



**Grade Level:** 3-5

**Essential Skills:** 4, 5

**CCSS:** 3.SL.2, 4.SL.2, 5.SL.2

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials:**

**Source Search Kit\* or:**

**Per Student**

- pencil
- bandage
- mint candy
- biodegradable packing peanut
- leather
- paper clip
- fruit snacks
- crayon
- cloth drawstring bag
- 4 index cards

**AITC Library Resources:**

**Books:**

Weaving the Rainbow  
Where does food come from?  
Right this Very Minute

**More Lessons:**

Wool Spinning  
Cotton Ginning  
Clothes on the Grow  
From Wool to Wheel  
A Common Thread: The  
Significance of Wool in Medieval  
England

## Source Search

**Description:**

Before a product ever leaves a factory or enters a store, it began as a natural resource or an agricultural commodity. Agriculture provides us with a vast array of raw materials to make clothes, books, cosmetics, medicines, sports equipment and much more. Students will learn that agriculture provides nearly all of the products we rely on any given day by participating in this activity where they match an everyday item with its “source.”

**Activity Directions:**

1. Explain to students that today they will be investigating common everyday items sources.
2. Provide students with one of each of the following materials a pencil, bandage, mint candy, biodegradable packing peanut, leather, paper clip, fruit snacks, crayon, cloth drawstring bag and 4 index cards. *\*Note: objects can be put in the drawstring bag per each student ahead of time for ease of distribution. All objects fit in the bag except for the index cards.*
3. Instruct students to grab a writing utensil and write one of the following words on each of their cards: farm, factory, store and earth. Have students place the four cards across the top of their desk with space between each card.
4. When you say “go” their job is to place each object under the index card that is the product’s source. Before you start, have students define the word source. The source of an object is where it originated from.
5. Say “go” and provide students with a few minutes to sort all of their items.
6. Have students keep the objects categorized on the desk while you read the book, *Where did my clothes come from?* by Chris Butterworth.
7. Ask students to recount the process described in the book of where the different clothing pieces originated from (i.e. jeans from cotton which came from a cotton field, sports uniform from polyester which is made from petroleum, sweater from wool that came from sheep).
7. After, provide students a couple of minutes to adjust their categorized objects if they are thinking differently about the true source of the object.
8. Review each object holding one up at a time and asking students where they placed it, use the descriptions below to explain the origin of the product.

**Pencil** - made from trees that grow in the forest (a product of the **earth**).

**Bandage** - The backing, which makes up the majority of the bandage, is typically made from plastic (a product of the **earth**). However, the pad in the middle of the bandage may be made of cotton (a **farmed** product).

**Mint candy** - Mint candy would have been made from peppermint oil, sugar and corn syrup (all **farmed** products).

**Biodegradable packing peanuts** - Make sure to mention that the packing peanut in their bag is a biodegradable one made of corn (a **farmed** product). Other packing peanuts are made out of plastic (a product from the **earth**).

**Leather**- Animal hides are used to produce leather (a **farmed** product).

**Paper clip**- Made out of metal mined from the earth (a product of **earth**).

**Crayons**- Most commonly made from paraffin wax which comes from petroleum derived from the earth (a product of **earth**). Some crayons are made from soybean oil which comes from soybeans (a **farmed** product).

**Fruit Snacks**- Flavoring is provided from fruit juice concentrates which also come from products grown on the farm (a **farmed** product). Corn syrup comes from corn starch which also grows on a farm (a **farmed** product).

**Cloth drawstring bag**- Cotton bag made from a cotton plant (a **farmed** product).

9. At the end, every product should be in either the "Farm" or "Earth" category. At this point you'll want to remind students that farms need natural resources – nutrients, water, light, and air. All of the objects in the "farm" category could actually be placed into the "Earth" category! All of the objects we use today come from agriculture and the natural resources of our earth.

10. Consider having students map out the processing of one of the products tracing it back to its original source to the processed item we use today.