

Skeeter Wiggler Tag

Subject: Science, Physical Education

Duration: 45 minutes

Location: Outdoors

Key Vocabulary: Mosquito larvae (wigglers)

Related Activities: Swallow that Mosquito; Create A Food Chain

Florida Sunshine State Standards: SC.4.L.17, SC.5.L.15



Materials

- Name badges with the following labels:
 - water beetle
 - dragonfly
 - mosquitofish
- Red flagging tape

Objectives: The student will be able to: a) show the general life cycle of the mosquito, b) demonstrate an understanding of the survival problems of a mosquito, c) summarize the importance of the mosquito and the role it plays in a natural system and predict what the consequences could be if mosquitoes were removed from the natural environment.

Method: Students will be shown boundaries of a make-believe pond in which they will demonstrate the life of a mosquito.

Background: There are 77 species of mosquitoes in the southeastern United States and all but ten of them are found in Florida. In the Everglades, mosquitoes are extremely abundant during the summer months. Most think of mosquitoes as a very aggravating nuisance; however, they play an important environmental role by providing food for fish, birds, and other insects. Refer to the “Natural History” section for more information about the mosquito.

Suggested Procedure

1. Discuss the value of the mosquito in the food chain.
2. The teacher will mark off a large area which will represent a pond. Part of the pond area should represent the pond surface, while the other should represent deep water. The flying zone is permitted in both areas of the pond.
3. Appoint one student to be the water beetle living on the pond surface. Tell the students the beetle likes to eat mosquito wigglers (mosquito larvae). The wigglers must occasionally come up to the surface to breathe.
4. Designate another student to be a dragonfly that flies over the pond waiting for the wigglers to hatch. Dragonflies eat adult mosquitos. When the dragonfly flies over the pond, the wigglers must retreat to the deep water area. Choose one student to represent the mosquito fish, which lives in deep water. They also eat wigglers.
5. All of the remaining students are wigglers.
6. Every time the teacher calls out the word “BREATHE,” the wigglers must come to the pond surface to breathe - where the beetle has a chance to eat them!

7. When the teacher yells out “DRAGON FLY IN THE AREA” the wrigglers must go into the deep pond area - where the mosquito fish has a chance to eat them!
8. When the teacher yells out, “ALL GROWN UP,” the wrigglers must get out of the pond before the dragon fly, beetle, or mosquito fish get them.
9. If they are tagged by the beetle, dragon fly, or the mosquito fish, they are dead.

Evaluation

At the completion of the game, have students sit in a circle and discuss the life and times of a mosquito wriggler. Ask them questions like: What good are mosquitoes? What other threats do they have? What benefit are they to the Everglades? What role do they play in the fresh and salt water food chains?

