



25 - 45 mins



Any group size

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE

Allow foundational learning about ecosystem concepts through role play and active learning.

Expected Outcomes

Participants

1) Talk and interact with each other, sharing new knowledge about where animals live and what they eat.

2) Understand that an ecosystem is just a collection of animals and plants that interact, this can be simple or complex.

3) Understand that actions of an individual can influence the health of ecosystems. Their action can be negative (destroy) or positive (create).

4) Think about what common actions people take (e.g. cutting firewood) that might have negative consequences for animals that live in that ecosystem.

5) Start to use language of 'Habitat' 'Diversity' 'Structure' 'Function', and 'Composition'.

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OUTDOOR ACTIVITY THE ECOSYSTEM GAME

PREPARATION & RESOURCES

Space and boundaries

An outside area is ideal, or a large covered indoor area with enough space for each person to stretch their hands out and swing around.

Understanding of the audience and group

Review the participant list to understand demographics, current issues, local context, and prior learning.

Game Cards

Make sure they are sorted into 2 groups - habitat and animals.

STRUCTURE AND TIMING

Introductions and Invitation to think (2mins)

Ask 'What do you know of the word 'Ecosystem'? Can you think of an example? Get a sense of the groups understanding, in their own words. Start with a few people sharing their thoughts and build from there.

Hand out cards and form the Ecosystem (10 mins)

Ask the people who have habitat cards to find an open space to stand, clear from other people. 'You are a foundation, structure, we are building an ecosystem. You are not able to move yourself. Add the animals. Ask people to read their card, take on that role and take their place in the ecosystem. Stand near someone or something you are connected to. Ask a few people Why did you stand here? Help people if needed and use examples for group. Once people are still, describe how this is a good, balanced, well-composed Ecosystem.

Play with the Ecosystem (10mins)

Set scenarios, and as elements are taken away, structures and animals that are impacted need to sit out of the game and cannot come back. What happens if...? Where are you going to live now? What are you going to eat now? Is there a problem with me taking this away?

Conclusion - opportunity to rebuild and recover (5mins)

Once most people have left the game, rebuild the ecosystem by building a new scenario - What happens if we bring back X, Y and Z? Discuss the power that comes with being human - the power to create or destroy ecosystems and the opportunity for everyday actions.

STYLE AND CONTENT

Stand up	30%
Hands on	10%
Presentation	5%
Group input	30%
Thinking	30%