times.
- Location.
- Will you have music?
- Will there be a Master of Ceremonies?
- Other plans??
Henry A. Wallace, former Secretary of Agriculture, knew Weather and Wind were important When growing corn, and Weeds had to be controlled.

Harvest time: Waiting is over, Wagons hitched up [horses], Walking beside at a brisk pace - Wasting no time, Wearing gloves with hooks or pegs each in their own Way of picking corn, Whamming the corn ears on the bang boards of the wagon.

**Description of picking corn by hand using wagons with "bang boards."**

Wagons were used to bring in the corn. These wagons or pickups had a bed or box as standard equipment. Then "bang boards" were added. These were 3 or 4 boards nailed together to create a panel that could be attached to one side of the wagon.

Extension to one side of wagon or truck was called a "bang board" because, when corn was picked by hand, the person would twist the ear of corn from the stalk, then toss it into the wagon. If the picker tossed too hard or high, the ear of corn could go over the top and fall into the field. If the ear hit the bang board, it would fall into the wagon. The ear of corn made a "bang" when it hit the bang board extension.

**Interview** someone who picked corn by hand.

How was the process described?

**Corn Fact:** "Wet-milling" a bushel of corn will produce

- 31.5 pounds of starch or
- 33 pounds of sweetener or
- 2.5 gallons of fuel ethanol and
- 10.9 pound of 21% protein food and
- 2.6 pounds of 60% gluten meal and

**Internet Research:** Can you make alcohol from corn?
I'm excited about corn so I express exuberance for the extra good exhilarating taste of first corn of the season.

**Definitions of two corn terms:** xenia and xylem.  
*xenia* refers to transfer of pollen from one variety of plant to endosperm of another variety, resulting in hybrid characteristics.  
*xylem* the woody tissue of a plant that permits water and minerals to move within the plant.

**Internet Research:** What is "xanthan gum?"

**Internet Research:** Exports are critical to American agriculture. What agricultural products does the United States export?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Products</th>
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**Corn Fact:** Explosives may contain corn products.
YOU

You come from strong people,
You love your family and they love you.
You take each day and use it wisely.
   This leaves a legacy - each day.
   What of your efforts today will benefit tomorrow?

You are one cycle among many cycles.
You are of this
   year, all
   yesteryears and
   years to come.
You will live in memory years after you die.

You are important.
You are, and contribute, to the world as no other can.
   Life has cycles within cycles.

My memory:
Every year I need to see and feel the fall harvest. I remember
and re-live good memories growing up on a farm
that raised hybrid seed corn and other living things.

Your idea: Write or recall a childhood memory?

Internet Research: **Yield** is the amount of corn grown on an acre of ground.
   Why does yield change with each growing season?

**Fun fact:** Yogurt may use corn syrup to sweeten it.
   Corn starch gives yogurt and ice cream a consistent texture.
Z

**Definition:** Growing Zones tell us which plants will do well in which parts of the world. Different seeds grow well in different growing zones.

Feel the Zephyrs, which blow continuously in Iowa, assuring us of another day and another season.

**Your idea:** Write a poem about zephyrs blowing on prairies.

Zoom in, look closely, live respectfully, with nature.

Zoom in on a corn kernel or cob with a magnifying glass or microscope. Write or draw what you see.

**ADD CORN FACTS:** What facts about corn should be added to this booklet?