

MOST*

The Life History of Stuff

Materials

- Computer
- Paper
- Pencil or other writing utensil

Instructions 1 Pick a food item to research.

- 2** Research its production. What does it grow on? What type of environment does it grow best in? Is that environment similar or different than the type of environment you live in? Does the environment need to be changed to grow it properly? Does it take a lot of land, food or water to produce? Does it take a long time to grow?
- 3** Research its sale. Is it grown by nearby farms? How much does it have to travel to get the store? What does it need to keep fresh? Does it need to be refrigerated? Does it need water after it is picked? Are things added to it to make sure it stays fresh longer? Are there changes to it to make it more appealing to customers?
- 4** Research its disposal. Do you use all of the item? Does it get composted, trashed or recycled? Does it come with a lot of packaging? How long does it last?
- 5** After doing this research create a timeline of the life of the food item you pick. Look at the answers to the previous questions and the timeline and think about how these different stages would affect the environment. How could that effect be reduced? Are there a lot of resources being used to grow this food? Are a lot of greenhouse gases released in the transportation and keeping of this food? Does this food take up a lot of space in the landfill? Could you buy local? Could you buy items with less packaging? Are there similar items that use less resources?

