

Invasive Species Lesson Plan

Subjects Covered

- Science: Life science and environmental science
- Reading: Comprehension
- Writing: Summarization

Science Skills

- Comparing, recording, analyzing, classifying

Science Education Standards Addressed

- Science as Inquiry
- Regulation and Behavior
- Population and Ecosystems
- Diversity and Adaptation of Organisms

Objectives

- Students will be able to describe the difference between a nonnative and an invasive species.
- Students will be able to read and explain research about invasive species using the *Natural Inquirer*.
- Students will be able to identify a specific problem with invasive species using the *Natural Inquirer*.
- Students will be able to explain the findings and implications from a scientific study using the *Natural Inquirer*.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast different types of invasive species.
- Students will be able to explain why invasive species may be harmful to an ecosystem.

Estimated Time for Lesson

- Two class periods

Materials

- Invasive Species Edition of the *Natural Inquirer* journal
- Notebook
- Pencils

Procedures

1. Begin the lesson by engaging students in a brief discussion about nonnative and invasive species and the reasons why invasive species may be harmful to an ecosystem.

2. Divide the class into groups of three or four and assign each group a *Natural Inquirer* article to read.
3. As the groups read their article, have them take notes about the article. They should at least answer the following questions:
 - a. What is the name of the invasive species?
 - b. What type of organism is the invasive species (animal, plant, etc.)?
 - c. Why is the invasive species a problem?
 - d. What problem did the scientists study?
 - e. What are the findings from the study?
 - f. What are the implications of the study?
4. After students have finished reading and taking notes on their article, ask each group to present the information to the class.

Assessment

After students have presented their information to the class, ask students to compare and contrast the different invasive species that they heard about during the presentations. Note: You may want to encourage students to take notes while listening to other groups' presentations. Have students also discuss questions such as: How can students help control the spread of invasive species? Teachers may also want to assess students by collecting the notes from the groups and by considering class discussion and presentations.

Modifications

For students who want an extra challenge after finishing this activity, ask the student to research an invasive species in the area where the student lives and prepare a report for the class on the invasive species and how it can be controlled.

For students who have difficulty reading or writing, try pairing them with a reading buddy. In addition, it may be helpful for students to create a word wall of science vocabulary words for the journal before they begin reading the article. To create the word wall, ask students to use the glossary at the beginning of each article and create word and definition cards to put on the wall. Students may want to include drawings that represent the word to help them remember the word.