

GO FISH

("Go Fish" is an adaptation of "Oh Deer" from Project Wild, Secondary Activity Guide, 1983.)

Objectives

1. Identify and describe food, water and shelter as three essential components of habitat.
2. Describe the importance of good habitat for fish and other wildlife.
3. Define "limiting factors" and give examples.
4. Recognize that some fluctuations in wildlife populations are natural as ecological systems undergo a constant change.

Materials

Large enough area for students to run (playing field or gym)
Paper, chalkboard or flip chart to write on
Markers

Procedure

1. This activity emphasizes three of the four habitat components: food, water and shelter (space being the fourth).
2. Students count off by fours. All of the ones are fish and go to one area. The twos, threes, and fours are habitat and go together to another area. Mark two parallel lines on the ground about 20 ft. apart. Have the ones line up along one line and the rest along the other line.
3. The fish (the 1s) need to find food, water and shelter. When a fish is looking for food, it should clamp its hands over its stomach. When looking for water, it puts its hands over its mouth. When looking for shelter, it holds its hands together over its head. A fish can choose to look for any one of its needs during each round of the activity. A fish cannot change what it is looking for once it has seen what is available.
4. The 2s, 3s, and 4s are food, water, and shelter. Each student can choose at the beginning of each round which component he or she will be during that round.
5. The game starts with all players lined up on their respective line and with their backs turned to the students on the other line.
6. The group leader begins the first round by asking all the students to choose what they will be and then make that sign.
7. When you see that the students are ready count "One....two....three....Go Fish." At that point the students turn to face each other while they continue to hold their signs.

8. When the fish see the habitat component they need, they are to run to it and tag it. Each fish must hold the sign until getting to the habitat component person with the same sign. Each fish that reaches its necessary habitat component takes that component back to the "fish" side. When more than one fish reaches a habitat component, the student who gets there first survives. Any fish that fails to find its food, water, or shelter dies and becomes part of the habitat. That is, in the next round, the fish that died is a habitat component and so is available as food, water or shelter to the fish who are still alive. Habitat components stay in place on their line until a fish takes them. If no fish needs a particular habitat component during a round, the habitat component just stays where it is in the habitat line. The habitat person can change which component it is from round to round.
9. The group leader keeps track of how many fish there are at the beginning of the game and at the end of each round. At the end of at least five rounds, gather the students together to discuss the activity. Encourage them to talk about what they saw. For example, they saw a small school of fish begin by finding more than enough of its habitat needs. The population of fish expanded over two to three rounds of the game, until the habitat was depleted and there was not sufficient food, water and shelter for all the members of the school. At that point, the fish starved or died of thirst or lack of shelter and they returned to the habitat.
10. Using the paper and marker, create a chart depicting each round. Numbers of fish are on the vertical axis, while years are the horizontal axis. The number of fish at the beginning of the game and at the end of each round represents the number of fish in a series of years. The beginning of the game is year one and each round is an additional year.