

Catalog Writers

Overview Students will view a selection of “variety cards” – pictures of vegetable varieties, and choose one to write a description of and name, with the aim of capturing customers’ attention! Students are encouraged to use their imaginations as well as anything they already know about how things grow to accomplish the task.

Standards (NYS): Science: 4.1, ELA: 2

Objectives To have fun and get acquainted with the interesting and unusual variety in vegetables through creative writing.

Time 15-30 minutes (20 minutes prep)

Materials

- 2 copies of the same catalog
- glue stick
- scissors
- 4X6 unlined index cards



Instructions

1. With two identical catalogues, find ten (or more, depending on how many are in your group; it’s nice to have a few extra to allow for choice) interesting vegetable varieties. From one catalogue, snip only the photo, and from the other, cut the same image, including the name and description.
2. Glue each picture onto an index card, keeping the varieties with the names and descriptions in a separate pile. Reserve these for later.
3. Spread the nameless variety cards around on a table for students to examine. Working independently or in pairs, students will pick a variety card they like.
4. Students will name the variety and write a description for it. This is a creative writing exercise so there is no wrong answer! Encourage them to use colorful language, and to include specifics.
5. When everyone has had a chance to do this, have volunteers share their variety, it’s name and description.
6. If there is time, ask students to compare their descriptions with the catalogue descriptions, using the reserved set of cards. Are they surprised? Based on the different descriptions, ask, “Which would you rather grow?”

Taking it Further K-2: ask your students to generate descriptive words that come to mind from viewing each picture, rather than writing a complete description. Provide scribe services as needed.