

## Activity 2

# Playing Lightly on the Earth

### Objectives

Students will: 1) distinguish between games that are damaging and not damaging to the environment; and 2) invent games with a benign effect on the environment.

### Method

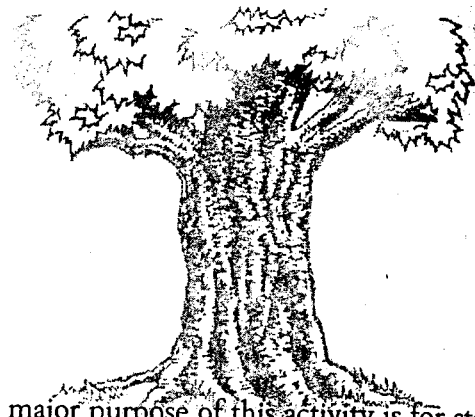
Students look for evidence of games that harm the environment and then invent and play games with a benign effect on the environment.

### Materials

None

### Background

Personal choices of all kinds can have an effect on the environment. Students can look at the games they play outside and choose those that have little or no damaging effect on the environment, rather than those that leave scars— aesthetically and ecologically.



The major purpose of this activity is for students to become aware of the choices they make each time they play a game outside and to consciously experience games that have a benign effect on the environment. The activity is designed for students to experience success at a personal and immediate level in maintaining and improving the quality of their own environments.

### Procedure

1. Ask the students to think of examples of ways to play outside that do no serious or permanent damage to the environment and 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. Are there any games 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 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.

**Grade Level:** K-4, Pre-K

**Subject Areas:** Environmental Education, Science, Expressive Arts

**Duration:** one 30- to 45-minute session

**Group Size:** any

**Setting:** outdoors

**Conceptual Framework Topic Reference:** WMIC1, WMIC2

**Key Terms:** game, harm

**Appendices:** Outdoors

4. Ask the students to work together in small groups—from two to seven or eight—to invent a game that does no serious harm to the environment, including plants and animals. The students could also try to invent games that could make this a better environment in some ways. Give the students about 15 minutes to invent their games.
5. Ask each group to present its game to the other students. Play each of the games. Ask the students to talk about their feelings about the importance of playing games that do little if any damage to the environment.

## Evaluation

1. Keep a record of the games played outside for one week. Identify which, if any, are harmful to the environment. For one week, or longer, play only games that do no harm to the environment.
2. Invent a game for younger children that does not harm 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

Analyze a variety of kinds of recreation for their impact on wildlife, vegetation or other natural resources, etc.

