

Where Do You Belong?

Every ecosystem has species that are naturally found there. These species are called native, or indigenous, species. Sometimes organisms are introduced to an ecosystem where they were not originally found. These are called non-native species. Non-native species that outcompete the native species are called invasive species.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Crayons/Markers

Definitions

Native Species: A species that normally lives and thrives in a particular ecosystem.

Non-native Species: An exotic species that is neither native nor naturalized to the natural region.

Invasive Species: A species that invades natural habitats and reduces biodiversity.

Activity:

1. Each person should have a piece of paper and a pencil.
2. Fold the paper in half (hamburger fold).
3. Each person will make a three door foldable by folding the paper in thirds, making a sharp crease, and then unfolding back to the hamburger fold.
4. With the opening of the paper facing the person, have them draw two overlapping circles to make a Venn diagram. The circles should overlap in the center of the paper.
5. Give the students scissors and have them cut along the two creases of the paper. Only cut the top sheet of paper (where the circles are drawn) up to the center fold.
6. On the left hand flap, inside the circle, have the students write "Native Species."
7. On the middle flap, inside the overlapping circle, have the students write "Nonnative Species."
8. On the right hand flap, inside the circle, have the students write "Invasive Species."
9. Have the students open one flap at a time and instruct them to write a definition and give examples for the species listed on the flap.



Extension: Examples of invasive species will vary from region to region. Research native, non-native, and invasive species in your area, as well as what effects the invasive species are having on your region. Students can also research what is being done to combat these invasive species.