Wandering in the Wilderness

(Exodus 16:1-18; 17:1-17; 20:1-7)

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God gives us food. **FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!** Kids participate in a food chain activity.	**SPARK RESOURCES:** Spark Story Bibles **SUPPLIES:** None	**SPARK RESOURCES:** None **SUPPLIES:** Pictures of common favorite foods, pictures of food sources like farm animals and plants, tape, paper, crayons, scissors, yellow ball or drawing of the sun, yellow crayons, Food, Glorious Food! Cards (pages 131-132)
Upper Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God's laws help keep things in order. **ORDER IN THE UNIVERSE:** Kids learn about the law of gravity.	**SPARK RESOURCES:** Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers **SUPPLIES:** Large bag of small balls (golf, ping pong, or similar size), bucket	**SPARK RESOURCES:** None **SUPPLIES:** Small paper cups, hole punch, string, scissors, small craft pom-poms or other soft balls, hardware nuts, straws
All Kids		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God's laws are not too hard, not too soft. **HOW HARD COULD IT BE?** Kids test and rank the hardness of common items.	**SPARK RESOURCES:** Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers **SUPPLIES:** Deck of playing cards	**SPARK RESOURCES:** None **SUPPLIES:** Crayons, pennies, sharp pebbles, plastic butter tubs, wood scraps (pine and oak), nails, scissors, steel butter knives, gallon-size plastic bags

Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation's story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.

Wandering in the Wilderness

(Exodus 16:1-18; 17:1-17; 20:1-7)

Workshop Focus: God gives us food.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids, it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksundayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Wandering in the Wilderness Storytelling

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. Did anyone eat before you came here today? What did you have? Where did that food come from? *(a store, a restaurant, our garden/farm)*

A lot of Bible stories talk about food. Have you heard the story about how Jesus fed a crowd of people with just a little bit of bread and a few fish? Or about how the father celebrated the return of a son with a giant feast? Do you remember any others that include food? Allow time for answers. **One story we're going to read today talks about hungry people looking for food. Let's turn to page 90 in our Spark Story Bible for the first of two stories we are going to read today.** Read Manna, Quail, and Water, followed by The Ten Commandments, on page 94 aloud.

How did the people in the first story feel before they found food? *(hungry, grumpy, sad, worried)* **What kind of food did the people in the story eat?** *(quail, manna)* **Where did that food come from?** *(God)*

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies
None

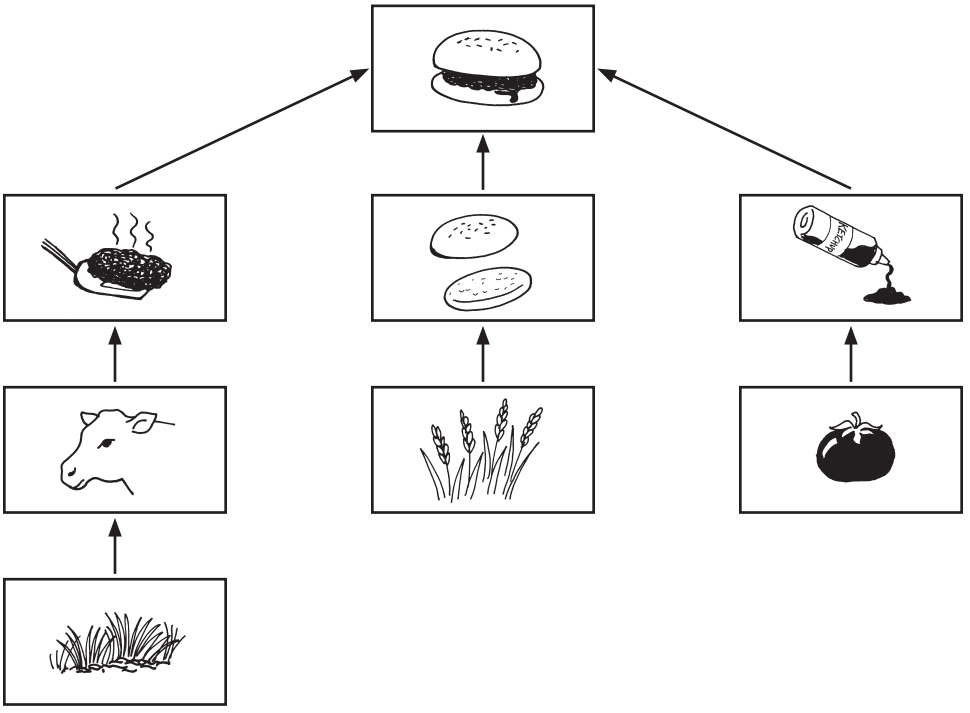
Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Food, Glorious Food!

Set Up: Tape the pictures of common favorite foods on the walls in the meeting area. Space them apart so that kids can group near them. Place the other pictures in groups (cows, chickens, fruit trees, corn, etc.) on a table. If you don't have a yellow ball, draw a picture of the sun for use later. Make a copy of the Food, Glorious Food! Cards and cut them apart.

Activity Instructions

The Israelites in today's story used a lot of energy when they were walking through the desert. When you use a lot of energy, you get hungry pretty quickly. If I sent you outside to walk around for a long time, do you think you could find food to eat? Allow answers. **In some countries, people now get most of their food from grocery stores and restaurants. In other countries, people get most of their food from farming. And some people get food by hunting and gathering what they can find around them. That is the way the people in today's story were getting their food. No matter what way you get your food, it isn't from magic. We're going to find out where all our food starts from. Let me show you what I mean.** Show kids the hamburger card. **What are the parts of this hamburger?** *(hamburger patty, bun, ketchup)* **Where does the hamburger patty come from?** *(a cow)* Continue down the food chain for each component. Repeat for the ice cream sundae food chain as well. See page 121.



Spark Resources

None

Supplies

- Pictures of common favorite foods (such as pizza, hamburgers, chicken nuggets, macaroni and cheese, apples, carrots, ice cream, milk)
- Pictures of food sources like farm animals and plants (from magazines or computer)
- Tape
- Paper
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Yellow ball or drawing of the sun
- Yellow crayons
- Food, Glorious Food! Cards (pages 131-132)

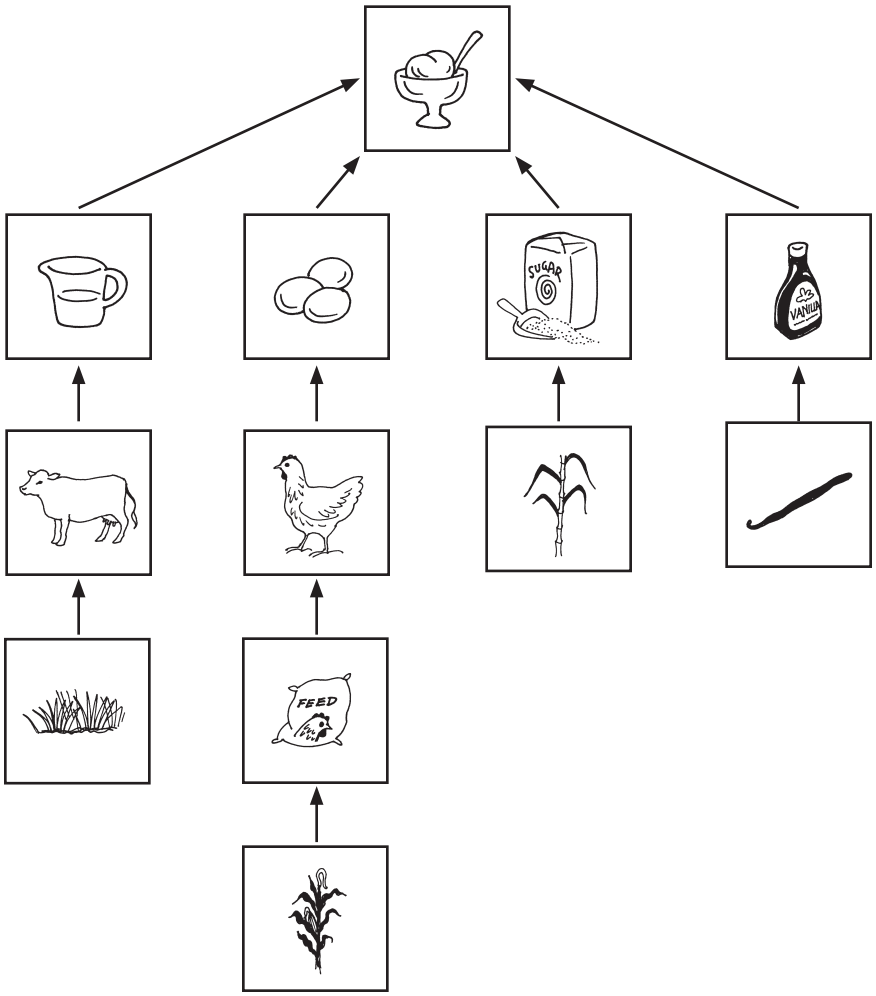
1. **Look at the pictures of food that I put on the walls.** Point to the pictures and name each one. **Find one food that you really like, and go stand by that picture. If you don't see a food you like, we can draw a picture of one that you do.** It works best if there are several members in each group.

2. **Work with the group at your picture to name every ingredient you think is in your favorite food. For example, what ingredients are in ice cream?** *(cream, sugar, egg, and flavors—like chocolate or vanilla)*

3. **Can your group figure out where each ingredient comes from in nature? Where does an egg come from?** *(a chicken)* **When you figure out where a food comes from, come up to picture table and see if there is a picture of your food source here. We'll put a piece of tape on it, and you can tape it under your food.** If there isn't a picture of the food source, you can draw it.

4. **Do this for every ingredient. You might have to do it more than once for some things. Like that egg. It came from a chicken. What did the chicken eat so it could lay an egg?** *(bugs, corn)* **So you might have a long line of pictures under your favorite food! We call this line a food chain.**

5. **What do you notice about the last/bottom picture in each food chain?** *(It comes from a plant.)* **All of our foods start with plants. Do you know where plants get the energy they need to grow?**



SCIENCE

6. Bring out the yellow ball or drawing of the sun. **Plants get their energy from the sun. They use sunlight to make their own food. So we need to add the sun to the end of our food chains.** Distribute paper and crayons for kids to draw suns.

7. **In today's story, the Israelites complained about the sun beating down on them as they walked across the desert. They probably didn't realize it was that same sun that was providing energy for the plants to grow, that could feed the quail, and help produce the manna. Isn't that amazing?**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

We learned today that the sun provides energy for plants to grow. We eat some plants, and other animals eat plants, too. Sometimes we get food from animals that eat plants. But it all starts with the sun. The Israelites saw the sun as they walked through the desert, and we read how God provided them with food. We can see God's work in the sun that helps provide all the food we need, too. We should think of how God provides for us whenever we see the sun, and be happy that God is taking care of us. For our final prayer, let's say/sing, "You Are My Sunshine" as a way to thank God.

Spark Resources
Family Pages

Supplies
None

Prayer Time

If you are comfortable, sing the following prayer rather than saying it.

Dear God,
You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.
You make me happy, when skies are gray.
I'll try to show you how much I love you.
Never take my sunshine away.
Amen.

Wandering in the Wilderness

(Exodus 16:1–18; 17:1–17; 20:1–7)

Upper Elementary

Workshop Focus: God's laws help keep things in order.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids, it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Wandering in the Wilderness Storytelling

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. Hold on a minute while I get all of these balls into the bucket. Open the mouth of the bag wide, and pour the balls from up high toward the bucket—you want a lot of them to miss! Expect laughter. **Help me put the loose balls back into the bag while we talk about what just happened. What might be a better way to get all the balls into the bucket the first time?** *(take them out one or two at a time, pour slowly, etc.)* **So if I understand your comments and suggestions, you are telling me that when I simply opened the bag and dumped the balls, they all went different ways and had no order. If I made an orderly system, more balls would go into the bucket. Is that correct?** *(yes)* **So would you agree that some kind of order could help make jobs easier to get accomplished?** *(various responses)*

Order, and lack of order, is an important topic in today's stories and activities. Pass out Spark Bibles. **To see how, we'll start by opening our Spark Bibles and reading Exodus 16:1–18** (page 77). Direct kids to also read Exodus 17:1–17 (page 78) and Exodus 20:1–17 (page 81). Ask for volunteers to read verses aloud.

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
Large bag of small balls (golf, ping pong, or similar size)
Bucket

SCIENCE

How were the Israelites acting before Moses went to the top of the mountain? *(They weren't getting along. They were misbehaving.)* **Moses was trying to lead the Israelites to a new place to live. How do you think the Israelites' behavior affected his ability to lead them?** *(It made it harder.)* **What was the reason God gave Moses the Ten Commandments?** *(various responses)* **One reason God gave Moses the Ten Commandments was to help establish order among the Israelites.**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Order in the Universe

Set Up: Create a large open area. Cut the string into 18" (46 cm) and 36" (1 m) lengths, one piece of each length for each kid. Punch two holes opposite each other near the top edge of each cup. Tie each end of the shorter string into each hole to make a handle for the cup.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Small paper cups, 1 per kid
Hole punch
String
Scissors
Small craft pom-poms or other soft balls
Hardware nuts in two sizes, 2 of each size for each kid
Straws, 1 per kid

Activity Instructions

Some people think of the Ten Commandments as laws that they can choose whether they want to follow or not. Another kind of law is a scientific law. A scientific law isn't a law like a commandment. You can't break a scientific law. A scientific law is a fact that describes an action that happens every time. Can you think of any scientific laws? *(the law of gravity, the law of energy, etc.)* **The law of gravity is one that most people have heard of. What do you know about gravity?** *(It pulls things down, it's what keeps us here on Earth, there is less gravity on the moon.)* **Gravity is the force that holds things on Earth. What causes gravity?** *(various responses)* **We're going to do a demonstration about gravity.**

1. **Imagine these cups were the earth.** Distribute cups.
2. **You're holding your earths still. Is our earth holding still?** *(No, it's turning around as it goes around the sun.)* **Although we can't really feel the earth moving, it's turning in two different ways. It's spinning around in a small circle, making one whole turn every 24 hours. This is what creates day and night. At the same time, it's moving in a huge orbit around the sun, making one entire trip in about 365 days. That is what creates a year.** If you have the room, time, and desire, you can have kids try to spin around as they walk around in a large circle. They'll get pretty dizzy.
3. **Spinning is part of the key to gravity. What would happen if you filled your earth cup with small pom-poms and held it upside down?** *(They would fall out.)* **Try it and see.** Distribute pom-poms to kids.
4. **Try it again. This time, stand an arm's length away from each other. After you put the pom-poms to your cups, hold onto the string and spin your earth cup quickly so that it's upside down part of the time. What happens?** *(The balls stay in!)* Some balls might fall out if they do not twirl fast enough.

5. So a spinning Earth is one key to the law of gravity. Another key is the mass of the earth—how big it is.

6. Distribute a straw, a long string, and two of the smaller size of the hardware nuts to each kid. **Thread your string through your straw. Tie one nut to each end of the string. Tie it on very tightly.** Check the knots to make sure the nuts are on securely.

7. **Stand an arm's length away from each other. Hold your straw upright. The nut on the top represents the moon, which is a natural satellite of Earth. The nut on the bottom represents Earth. Hold the straw away from your body. As you swing the top nut around, watch what happens to the one on the bottom. Try swinging the top nut in small and large circles, and fast and slow. What do you notice?** *(The faster I swing it, the higher the bottom nut comes up, a small circle keeps the bottom nut lower, etc.)*

8. **Rest your orbiting practice for a moment, because something is wrong with our model. Are the earth and the moon really the same size?** *(No, the earth is bigger.)* **Gravity has a greater effect on Earth because Earth has a greater mass. Let's see what happens when Earth gets heavier.** Distribute one heavier nut to each kid. You may need to cut off the smaller nuts if the knots were truly secure. Double-check the new knots before allowing the kids to swing their "satellites."

9. **Here's something to think about. Our orbit around the sun is affected by the sun's mass and its gravitational pull. What would happen if Earth's mass suddenly changed and we moved closer to, or farther from, the sun? Would Earth still be a place we could live?** *(probably not)* **So we depend on the scientific law of gravity to keep us in our proper place.**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

We explored just a bit about the law of gravity today. There are many other scientific laws that help us explain and explore how our universe works. The scientific laws weren't given to anyone on stone tablets on a mountaintop. They were discovered by many, many scientists who made long and careful observations of how the world works. But the scientific laws are similar to the Ten Commandments, in that they help us understand the order of our world and why it's important to keep things in order.

Spark Resources
Family Pages

Supplies
None

SCIENCE

Prayer Time

Dear God,
The order in the universe helps keep us in a place just right for human life. Help us to understand that your Ten Commandments provide the order we need not just to stay alive, but to get along with each other. When we get along, it's much easier to make progress toward our goals.
Amen.

Wandering in the Wilderness

(Exodus 16:1–18; 17:1–17; 20:1–7)

All Kids

Workshop Focus: God's laws are not too hard, not too soft.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Wandering in the Wilderness Storytelling

Set Up: Remove all face cards from the deck.

Activity Instructions

Remove all face cards from the deck. **Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. Using no words, I would like you to get in a line from the shortest person to the tallest. Remember—no talking!** Give the kids time to accomplish this challenge. **Good job. You created order when we started out with none. Let's try a challenge that might be a little bit harder. When I give each of you a playing card, don't look at it. Hold it up to your forehead, number side out. This time, without speaking, line up from the lowest number to the highest. You can look at other kids' cards, but not your own!** Give the kids time to accomplish this challenge. **Let's gather together again. Which challenge was harder?** *(the one with the cards)* **Why?** *(we didn't know where we fit in)*

You just experienced two things—putting things in order, and having something be harder. Let's see how these two ideas are portrayed in the Bible. Pass out Spark Story Bibles to younger kids, and Spark Bibles to older kids. **In your Spark Story Bible, turn to Manna, Quail, and Water on page 90. In your Spark Bible, look up Exodus 16:1–18** (page 77). Ask for volunteers to read from the Spark Story

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
Deck of playing cards

SCIENCE

Bible aloud. Direct kids to also read The Ten Commandments (page 94) in their Spark Story Bibles, and older kids to Exodus 20:1–17 (page 81) in their Spark Bibles.

Allow responses to the following questions: **Do you think it would be easy or hard to lead a large group of people to a new place? Did the Israelites have good order in their actions, or did they act kind of crazy and wild? What did God give Moses to help create order among the Israelites?** *(the Ten Commandments)* **What were the commandments written on?** *(stone tablets)*

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

How Hard Could It Be?

Set Up: Cut the sides and lids of the butter tubs into square pieces. Create kits using the plastic bags, with one of each supply in it from the list,—excluding the scissors.

Spark Resources
None

Supplies
Crayons
Pennies
Sharp pebbles
Plastic butter tubs
Wood scraps (pine and oak)
Nails
Steel butter knives
Gallon-size plastic bags
Scissors

Activity Instructions
Today's stories focused on how hard, or difficult, it was for the Israelites to wander around the desert, and how hard it was for Moses to lead them. We use the word "hard" in another way, like when we describe how the stone tablets the Ten Commandments were written on would feel.

When you think of hard like a stone, what is the hardest thing you can think of? *(various answers)* **What is the softest thing you can think of?** *(various answers)* **Can something soft, like snow, become harder?** *(if you pack it into a snowball)* **Can something hard become soft?** *(if you melt or dissolve it)*

Geologists are scientists who study minerals, rocks, volcanoes, earthquakes, and other cool stuff. One clue geologists use to identify samples of earth materials is to test their hardness. They put items in order according to how hard they are. This creates a scale that has the softest mineral, talc, in the number one spot, and the hardest mineral, diamond, in the number ten spot. We're going to test some earth materials and some non-earth materials, and make our own Spark Scale of Hardness.

1. Divide kids into mixed-age groups of 3, and have them find a work area.
2. **To test for hardness, you need to see if one thing can scratch another. A scratch is a mark that goes inside of something else. It is not just a streak of color on top of an item. For example, a crayon would leave a streak of color if you pressed it hard against a penny. But would it go inside the penny and leave a scratch?** *(no)* **Do you think a penny could scratch a crayon?** *(probably)* **So which one is harder?** *(the penny)*

3. **After you get your kit of materials, your job is to try to put them in order from softest to hardest. The softest item shouldn't be able to scratch anything else. The hardest item should be able to scratch everything else. When you are doing your scratch tests, find a smooth area to test. Rub it with your finger to make sure it has no scratches. Pick one item to test. Press it hard against the smooth area, and move it down. If you can make a scratch, the area shouldn't feel smooth anymore.**

4. Distribute kits and let groups get started. Rotate among groups, providing advice and guidance as needed. Encourage the groups to put their items in a line in order from softest to hardest.

5. When all groups are done, have them share their results.

6. **Would it be good if everything were the same hardness?** *(no)* **Imagine trying to draw a picture with a crayon that was as hard as a knife. Or trying to cut a piece of meat with a knife as soft as a crayon. We need a range from soft to hard in order to have the right tools and products to make our lives easier overall.**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

We worked like geologists today and measured hardness. Another type of scientist, a social scientist, might try to measure how hard, or difficult, it is for people to follow rules. In today's story, God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments. Some of the commandments are harder to follow than others. But each of them is important in making it possible to live together as a community.

Spark Resources
Family Pages

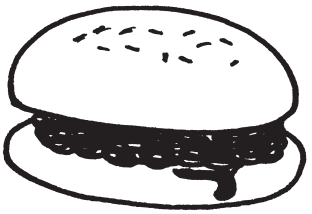
Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Dear God,
Help us to look at your commandments with new eyes. Let us see that each one is of the right hardness to create the order in our community, and to create a safe and productive place for all members.
Amen.

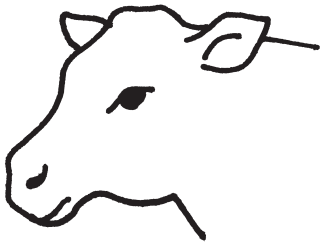
SCIENCE

Food, Glorious Food! Cards



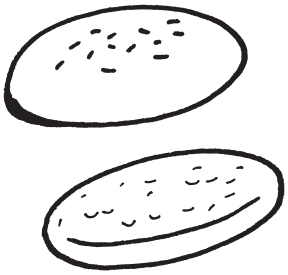
hamburger

meat patty



cow

grass

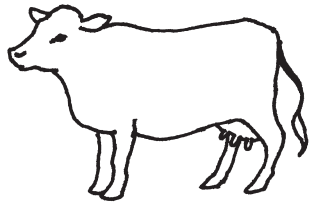
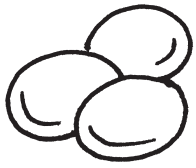
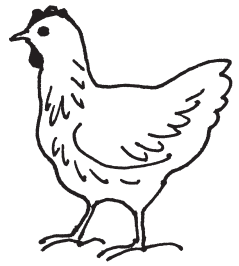
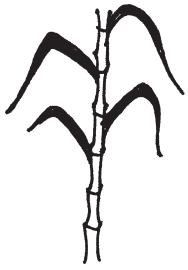


buns

grain

ketchup

tomato

 ice cream	 cream	 cow
 grass	 eggs	 chicken
 feed	 corn	 sugar
 sugar cane	 vanilla	 vanilla bean