



Theme: Plants (Grades 6-8)

Pre-Visit Activity #2 Good and Bad Bugs?

Overview:

The students will learn about the good and bad bugs in a garden by playing the game "Good Bug Bad Bug," similar to "Predator and Prey."

Objective:

- Students will identify and understand the importance of good bugs and bad bugs in a garden.

Materials:

- Pictures of good bugs and bad bugs (1 of each per group;)
- Bibs
- 2 Hula hoops
- Whistle
- Timer
- 20 bean bags

Background:

Students need to understand the role of good bugs and bad bugs in the garden. The good bugs are the pollinators, which are essential if we are to have flowers and food. They are the biological control agents, which control various pests and weeds. The bad bugs are the pests, which eat and destroy our plants, crops and forests.

Activity:

1. Divide the students into groups and hand each group a picture of a good bug and a bad bug.
2. Each group is to research the bugs, figuring out why they are good or bad.
3. Have each group present their findings to the class.
4. Do a T-chart on the board, taping the pictures on the correct side.
5. Discuss these questions:
 - What happens if there are too many good bugs?
 - What happens if there are too many bad bugs?
 - What happens if there are not enough bugs?

6. These questions will lead to another concept called “limiting factor.” This is the idea that only a limited amount of good insects or bad insects will have an affect on the environment.
7. Play the game “Good Bugs, Bad Bugs.”
8. Select good and bad bugs that you will use during the game:

Good Bugs

- Honey bee
- Ladybug
- Butterflies
- Damselfly
- Lacewing
- Praying mantis

Bad Bugs

- Grasshopper
- Termite
- Aphid
- Black horse fly
- Cockroaches
- Borers

9. Divide the students into good or bad bugs. Give one group bibs to wear.
10. Place 20 beanbags throughout the playing area to represent plants.
11. Place the two hula-hoops on opposite sides of the playing area assigning one to the good bugs and one to the bad bugs as a home base or safe zone.
12. The object of the game is to collect as many beanbags as possible and put them in the respective hoops, during a set time. The beanbags represent the plants.
13. Students may not throw them. If they pick them up, they must run them back to their hoop without being tagged by the opposite team.
14. If they are tagged, they must drop the beanbag where they are and wait to be tagged/freed by a teammate.
15. Each team may try to get the beanbags from the opposing team’s hoop, as long as they are not tagged.
16. The hoops represent the home base. You may restrict how long a player can stay in the hoop.
17. You can change the teams, for example by having more bad bugs than good bugs. Discuss the results and how this can affect the plant and insect relationship.