

Skills Worksheet

Critical Thinking

Buying the Farm

Fed up with frantic New York City life, James Robert McCoy (a.k.a. Jim Bob) has decided to buy a farm and move to the country. However, he doesn't know anything about soils. Help Jim Bob sort through these classified ads:

**Farm for Sale:
Corn Hollow**

Located just outside Lincoln, Nebraska, this farm is a charmer. Nothing but corn has been planted here over the last five years, so the land is ready for more of it! Corn Hollow has been plowed and empty for over a year, just waiting for you to bring her back to life. A perfect choice for the inexperienced farmer!

**Great Opportunity:
Stony Meadow Farms**

This is a farm waiting to happen! Special reduced price! At first glance, Stony Meadow may seem like a huge block of stone, but it's really a farm-to-be! The solid granite foundation will weather away and turn into fertile soil in no time. Plus, there are no pesky weeds or bugs to annoy you! Act fast on this one!

**Desert Dreamland:
Sandy Acres**

Sandy Acres can be yours today! At a fraction of the cost of "prime" farmland, you can buy into the biggest secret in agriculture. The fields of Sandy Acres, in the Arizona desert, have never been farmed! Just think of all the nutrients waiting to be tapped! Plenty of sunshine, too! All this soil needs is water. Call today!

ANALYZING ADVERTISEMENTS

1. Because the soil at Corn Hollow has supported nothing but corn for five years, it should be perfectly suited for growing more corn. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain your reasoning.

APPLYING CONCEPTS

2. What can farmers do to ensure a good balance of soil nutrients year after year?

Critical Thinking *continued*

PREDICTING CONSEQUENCES

3. Corn Hollow's fields have been empty for over a year. What soil problems might this cause?

4. What are the chances that Jim Bob would be able to farm on Stony Meadow Farms within a year? Explain.

5. What characteristics of desert soil should Jim Bob be aware of? Explain.

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

6. Which farm would you recommend to Jim Bob? Explain.
