La Tortilleria

Grade: 5th grade

Season: Any

IGS Unit: Farms, Food Systems

Time: 2-3 classes, 30 mins each.

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

Topical Questions: How was corn traditionally processed? What does the traditional process of corn tell us about traditional Mexican culture?

Objective: Students will explore the process of seed to fork through the lens of corn. Students will understand the cultural significance of corn, while learning new Spanish vocabulary.

Materials:
- *La Tortilleria*, by Gary Paulsen and Ruth Wright Paulsen (Spanish or English version)
- *La Tortilleria* text print-outs
- *La Tortilleria* sentence strips
- Poster board (optional)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Crayons, colored pencils

Introduction: Today we are going to learn about the traditional process of growing corn and making it into tortillas that began with the Maya, and is still done in Mexico today.

Activity 1:
- Read *La Tortilleria*, by Gary Paulsen and Ruth Wright Paulsen
- Discuss the story, and the process of making tortillas.
- What does this story tell you about Mexican culture?
- Ask students to identify the new vocabulary, circling unfamiliar words
- Ask students to highlight the *verbs* on their text print-out
- Pair students to work through the new vocabulary together
Activity 2:
- In pairs, students sequence *La Tortillería* by pasting the sentences in order, and decorating with their own illustrations of the different steps of the process.

**Assessment:**
Students complete their representation of the life cycle of corn, from seed to fork.

**Extensions:**
- Lesson: Tortilla Factory
- Lesson: Corn and the Columbian Exchange