

Invader Tag

Directions

1. Tell the girls they are going to play the role of native plants in a given community. Discuss the region you live in and name some of the native trees, shrubs and other plants that live there. Have the girls decide which plant they'd like to be. (Refer to the Native Plants section at the end of this document.)
2. The markers serve as the boundaries of the community (e.g. the field, forest, etc.) and the plants can grow anywhere they choose within the boundaries.
3. Discuss with the girls the types of invasive plants found in your region (refer to the Invasive Plants section at the end of this document), and their impacts. Discuss the characteristics that make a plant invasive.
4. Choose one girl to be an invasive plant, such as English ivy, knotweed, hawkweed, or another that is common in your area. Introduce this plant into the area anywhere she wishes to grow. The invasive plant is going to grow, spread and reproduce rapidly by tagging native plants and forming a long "vine" or chain (girls holding hands).
5. "Native plants" are free to run anywhere in the boundaries of their community to escape the effects of the invader. Of course, plants are not mobile in nature, but they must compete with invasive plants for soil, nutrients, space, sunlight and water, and running is a simulation of this competition for resources. When the invasive plant tags a native plant, the two join hands

and tag another plant. The third plant joins hands and becomes part of the invasive vine or population. **Note:** only the girls at the ends of the vine can tag other plants. □

6. The vine continues to grow as other native plants are tagged and join hands. Once a vine has six girls, it “reproduces” by splitting apart (or use four girls if your group is smaller). The two new invasive plant chains can then both tag native plants, and each time it grows to six girls, it splits apart again. □
7. The climax comes when there is only one native plant left in the area: alas there is no escape! The last native plant tagged can be the “introduced” invasive plant in the next round. Play as many rounds as time permits. □