

Honoree: David A. Williams

Subject: Science and ELA

Grade Level: 6th - 8th

Standard Addressed:

Science

Standard 6-2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of structures, processes, and responses of plants that allow them to survive and reproduce.

ELA

Standard 6-2: The student will read and comprehend a variety of informational texts in print and non-print formats.

6-2.1 Analyze **central ideas** within and across informational **texts**.

6-2.2 Analyze informational **texts** to draw conclusions and make **inferences**.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. identify three contributions made to society by David A. Williams;
2. identify four things plants need to grow;
3. describe how the elements of light, water, air, and nutrients (or the lack of) affects plant growth; and
4. list at least five products made from cotton, tobacco, and muscadine grapes.

Background:

From farmer to vintner, “Daddy Ag,” as David A. Williams is famously known in Nesmith, has made his mark in South Carolina agriculture. In a career that began as a vocational agriculture teacher in the 1950s and 1960s, Williams was also a cotton and tobacco farmer. He later shifted his crops to muscadine grapes and in 25 years has transformed part of his farm to a five-acre vineyard.

His award-winning vineyard and farm won the 2009 “Preserving our Places in History Award” from the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission. In 2010, the Williamsburg Hometown Chamber named Williams the “Agriculturalist of the Year.” His other awards and recognition include four generations of the Williams family being pictured on the cover and featured in an article in the October 2009 Greater Pee Dee/Grand Strand Business Journal. The Williams Vineyard and Farm was cited as a tourist attraction in the August 15, 2010 edition of the Philadelphia Sun Travel section article, “Smooth Traveler: South Carolina’s Heritage Corridor, Part Two.”

“Daddy Ag” is still actively involved in agriculture and considers his farm a source of pride as he faithfully makes the daily 30 mile round trip from Kingstree to Nesmith to pamper and fertilize, trim and nurture, and monitor the growth and development of his prized vineyard. The first black man in Nesmith to obtain a college degree, Williams was the 23rd child in the blended family of Rev. Gabriel and Mary Williams. He received his undergraduate degree from the former Colored Normal, Industrial, Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1950, now South Carolina State University.

His community involvement includes serving as the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Friendship United Methodist Church, and overseeing the construction of the sanctuary, the largest African

American church in Williamsburg County.

Procedures:

1. Present the background information on Mr. Williams and allow students to conduct their own web searches for additional information. Have students write at least three contributions Mr. Williams has made to South Carolina and the world.
2. **Mini Lecture/Presentation:** Invite a local representative for either the Clemson Extension or 4H Office to speak with students about agriculture in South Carolina. Example: Which crops are more prominent in South Carolina and why? What different types of soil are found in South Carolina and how do they affect what can be grown in the area? What do plants need to thrive and grow?
3. Discuss the four elements and their function to plant growth. Emphasize the need for nutrients and tell students that nitrogen is a nutrient.
4. Think-Pair-Share: Individually, have students think of the various things that are made cotton, tobacco, and muscadine grapes. In pairs, have students share the products they have thought of. In large group, have students contribute to a class list of all of the products they have thought of.
5. Have students work in groups and use magazines, clip art, and newspapers to create collages of items made from cotton, tobacco, and muscadine grapes. Students may present their collages.
6. **Closure:** Reflective Journal - students should create a one page summary reflection on the contributions on Mrs. Williams and how those contributions affect our lives each day.