

## How to grow maize

### Read what Emmah says about this activity

The activity aims to enhance learners' communication skills and promote teamwork and collaboration.

#### Stage 1: Listening

Introduce the lesson by asking the learners about their experiences with farming or what they know about growing maize.

Write these comprehension questions on the board:

1. What is the first stage of growing maize?
2. What is involved in growing maize?
3. How do you know that maize is ready?
4. How do you get rid of weeds?

Read the passage aloud and ask learners to listen for the answers to the questions:

Maize is one of the most widely grown crops in Africa, serving as a staple food for millions of people. It's also used as animal feed and in various industrial products.

Before planting maize, the land needs to be properly prepared. Start by clearing the field of weeds or previous crop residues.

Choosing the right maize variety is important for a good yield. Certified seeds are recommended for better germination rates and disease resistance.

The planting season for maize depends on the region and climate. In most areas, maize is planted at the onset of the rainy season.

Maize is a heavy feeder and requires adequate nutrients for optimal growth. Before planting, apply organic manure or compost to improve soil fertility. During planting, use a balanced fertiliser.

Maize requires consistent moisture, especially during germination, tasselling, and ear formation. If rainfall is unreliable, consider irrigation.

Weeds compete with maize plants for nutrients, water, and sunlight, reducing yields. Use a hoe to manually weed the field, especially during the early stages of growth.

	<p>Maize is ready for harvest when the kernels are firm. To check for maturity, peel back the husk slightly and press a fingernail into a kernel; if the liquid is milky, it's not yet ready.</p> <p>Allow some time for students to check their answers together then elicit their answers.</p>
<b>Stage 2: Vocabulary</b>	<p>After reading the passage, elicit or teach the following words to the learners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.husk</li> <li>2.tasselling</li> <li>3.irrigation</li> <li>4.harvest</li> <li>5.weed</li> </ol>
<b>Stage 3: Speaking (An interview between a Farmer and an Agricultural expert)</b>	<p>Put learners in pairs.</p> <p>Assign roles to learners, let them take turns being a farmer and an agricultural expert, asking and answering questions about growing maize.</p> <p>After the role-play, discuss what worked well and what didn't and provide feedback.</p> <p>Choose a pair who have done the role-play well to perform it to the class.</p>
<b>Stage 4: Home-school link</b>	<p>Ask students to ask elders or family member about the steps needed to grow other crops, vegetables or fruit and take notes.</p> <p>When they come to the next class, they can repeat the role play but each student can now become an expert on the food they found out about.</p>

**Author: Emmah Kanyembo**