

Bog Blog: A Grower's Work

Notes to the Teacher

This Bog Blog assignment relates to the *Exploring Cranberries* lesson **A Grower's Work is Never Done**. This piece will encourage students to relate details to a bigger idea (and back again). While any writing assignment can meet almost any of your language arts goals, this Bog Blog is intended to give your students practice in:

- Writing with a clear focus, coherent organization, and sufficient detail
- Using appropriate rhetorical, logical, and stylistic criteria

In Massachusetts, these goals address Standards #19 and 25 in the MA Curriculum Framework in English Language Arts.

You might support the adoption of appropriate criteria by running a mini-lesson just after students see the Bog Blog Prompt for the first time. The list of ideas to keep in mind as they write can help initiate a discussion of what criteria students should aim for. As a group, you can develop a rubric (assessment check list with various degrees of proficiency outlined for each criterion) to help students guide their writing and/or revision. Finally, you can enhance this learning opportunity by pairing students so they can examine each other's posts and identify strengths as well as areas that might be improved, based on the rubric.

The content of this writing piece is intended to help students understand the life of a cranberry grower and what happens on the bog, with a focus on the fact that growing cranberries is a year-round activity,

Note that the students will access this Bog Blog via a link from the Student Home Page. Clicking on the link will open an interactive Word form. The student responses are limited to 40 characters for their names and 1200 characters (about half a page) for their responses. Each student should save his or her blog with a unique name to a file folder you designate.

For your reference, the text of the student prompt appears on the following page.

Bog Blog Prompt

You heard someone at town meeting say, “Oh, cranberry growers are so lucky! They only have to work in the fall.” Write a blog entry to the town web site, describing why that statement is wrong. Write in a way that will encourage people to learn more.

As you write this piece, keep in mind that your blog is like a letter to the editor. It is going to be public. You want to inform people so they understand the cranberry bog better.

- Make sure you let readers know what you are writing about. Stay focused on your topic. Organize your ideas clearly.
- Think about your audience. The readers you hope to reach are people who don't know what it is like to be a cranberry grower. What do they need to understand better?
- Make sure you are respectful. People won't want to read and learn from you if you insult them.
- Think about how you will keep your readers interested. Why would they want to read what you have to say? What details will keep them reading? Can you replace words like “is,” “was,” and “thing” with other words?