

Ecosystem Rip-Off



Activity

Students use their knowledge of aquatic nuisance species to play a trivia based board game.

Grade level: 6-8

Subjects: Ecology, Math, Science

Setting: Classroom

Duration: 50 minutes

Key Terms: competition, generalist, invertebrate, resources

Objectives

- Students will learn the basic life history characteristics of several aquatic nuisance species that are of regional and/or national importance.
- Students will learn how and why these species are so detrimental to the aquatic ecosystem.

Materials

- Game Board (6)
- Movable Game Pieces
- Dice (6)
- Trivia Cards (6 sets)
- Pencil and Paper to keep score

Preparation

- Before beginning the activity, review traits of common Columbia River aquatic nuisance species (see Fact Sheets).
- Briefly review the instructions of the activity.

Directions

- Divide the class into small groups, and give each group a set of game pieces, trivia cards, and a game board.
- To begin, have each group member roll the die. The player with the highest number goes first.
- Player 1 rolls the die and moves his/her game piece the number of spaces shown on the die.
- The player to the left of the player 1 selects a game card from the top of the stack and reads it aloud. Player 1 answers the question.
- Player 1 receives points based on his/her answer. Points are recorded on a score sheet.

- When a player lands on a square that requires moving ahead or back a number of spaces, the player moves his/her game piece and then answers the trivia question.
- Answering a question incorrectly may cause a player to lose points. However, if a player has no points to lose, his/her score can never go below zero.
- Play continues in a clockwise direction until all players reach the “finish” square, or you run out of time.
- **The object of this game is to answer the most questions correctly. The player with the most cumulative points at the end of the game is the winner, NOT the person who reaches the finish line first.**

Evaluation

After the game discuss the following questions as a class:

- Did you learn anything new about aquatic nuisance species from this game?
- Which trivia question did you find most interesting and why?
- How are aquatic nuisance species introduced into new areas? How are they spread?
- What impacts do aquatic nuisance species have on native species or the aquatic environment?
- How can we prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species?

Extension

Invite students to write their own aquatic nuisance species trivia questions to play with in groups.

Source

This activity is an adaption of [Rival for Survival](#) by ESCAPE: Exotic Species Compendium of Activities to Protect the Environment, a project of the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program.