



Biodiversity Football

LESSON PLAN

What Can Be Learned?

Biodiversity refers to the variety of all living things - plants, animals and micro-organisms. There are approximately 13.5 million different species of plants and animals on earth - Australia has more than one million of these and is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world.

Why is it important to maintain this diversity?

A high level of biodiversity is a sign of a healthy system. A salt pan or stagnant lake, for example, have very low levels of biodiversity - a limited number of things can survive in these environments.

Ecosystems with a wide variety of plants and animals also tend to be more stable. All the living world relies on the natural environment. As humans we rely on a diverse environment to provide us with air to breathe, food to eat, materials to use in our daily lives and natural beauty to enjoy. It is within our interests to try and look after biodiversity and our resources.

Life on Earth will not be the same if our levels of biodiversity are reduced.

The Activity

You may wish to introduce the concept of biodiversity using the following background information:

How does a diverse environment help humans to live?

List what humans need to survive, and where these things come from.

Oxygen - trees and other plants

Water - organisms that deal with pollutants and keep water clean, trees and other vegetation contribute to the water cycle.

Food - a variety of plants and animals for us to eat, and plants for these animals to feed on

Shelter - materials to build our homes

What threatens biodiversity?

Some examples:

The introduction of predators (e.g. fox)

Land clearing

Damaging animal homes and habitats

Hunting (e.g. Thylacine)

Pollution

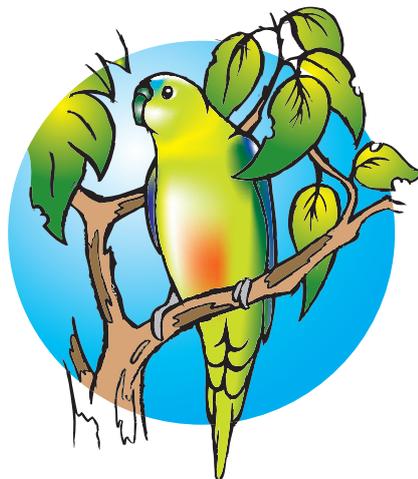
Disease - such as Devil Facial Tumour

Biodiversity Football

It would be useful to have two adults to play this game (one on the field, and another on the sideline).

This game can be played as a normal game of Aussie Rules or soccer - with the following changes:

The players are all native animals. Scoring a goal is like feeding or breeding (i.e. it ensures you survive).



Precious Parks E-Set suited to lower secondary students.

There are threats that stop you from surviving - one student or the teacher will also be on the field trying to tag you. When you are tagged you will be given a reason why you have not survived (see examples below).



Examples:

- Attacked and killed by a fox
- Oil spill destroys the waterproofing of your feathers
- A hunter shoots you
- Your tree is chopped down and destroys your nest
- Weeds take over the place where you graze
- Land clearing takes away the trees you feed on
- Run over by a car at night
- A cat eats you
- Overfishing leaves you with no food to eat
- Your nest is stepped on by someone on the beach
- A dog eats your chicks
- Pollution in your river poisons you

When you have been tagged you are out of the game. You must run to the sideline.

In order to get back into the game the students could do one of the following before re-entering the game:

1) Wait for a given amount of time;

OR

2) Wait in-line, until a team scores a goal. When they do so the first student in line joins the team that has scored (they have bred successfully);

OR

3) Tell the adult on the sideline why they did not survive and give a possible solution to the problem;

OR

4) Write down their name, the native animal they are likely to be, and the reason why they did not survive on some paper/clipboards provided.

The winner is the team with most goals (the ones who have done the most 'feeding and breeding').

It would be worth mentioning to the teams that while they are devoting their energy to running away from the 'threat' (teacher) they are not concentrating on scoring 'survival points' (goals).

There could be a follow-up discussion where all the reasons why players did not survive are read out, and possible solutions could be suggested.



Precious Parks E-Set - Lesson Plan

E-Sets are an Electronic Environmental and Educational set of notes for teachers

FURTHER INFORMATION

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