

NAME OF THE ACTIVITY: Foxes, acorns and a bunch of rabbits

GRADE LEVEL: Grades 3-7

RUN TIME: Initially to explain background, rules and play will take 30 minutes or more and background and rules do not have to be done together although correlating the rules with real life application to the background is advised. Subsequent games and options can be done in 10 minute increments.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Organism cards, copy of food web

HIGHLIGHTS: Food webs and chains, predator, prey, consumers and producers, strategy, safety in large group running and hiding,

OBJECT OF THE GAME: Find your food but don't get caught (eaten)

VOCABULARY: Omnivore, herbivore, consumer, producer, prey, predator, niche, competition

SET UP: None

PRIOR TO THE GAME EXPLAIN TO PLAYERS:

- 1) Explain the food chain and what organism eats what organism. Explain these terms with examples from the food chain: top consumer/predator (Fox – an omnivore that eats plants and animals), consumers/ herbivores like the rabbit /grasshopper that eat only producers – acorns from oak trees).

INSTRUCTIONS:

You have two teams of 10 or more (the important thing is to have two teams of rabbits), 2 foxes and 2 acorns. Set up a base where people will go if caught. Give the acorns 1 minute to hide and then send the foxes off. After another minute all the rabbits go looking for the acorns. The point of the game is to not get caught by the foxes while looking for the acorns. Once a rabbit finds an acorn they are “fed” and therefore safe because they no longer must look for food. Acorns can give away their position if they want to but encourage them to stay hidden for real life. If a fox finds an acorn before the rabbits do, the acorn is eaten “out of the game”. The fox may then rest or pursue rabbits.

If the fox “eats” tags a rabbit, the rabbit is out of the game.

OPTIONAL PLAYING EXTENTIONS:

- A. Eliminate the foxes. Designate half the rabbits as grasshoppers. Grasshoppers and rabbits are competing to find the acorns.

#### DISCUSSION EXTENTIONS:

How do the foxes and rabbits compete? Who has the advantage and why?

After trying option A: How do grasshoppers and rabbits compete? Do either have an advantage? Why or why not?

Allow students to add new rules or options to the game based on their research of animals. Allow them to form a hypothesis of how this rule/option will affect the play of the game, then run several trials to see if their hypothesis was correct. Make a real life application of the scenario they created.

Challenge students to research what a group of rabbits are called (it is NOT a bunch).