

CREATURE CONFERENCE

Summary: A discussion activity to explore how local ecosystems work and how they might react to different environmental conditions.

Aim: To explore the local ecosystem from the point of view of the animals and plants that live there.

Equipment: Cards of local living creatures (for example, man, plants, insects, birds, animals etc). Cards with scenarios and problems to be solved by the group.

Preparation: Prepare the cards and some problems to ask the group

Duration: Thirty minutes

Setting: Scout meeting place

Age Range: 15+



LARCH HILL

INTERNATIONAL SCOUT CENTRE

eco adventure

Aim

Scouts are working towards a world where sufficient natural habitat exists to support native species.

Educational objectives

Explore a local natural area. Understand the ecosystem connections of native species of plants and animals and their habitat needs. Demonstrate the relationship between personal actions and the availability of sufficient natural habitat to support native species. Be aware of global conservation issues affecting biodiversity.

Background

Within a habitat there are many different animals and plants existing in co-operation with one another and with the environment. This activity imagines that all the creatures within a habitat have a say in how that community operates. This is very similar to how human society is managed. Human beings are part of the natural community but do we always give it enough consideration? This activity enables us to explore what could happen if everything within the natural community was equal and able to have its say.

Step by step guide to activity

1. Sit the participants down in a circle. Ask everybody to pick a card. On each card is a different creature from within the local ecosystem. Make sure that one participant is a human being. Give the group a few minutes to think about their creature.
2. Choose one leader to be the chairperson of the group. They are the guardian of the Earth and must lead the discussion.
3. Each participant then introduces themselves. They must tell the group what creature they are, where they live, how they live, what they eat and so on.
4. The chairperson presents the first question. The questions should be suitable for the age of the participants and also for the habitat being considered. Think about problems that the habitat could face or is facing. Think about actual problems that have affected your local environment. Some example questions are:

The summer has been very dry and the grass has not grown as much as usual. There is not enough for everyone. What shall we do?

A new family of (choose a suitable predatory animal) is wanting to move into the habitat. What do the group think about that?

The lake has been polluted by human beings. Who has been affected?

Winter is approaching. Is everyone prepared?

5. Each participant comments. They must think about how the question affects them in their creature role. Encourage the Scouts to stand up for their creature and if they want the community to take action on something then they must tell the group. For each question the group need to decide what they can do to make the environment good for the all the creatures.
6. Prepare some additional cards for certain creatures. These should contain a scenario and a question to ask the group. These problems need to be sorted out by the whole group.
7. Bring the conference to a close by thanking all the creatures for their participation.

Evaluation

After the conference, discuss the effect of human beings on the habitat. Use the following questions to generate a discussion.

How have human actions affected the habitat?

Are humans aware of how their actions affect the creatures living around them?

If we considered how our actions affect the environment, would we come to different decisions?

Further activities

1. Explore the local natural environment to see how human actions are affecting it. If the environment is being harmed investigate how and why and find out what can be done to solve the problem.
2. Have the Scouts do further investigations into their creature to learn more about this animal in the local habitat. What are this animals habitat needs and any threats to this species.
3. Visit a wildlife shelter or rehabilitation centre that helps native species.