

Biodiversity Detective Game



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Activity Name: Biodiversity Detective Game

Ages: Grade 1 – 7

Activity Energy: Medium - High

Length of time: 30 minutes

Number of Participants: 2 – 24

Indoor/Outdoor: Outdoor

Concept: This task oriented game allows students to explore an ecosystem while learning simple facts to discover a mystery animal or plant.

Materials Required:

Tasks, clues, and answer cards are required. The tasks should be drawn from a bag. The clues are kept in separate envelopes for each animal/plant. The answers should be hidden in a container of some kind, such as an envelope or a box. Tasks and clues have been organized by ecosystem and can be found on the main page. You will be required to find and print off an image of each mystery animal/plant prior to the game.

Introduction:

Biodiversity is the key to the resilience of natural ecosystems. By exploring the many variations in plants, animals and other creatures in an area, students are introduced to the diversity that surrounds them. Using the format of a scavenger hunt, students are required to make guesses about where an item or organism might be based on their knowledge of natural systems and then strengthen this knowledge by exploring various ecological niches.

Methods:

1. There are 5 - 8 mystery animals or plants to be discovered in a variety of ecosystems (see additional resources). Choose the ecosystem that suits your site.
2. Children will be divided into groups. The number of groups will depend on the number of mystery animals or plants that are in the game.
3. For each team there will be a colored envelope with 5 clues in it that will reveal their mystery animal/plant. The clues will be numbered 1 to 5. Each team will be assigned or choose a color.
4. Each team will work together to collect their 5 clues. They do so by completing a “biodiversity task” that they pull out of a bag. For the first accomplished task they get Clue #1. For the second accomplished task, they get Clue #2 and so on.

5. Once they have all 5 of their clues (and not before then), they will be allowed to guess their animal/plant. A leader will open the mystery box and find out if their guess is correct.

Tips for Teachers:

- For this activity, you will want 2 – 3 leaders/volunteers. One person should be the 'task master' who holds the bag for students to draw out a task. One person should be in charge of handing out the clues once they ensure that their task has been completed. One more person will be in charge of the answers.
- Some tasks involve living things. Prior to beginning the game, students should be directed to leave all living things in place when they are completing their tasks. They can report verbally what they found.
- Groups will finish at various times. Have something for them to do while they are waiting for the others to finish.
- When a team guesses their animal/plant, the leader should only reveal the answer if they are correct. This allows them to guess again if they did not get it the first time.
- Pair up students that can read well with students that are still learning.
- Students often enjoy this game so much, they will ask to do it again.