

Invasive species Activities Guide

Ideas adopted from Project Learning Tree [Pre-K - 8 Environmental Education Activity Guide](#)

For 5-8 graders

Introduction:

- Ask students what “invasion” means
- Have they heard of “invasive species”? What does it mean?
- Why might invasive species be a problem?

Activities:

1. Divide students into groups of two and have them read a handout or research an invasive species to determine:
 - Where is the native range of the species?
 - Why or how did the species arrive in its new location?
 - How far did it travel from its native region?
 - What characteristics have helped it thrive in its new location?
 - What effects does it have on other species or the environment?
 - Draw a picture of the species and environment it effects.

Species	Native Region	Mode of transport	How far did it travel?	Characteristics helping it thrive	Effects

- Have each team present their species.
- Have a discussion about the similarities and differences between species.
- What are general characteristics of invasive species?
- In what ways to invasive species spread?
- Have the students break back out into their teams and develop a material (poster, brochure, door hanger, video, skit, etc) to educate the public or government about their invasive species. All materials should cover:
 - Where the species originated
 - How and why it got to your area
 - The characteristics that help it thrive
 - Its effects on the environment and humans
 - What people can do to get rid of the species or prevent it from spreading?

2. Have the students research what species native to the United States have become invasive species in other parts of the world.
 - Have students research a species and report it to the class as discussed above.
 - Have the students put a pin in a map of the world where the species originated in the US and another pin where it has become an invasive species. Attach a string between the two pins to represent the invasion.
 - Have the students compare the environments between origination and destination points.