

# Stephanie Stephens



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## Personal Introduction

My name is Stephanie Stephens and I am originally from Elm Creek, Nebraska. I grew up on a small family operation that consists of cattle, goats, and chickens. Growing up, I was heavily involved in 4-H showing goats and cattle, baking exhibits, knitting, and sewing, among other projects. I joined FFA as a freshman in high school- which was the first year that my school had a chapter. My livestock showing career continued as I showed in both 4-H and FFA at my county and the Nebraska State Fair.

I became interested in education towards the end of my junior year of high school. My ag teacher at the time provided me with the opportunity to observe and eventually teach the Junior High (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades) the following school year. During that next year I learned a lot! I loved learning how to direct the energy of my junior high students. There were many students that came into that class without a background in agriculture. I loved being able to help them learn about the complexities of the ag industry and why it mattered to them- even if they weren't going to pursue a career in agriculture.

That experience ignited a passion for teaching students about agriculture. I have been attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and majoring in Agriculture Education with a minor in Animal Science. I hope to challenge students to grow and learn in by using many different teaching methods and providing hands-on experiences and opportunities.

## Program Philosophy

As an Agriculture Educator, my desire is to provide students with new agricultural experiences and challenge them to a deeper understanding of a variety of topics. I will do this through classroom learning, as well as Supervised Agriculture Experiences (SAEs) and Work-Based Learning (WBL). Both SAEs and WBL will provide students with experiences outside of the classroom that will allow them to develop personal and professional skills. These experiences are established and monitored by me, as their agriculture teacher.

Establishing a productive agriculture program in a school takes a lot of effort. Stakeholders in this ag education program include: teacher(s), students, school/administration, and parents/community members. While I have set a starting role for each of these stakeholders below, I also understand that these roles will continue to change and develop as this program also grows and changes.

### Roles of Stakeholders:

- Teacher: to provide meaningful learning opportunities for students
- Students: to engage in learning experiences in and outside the classroom, especially those outside of their comfort zone
- School/Administration: to support the teacher(s) and students in learning opportunities
- Parents/Community Members: to support the teacher(s) and students and to contribute to student experiences

Agriculture Education along with FFA, will have busy seasons during the entire year. I will communicate any needs and updates primarily through email and the Facebook page, as well as through any other established social media such as Instagram.

I have developed this philosophy based on my own personal and learning experiences in and out of an agriculture classroom.

I enjoy making connections both through other people and opportunities that I am presented with. I believe if you refuse to consider other peoples' thoughts and experiences, you limit your own opportunities to learn and challenge yourself.

My approach to challenges is to first think about what the problem is and analyze the situation from all potential perspectives. I like to be open-minded while trying to understand everyone's perspective and gather information about the situation. This allows me to help others in their own confusing situations by taking a step back and identifying potential misunderstandings.

I am more people-oriented than task-oriented. This can be a very good skill set when it comes to caring about others and noticing new or odd behaviors. However, it also means that I can get distracted easily from tasks. Being people-oriented means that I have a tendency to understand people, recognize problems, and be open-minded toward others. I have learned that I can also use my this skill to interact with people to help me keep a consistent pace. Accountability with others has helped me to manage my time more efficiently.

I want to tailor the way that I teach my students according to the way that they learn best. For example, if I have a class that mostly learns by doing, then I will provide lots of hands-on activities. However, even if my students would all prefer to not ever have specific assignments, I will still assign those. While I do want to teach my students according to how they learn best, I will also challenge them to learn how to grow outside of their comfort zone. If any of them go to college or have a professional job, they will need to be able to do things that they will not love, such as writing papers or public speaking events.

I have different ways that I approach teaching, most of which depend on how well I know the learners, or where they are with prior understanding of the subject that I am teaching. If I know that I have a lot of students that don't have much experience with the topic I am teaching, I try to connect the things we are talking about to them. For example, if I have students that aren't coming from farms or even want to farm in the future but are in my animal science class, I try to get them to understand why livestock matter to them. We may talk about selecting meat from a store counter or talk about all of the everyday products they use that are animal by-products. I also really love asking students questions while I teach. Questions keep students focused and engaged, and often lead to conversations and questions from them that I, as a teacher, would never have thought to address. I like the use of questions at the end of class: "Ask 2 questions before you can leave". This would be a great way to get students to talk and ask questions, even to just start building your classroom culture during the first week of classes. As a learner, I know that I tend to get frustrated when the class material is not very relevant. To combat doing this to my students, I think I could ask them at the beginning of the semester what things they would like to learn about. Then on days when I may usually have a "filler" activity, we could talk about those topics as a class. This way my students are learning about things they are actually interested in.

## Personal and Professional Goals

<b>Professional Development Goal(s)</b>	<b>Key Steps</b>
Provide curriculum that allows for hands-on learning opportunities	Develop a scope-and-sequence for each course that includes planned formative and summative assessments, and student activities
Become a better teacher	Attending professional development workshops during summer to collect teaching tools

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CVTo5M8PhVMGIHj4qg4jOE6sJE5KbqAySn87amOlhSk/edit#gid=1280573539>

<b>Personal Development Goal(s)</b>	<b>Key Steps</b>
Establish a healthy work life balance	Setting consistent times and limits for FFA meetings and contest prep availability

## Program Model

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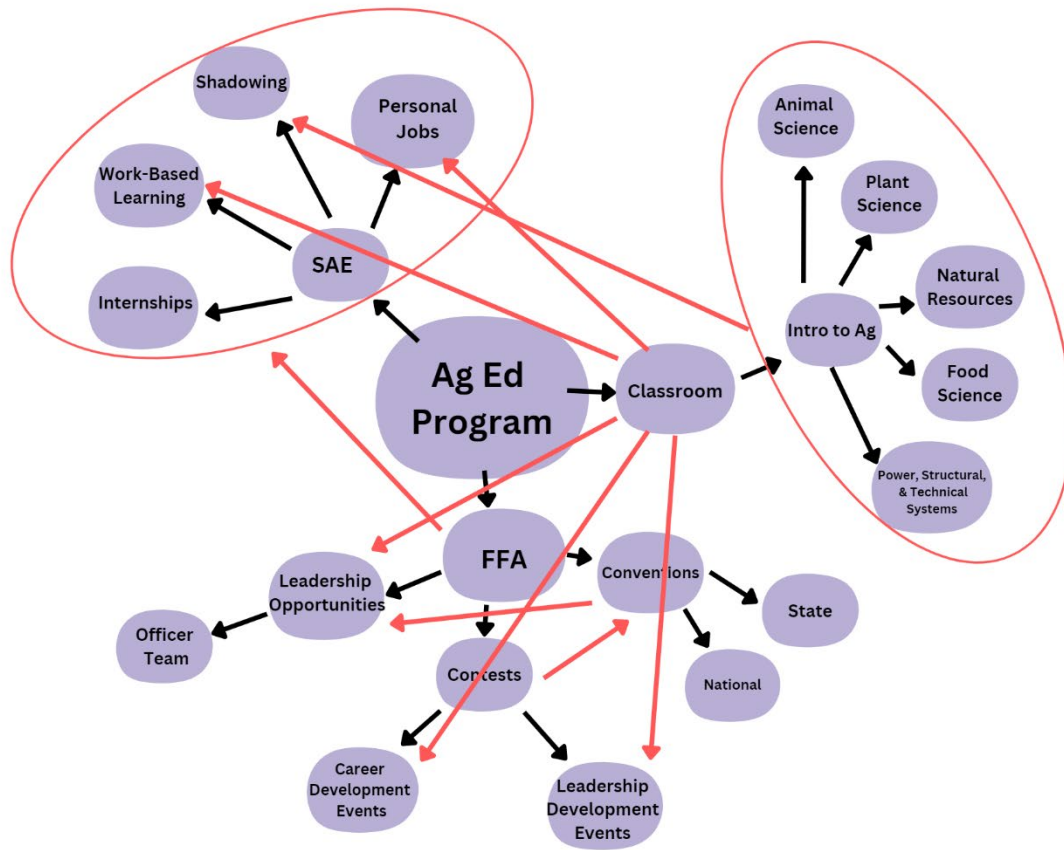
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## Example Lesson Plans

<b>Daily Plan</b>		<b>Instructor:</b>	Miss Stephens
<b>Course:</b> Natural Resources			
<b>Unit Title:</b> 1			
<b>Lesson Plan Title:</b> Exploring Careers			
<b>Contextual/Set</b>	<b>Where have you been?</b>	<b>Where are you going?</b>	
	Nowhere	Beginning to look at careers	
<b>Essential Question: (Law 2)</b>	What careers exist in Natural Resources?		
<b>Objective: (Law 1, 4)</b>	Students will be able to identify 3 careers in Natural Resources		

<b>Interest Approach</b>	“Think back to elementary.. What was your dream job & why?” <b>5 minutes</b>
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<b>Learning Activity 1 (Laws 3,4,5)</b>		<b>Estimated Time:</b>	<b>5-8 minutes</b>
<b>Instructor Directions</b>	<b>What will the teacher do?</b>	<b>What will the student do?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Think-Pair-Share:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students will get 20ish seconds to think about which careers relate to NRES</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give students sticky notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think for 20 (?) seconds about jobs that are included in the NRES industry- write down your thoughts on a sticky note</li> </ul>	

<p>&amp; write down their guesses on a sticky note. After their thinking time is up, they will turn to a partner (or small group) and share their thoughts.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Then partner up (with someone next to you) and talk about what you thought/wrote</li> <li>• (if time) share out loud as a class- no repeated careers</li> </ul>
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Summary (Law 6,7)	Transition
Essential points to summarize	Essential connections to the next Objective. (Scaffold)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are many jobs that exist within the NRES industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-</li> </ul>

Contextual/Set	Where have you been?	Where are you going?
	Discussed types of jobs within NRES industry	Diving deeper into specific jobs
Essential Question: (Law 2)	What do you need to look for when searching for a career?	
Objective: (Law 1, 4)	Students will be able to identify unnecessary habits for completing job applications.	

	Students will be able to identify habits that are important when searching for a job.
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Learning Activity 2 (Laws 3, 4, 5)		Estimated Time:
		8-10 minutes
Instructor Directions	What will the teacher do?	What will the student do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>AB Each Teach</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I will split the room in half (one ½ are 1s and the other ½ are 2s). 1s will go to Things to Avoid <a href="https://hive.com/blog/things-to-avoid-in-job-application/">https://hive.com/blog/things-to-avoid-in-job-application/</a> and 2s will go Basic Tips <a href="https://www.themuse.com/advice/6-job-search-tips-that-are-so-basic-people-forget-them">https://www.themuse.com/advice/6-job-search-tips-that-are-so-basic-people-forget-them</a>. Each student will have 5 minutes to write down (in their notebook) a few key ideas and then will partner up with someone with the opposite number. They will each talk about the key points</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give students the links to the articles (online/email or print off?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read article individually</li> <li>• Get with a partner (assign from across the room)</li> <li>• Find 5 things: 3 new things you learned &amp; 2 things you already knew</li> </ul>

they wrote down about their article with their partner.		
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<b>Summary (Reflection) (Law 6, 7) (End of the class)</b>
<p><b>5-10 minutes</b></p> <p>Summarize the key points of both articles as a class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review things they already knew</li> <li>• Review the new ideas that they learned</li> </ul> <p>(If time) have each student say one or two careers that they heard during class that they may be interested in researching for their career report</p>

<b>Materials, Supplies, Equipment, References, and Other Resources: (Law 1)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students: Computer (to get links to articles)</li> <li>• Teacher: (PowerPoint on computer)</li> </ul>

<b>Instructor:</b> Miss Stephens	<b>Date Teaching:</b> 3/15/23
<b>Course:</b> 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Ag	<b>Unit:</b>
<b>Lesson Title:</b> What is Ag?	

<b>Essential Question(s):</b>	What is Agriculture?
<b>Objective(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be able to define agriculture in their own words</li> <li>• Students will research ag commodities common to Nebraska</li> <li>• Students will explore careers related to the ag industry</li> </ul>

<b>Interest Approach/Scenario:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What is your favorite country song?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hear everyone’s answer and then link ‘Flyover States’ to people’s perception of ag vs the reality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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<b>Activity:</b> Teach from Google Slides presentation		
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	<b>Outline:</b>	<b>Teacher Notes:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google slides “What is Ag” (teal &amp; white)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at essential question &amp; objectives</li> <li>• Learn important ag terminology [establish common language]</li> </ul>	**See notes on google presentation

<b>Activity:</b>
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By-Product Web		
Materials Needed:	Outline:	Teacher Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White board</li> <li>• Expo markers</li> <li>• White board eraser</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose an ag commodity (NOT one from the Nebraska slide)- maybe sheep</li> <li>• Draw outline of animal on the board and then create a web of byproducts (from hooves, hide, wool, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to come up with ideas first, but after the first few ideas (or after students run out), have them look up more on their chromebook</li> </ul>

Activity: NE Ag Products Poster		
Materials Needed:	Outline:	Teacher Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters</li> <li>• Markers/crayons/colored pencils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review assignment &amp; rubric</li> <li>• Assign students into groups</li> <li>• Give groups their product</li> <li>• Give students time to research &amp; create poster</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give each group 1 rubric</li> <li>• Walk around the room as posters are being made (also checking for games on chrome books)</li> <li>• <b>IF there is time, students can present their posters,</b></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each group presents after all posters are finished</li></ul>	<i>otherwise they will present next class</i>
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<b>Summary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review terminology<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ “What is agriculture in your own words?”</li><li>○ “What are by-products?”</li><li>○ “Why is agriculture important for everyone?”<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ (if needed) “Is agriculture’s impact limited to only farmers and ranchers?”</li></ul></li><li>○ Ask for (any) 3 questions</li></ul></li></ul>
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## SAE and FFA Integration Philosophy

### FFA

Agriculture classes should supply a solid, basic foundation for the knowledge that is tested upon in FFA competitions and activities. In turn, FFA competitions should test students on the materials that have been covered in class. FFA, or the National FFA Organization, is a student-led organization that focuses on growing the next generation of leaders through agriculture education. FFA also helps members prepare for careers focused in agribusiness, education, leadership, communication, natural resources, and many other areas. Being involved in FFA will provide students with skills that they will continue to use long after they graduate high school. Students will be able to take the skills and knowledge learned in FFA in a various number of pathways after graduation, whether is is working on their family's farm/ranch, continuing secondary education through a trade school or 4-year college, or any other career field.

While class and FFA competitions overlap, practices for FFA activities will be kept outside to before or after school hours, or other appropriate times determined by the FFA advisor and student participants. Not every high school agriculture student may be an FFA member and it would be unfair to take their class time away. Unlike SAE, any FFA participation will NOT be graded, nor contribute to the overall ag course grade.

### SAE

SAE, or supervised agricultural experiences, are one of the three components of the three circle model. Examples of SAE projects include (but are not limited to): agricultural-based jobs, starting a personal business, working at home on the family farm, raising & selling garden produce, and community service projects. Students' SAEs will be integrated into their

ag courses- each student will only be required to complete one SAE, regardless of how many ag classes they are taking. SAE assignments are based on which level the student is at. Students will begin at the level determined by the teacher, with freshman and most first year students beginning at the beginner level and progressing forward each year until senior year where they will hopefully be on the advanced level. The student may change levels and progress differently from others as directed by the ag teacher or advisor. One day per week (typically Friday's) will be a SAE work day for students. Students will complete assignments to gain a total of 100 points over the course of the semester, which will count for a total of 20% of their grade. Each assignment ranges in the amount of points that may be earned. Some examples of said assignments are: mock interviews, career research, creating a resume and/or cover letter, completing AET record books, etc.

## Resume

# Stephanie Stephens

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## Education

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Education, December 2023

Minor: Animal Science

## Work Experience

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CASNR Career Services, Lincoln, NE

*Peer Coach*, August 2021-May 2022, August 2022-Present

- Review resumes and cover letters alongside hosting mock interviews for undergraduate students to ensure professionalism for future internships and careers
- Host various workshops and serve as guest speakers in undergraduate courses to speak to students about resources available to them
- Assist with university career fairs from set up to tear down by guiding employers and students to booth, monitoring check-in stations, and cleaning up afterwards
- Participated in conducting interviews for Peer Coaches for two different teams

Waverly Public Schools, Waverly, NE

*Substitute Teacher*, December 2022-March 2023

- Served a substitute teacher in the agriculture classroom for Mrs. Spath, giving lesson instructions and managing the students in the classroom

**Nebraska Extension Intern, Lincoln, NE**

*Lancaster County Livestock Intern*, May 2021-August 2021, May 2022-August 2022

- Assisted with Lancaster County Super Fair setup, livestock shows, and tear down to ensure a smooth fair for livestock exhibitors
- Aided in coordinating volunteers for the Lancaster County Super Fair via phone and email

- Pursued sponsors for two livestock banners to provide quality backdrops for photos
- Prepared presentations and activities for Clover College classes to educate youth about various agricultural topics including dairy goats, farm to table, agronomy/history of agriculture
- Performed various office duties, such as addressing and sending award sponsor letters, printing various materials, etc
- Assisted during the Nebraska State 4-H Horse Expo in Grand Island

William H Thompson Learning Community, Lincoln, NE

*Peer Mentor*, August 2020-May 2021

- Built relationships with 1st-year scholars through monthly meetings and community events in order to assist with a smooth transition to college
- Attend mentor training and meetings each month to connect with staff and other mentors

Stephens Family Farm, Elm Creek, NE

*Farm Hand*, Lifetime

- Mix rations for livestock including goats and cattle
- Assist in management decisions of cattle
- Complete seasonal tasks such as caring for calves and kids, fencing, biosecurity and doctoring

## Organizations

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SALT Company, Citylight Church, Lincoln, NE

*Bible Study Leader*, August 2021-May 2022, August 2022-present

- Attend leader trainings every other month
- Lead a weekly bible study with college girls

Agriculture Education Club, University of Nebraska- Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

*Treasurer*, August 2021-May 2022

- Attend monthly officer meetings to organize upcoming club meetings and events
- Assist in leading club meetings to keep the meeting running smoothly

4-H- Buffalo County 4-H, Kearney, NE

*President- Westside Feeders 4-H Club*, January 2018- December 2019

*Secretary- Westside Feeders 4-H Club*, January 2017- December 2018

*Member- Westside Feeders 4-H Club & 4-H 4You 4-H Club*, January 2010-December 2020

- Mentored younger club mentors both in and outside of 4-H events to encourage and grow individuals invested the future of the agriculture industry
- Taught other goat showmen in Westside Feeders how to trim and show goats for county fair

FFA Organization- Elm Creek FFA Chapter, Elm Creek, NE

*Treasurer, 2018-2019*

*Reporter, 2016-2017*

*Member, 2015-2019*

- Attended officer and club meetings to advocate for the FFA chapter and inform members about upcoming events
- Competed in a variety of competitions throughout the year to demonstrate knowledge of agriculture
- Kept a record book of activities relating to my Supervised Agricultural Experiences focused on Agriculture Education and Goat Production

## Volunteer Experience

Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County, Lincoln, NE

*Workshop Leader, January 2022*

- Taught youth the basics of crochet to a group of 19 youth ages 8-17 and assisted each individual as they worked through their own crochet project

Nebraska State FFA Convention, Lincoln, NE

*Agriscience Competition Volunteer, 2023*

*Career Fair Volunteer, 2022*

*State Proficiency Judge, 2021*

*Career Development Event Online Proctor, 2021*

Nebraska Youth Beef Leadership Symposium, Lincoln, NE

*Group Leader, September 2021*

Nebraska State Fair, Grand Island, NE

*Volunteer, September 2021*

Buffalo County Fair, Kearney, NE  
*Goat and Sheep Ring Steward*, July 2021, July 2022

Lakeview FFA, Columbus, NE  
*FFA Officer Interviews*, 2021

The Career Academy FFA, Lincoln, NE  
*Livestock Judging Coach*, Fall 2019

## Additional Agriculture Education Experience

Minden Public Schools, Minden, NE  
*Teaching Experience*, Spring 2023

- Taught 2 lessons: 1 on “Goat Production” to a large animal management class and 1 on “What is Agriculture” to 8<sup>th</sup> graders under the supervision of Miss Macie Wippel

Raymond Central Public Schools, Raymond, NE & Amherst Public Schools, Amherst, NE  
*Observation Experience*, Fall 2019

- Observed agriculture education teachers Mrs. Whitney Lehn and Mrs. Katie Hothem for a total of 40 hours

## Honors

Fall 2019-Present William H Thompson Learning Community and Scholarship Recipient

2020 Nebraska State FFA Third Place Proficiency- *Agriculture Education*

2019 Nebraska State FFA Degree Award

2019 Nebraska State FFA Runner-Up Proficiency- *Agriculture Education*

2019 Elm Creek FFA Chapter Dekalb Leadership Award

## Skills

Certifications: Class O Nebraska Driver’s License, OSHA, First Aid

Fiber Arts Skills: Knit, Crochet





## Example Assessments

### Formative Assessment Links

Chicken Anatomy Lesson:

- Chicken Anatomy Diagram | Quizlet
- Chicken anatomy parts pdf:
- [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L-qf4vaUm7zl1drMRN7pVtW4zTBzauVs/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L-qf4vaUm7zl1drMRN7pVtW4zTBzauVs/view?usp=share_link)

### Summative Assessments

#### Intro to Ag- Career Reports

Category	4	2	0	Comments
Heading	Contains all 4 elements: student name, date, course, and name of chosen career	Heading includes only 1-3 elements	Heading includes 0 elements	
Job description & Ag connection	Contains detailed job description and how the career connects to agriculture	Contains only a detailed job description or ag connection, or both with minimal details	Does not include a job description or connection to ag	
Education/Training:	Includes education and/or training required after high school and recommended high school courses	Includes education and/or training required after high school or recommended high school courses, but not both	Does not include education and/or training required	

Advantages/Disadvantages	Includes 3 advantages and 3 disadvantages	Includes 1-5 total advantages and disadvantages	Does not include advantages or disadvantages	
Link to personal strengths	Includes personal strengths and how they relate to chosen career	Includes personal strengths but not how they relate to chosen career	Includes no personal strengths or how they relate to chosen career	
Possible SAE Incorporation	Includes detailed connections from chosen career to potential SAEs	Includes SAE connection with minimal details	Does not include SAE connection	
Grammar	No grammar or spelling mistakes	Some grammar and/or spelling mistakes- doesn't majorly distract from report	Many grammar and spelling mistakes- makes article hard to read	

## Example Teaching Evaluations

\*see below

## Evaluation of Classroom Instruction

Student Teacher Observed: Stef Stephens  
Minden

Cooperating School: \_\_\_\_\_

UNL Evaluator: Macie Wippel

Date: 3/15/23

Lesson(s): Goat

### Production

Competency	YES/No	Comments
<b>Connecting with Students</b>		
Was the teacher ready for instruction? Did the teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• know their content?</li> <li>• use familiar analogies?</li> <li>• practice what they asked students to do?</li> <li>• prepare varied instruction at an appropriate level?</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>	
Were students ready for instruction? Did the teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gain student interest and attention before beginning?</li> <li>• pause when attention was interrupted?</li> <li>• exhaust students' attention?</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Processing Content</b>		
<b>Essential Question</b> Did the teacher use an essential question or bell ringer to establish the focus of the lesson? Did they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• know the language of the learners?</li> <li>• USE the question through the lesson to gain feedback from students?</li> <li>• use clear and concise language?</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>	Stef asked the students to guess how many goat farms there are in Nebraska, Kearney County, Buffalo County, and then Lincoln County.
<b>Objectives presented</b> Did the teacher state/present the lesson objectives? Did they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate a clear objective, using verbs, for what students should be able to do at the end of the lesson?</li> <li>• assess/summarize with students based on the objective?</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>	She stated them right away at the beginning of the lesson.
<b>Student Engagement in Learning</b>		The lesson was on goat production and