

It's Apple Time

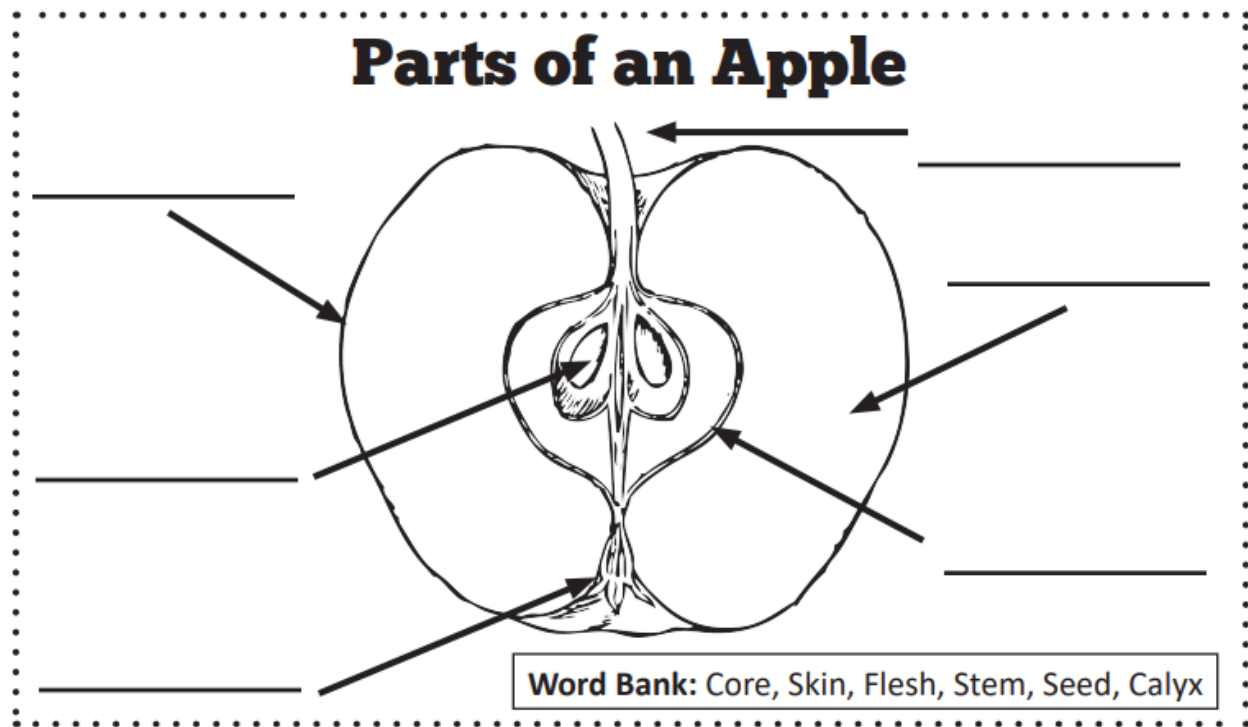
By Diane Cleland, Ag Literacy Coordinator

September means it's time to visit a local apple orchard! We are fortunate to have several amazing orchards in our two county area. These folks work all year long to grow those delicious, juicy apples!

Here are some fun facts about apples to share with your family and friends! Become an apple expert!

- Americans eat an average of 16 pounds of apples per year!
- The U.S. produces over 5 million tons of apples every year and all the apples are picked by hand!
- Apples are 84.6% water!
- There are over 100 varieties of apples grown in the United States.
- The apple was brought to North America by the Pilgrims in 1620.
- The GoldRush apple is the Illinois state fruit.

As you are enjoying delicious apples with your family this fall, take a moment and explore the parts of an apple. Have the kids label the parts of the apple in the diagram below. Here's a hint...the Calyx is the little brown spot on the bottom of an apple. It's the dried up apple blossom that turned into the apple after pollination. That's all the clues for today, I'm pretty sure you can guess the rest of the answers!



If you're looking for a good book to share with your kids this fall, I suggest [The Apple Orchard Riddle](#) by Margaret McNamara and G. Brian Karas. It's also an Accelerated Reader book for those kiddos who need AR points!

Take some time to enjoy the outdoors, bake an apple pie, make some applesauce and make family time a priority. It's the perfect time of the year to do so.