

**LEVEL:** Grades K-8

**SUBJECTS:** Social Studies,  
Physical Education, Science.

**PROCESS:** Through inventing and playing games with a benign effect on the environment, students look for evidence of games that harm the environment.

**OBJECTIVES:** The student will:

1. Distinguish between games that are damaging and not damaging to the environment.
2. Invent games that don't damage the environment.

**TIMEFRAME:** 30 to 45 minutes.

**SKILLS:** Analyzing, comparing similarities and differences, evaluating, inventing, problem solving, synthesizing, working in small groups.

**MATERIALS:** Access to going outside.

**VOCABULARY:** Game, harm.



## PLAYING LIGHTLY ON THE EARTH

**OVERVIEW:** Personal choices of all kinds can affect the environment. We can look at the games we play outside and choose those that do little damage to the environment rather than playing games that leave scars.

The major purpose of this activity is for all of us to become more aware of the choices we make each time we play games outside and to consciously experience games that are earth friendly. By playing games that are not damaging we help maintain and improve the quality of our own environments.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Most of us like to play. In fact, playing is an important way to learn as well as to have a good time. Ask students to think of examples of ways to play outside that do no serious or permanent damage to the environment, and then to list ways that are damaging. The damage might affect non-living

things, like putting graffiti on cement walls. It might be damaging to plants and animals like carving initials on tree trunks. Ask:

**-Are there any games we can play that do no damage?**

*(There may not be, but we can think about how much damage, how permanent it is, and what it affects.)*

2. Go outside on the school grounds and look for evidence of games that have damaged the environment. Ask students what could have caused the damage and how it might have been prevented.

3. Introduce the concept of playing games that do not seriously harm the environment.

4. Ask the students to work together in small groups of two to eight in order to invent a game that does no serious harm to the environment, including the plants and animals living there. The students could also try to invent games that could make this a better environment. Give students about 15 minutes to invent their games.

5. Ask each group to present their game to the other students. Play each of the games. Ask students to talk about their feelings about the importance of playing games that do little if any damage to the environment.

**ASSESSMENT:**

1. Ask students to keep a record of the games they play outside for one week. Identify which, if any, are harmful to the environment. For one week or longer, play only games that do no serious harm to the environment.

2. Have students invent a game for younger children that does no serious harm to the environment. Teach it to a younger child or group of children. Explain what the younger child or children learned about care for the environment.

**EXTENSIONS:** (For older students.)

Analyze a variety of kinds of recreation for their impact on wildlife, vegetation, and other natural resources, etc. What would students recommend to have recreational fun and still protect the earth.

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