



I AM AN APRICOT

I smell: sweet but tart
I feel: smooth, velvety, and just a little soft
I taste: sugary and tangy
I look: yellowy-orange or orangey-red and plump
I am: a taste of summer



EVERY SEASON MATTERS

BC's farmers work hard all year long to grow apricots for you to enjoy!



SPRING IS FOR PREPARING

Spring is a time for planting new trees and taking care of growing trees. Farmers feed their trees by adding nutrient-rich composted manure, or fertilizer, to the soil to help them grow. Another big job in the spring is thinning. Farmers pick off tiny apricot fruitlets so that the remaining fruit can grow bigger.



WINTER IS FOR REST AND "RESET"

Winter is for resting ... if you're a tree. If you're a fruit farmer, winter is a good time to prune (clip back) trees to make sure they are the right shape to grow good fruit the next year. Almost every branch on every tree must be pruned back every year: that's a lot of pruning!



SUMMER IS FOR HARVESTING

Through most of July and into August, apricots are ready to harvest. Fruit farmers often hire workers to help handpick their apricots before they get too ripe. In summer, farmers continue to feed and water their trees and keep a close watch for pests, disease, and weeds.



FALL IS FOR CLEAN-UP

In fall, the apricot trees get ready for winter by dropping their leaves. The farmers get ready too by tidying the orchard, putting away tools and equipment, preparing their machines for cold weather, and doing a last watering. Then, they force all the water out of their irrigation (water) lines so the pipes don't fill with ice and burst.

Fruit farmers, also called orchardists or growers, can specialize in one or several types of fruits. There are many people who help develop an orchard, including the owner, grower, horticulturist, and seasonal workers. Orchards have many needs according to the type of fruit trees grown, as well as many seasonal challenges. The grower's thorough knowledge of his or her crop's production is imperative for the orchard to be successful.

ACTIVITY: MAKE AN ORCHARD DIORAMA

Have your students work as a whole class, in small groups, or with a partner to plan and create their own fruit orchard diorama using various materials. Review "Every Season Matters" on the student side of this sheet and have students list their ideas for their orchards, as well as their needs, as they relate to each season. Ask students to also list how they will try to take care of those needs. Use the dioramas in a class share, with students answering questions from their peers.

Extension: We know orchards have many needs. Now ask the students to think about parks and green spaces in their community. What might those trees need in each season, and how are those needs taken care of? Are there any seasonal issues? How is the space meeting the needs of different age groups in the community? How often is this space being used, and what does this green space mean to you? How could the students be good stewards in their local community?



MATH QUESTIONS

Explain to students that harvest yields can be very different from season to season for orchard growers. For example, four years of heavy harvests can be followed by one year of a light harvest. Pose these math questions to your students:

If a grower could harvest ___ bins of apricots in a heavy year and ___ bins of apricots in a light year, how many bins of apricots would the farmer harvest in ___ years? Show your answer concretely, pictorially, or symbolically.

Your family went to the orchard and picked a box full of ripe apricots. You wanted to share them with friends and family. You gave 6 apricots to your neighbours, 1 to the mail carrier, 2 to your grandparents, and 5 to your babysitter. Now you have 6 apricots left to enjoy. How many apricots did you pick from the orchard? Draw a picture or write an equation to show how you found your answer.

APPETIZING APRICOT VOCABULARY

Irrigate: to manually supply water to fields or orchards using hoses, pipes, and sprinklers in order to help crops grow.

Prune: to cut off branches from a tree or bush in order to better control the shape and, in orchards, the fruit production of that plant.

Stone fruit: any fruit that contains a single hard pit (or stone) in the centre. The pit is the seed.



FAMILY CONNECTION

Encourage students to take a family walk in their neighbourhood and try to find a fruit tree. Are the tree's needs being taken care of?