

What is a Weed?

This activity is directly tied to the first spread, pages 1 and 2, in the *What's In Your World?* publication located inside the back pocket of the activity tool kit.



**Spotted
Knapweed**



**Dalmatian
Toadflax**



Houndstongue



**Leafy
Spurge**

What is a weed?

What does that word mean?

In this lesson students will participate in discussions, brainstorming, skits and a learning game to discover the world of weeds, how noxious weeds out-compete native plants and why noxious weeds affect our everyday outdoor activities.

Levels

Grades 4-8

Subjects

Language Arts, Science, Mathematics

Skills

Discussing, Comparing and Contrasting,
Analyzing, Brainstorming

Concepts

Structure, behavior, energy needs and functions of
living things;
interactions of living things;
diversity of life;
connections of science, society and local landscapes

Objectives

Students will learn the term noxious weeds.
Students will investigate how noxious weeds impact
our everyday outdoor activities and lives.
Students will participate in an activity to demonstrate
how noxious weeds out-compete native plant
species.

Materials (20 student class-size)

What's in Your World? booklets (pp. 1-2) - 1 per student
scraps of paper and pencils - 1 per student
journal or notebook - 1 per student
nametags with pictures or names of noxious weeds -
1 per student (bandanas or other items could be used)
playing cards (small paper squares - red (20), blue (20),
white (20))
flagging for marking boundaries

Time Considerations

Preparation - 30 minutes
Activity - 80 minutes

Lesson Overview

- Weeds and the Outdoor World Brainstorm
(60 minutes)
- Native Plant Species Game (20 minutes)

Background

What is a weed? This word is as old as the hills, or at least as old as the weeds that grow on the hills. Weed comes from the ancient Norse and German words *wind* and *weod*. Originally, these words meant a grass or an herb, but by the Middle Ages a weed was any "useless or unwanted plant."

Really bad weeds are called "noxious weeds." These are plants that come from other places--they don't belong here. They invade and harm our native plant communities, and they make our land unfit for agriculture, livestock, wildlife, forestry, recreation, and other good uses.