

## WHAT IS IT?

### Basic description:

Through a modified game of Tag, students are asked to differentiate between plants and animals. Students begin to explore the characteristics of plants. This activity could be used as an introduction to the unit.

### Source:

Science Is... by Susan V. Bosak, Scholastic Canada Ltd. and The Communication Project, 2000.

### Curriculum connections

#### Health and Physical Education – Active Participation (Grade 3)

##### Specific Expectations

- Participate vigorously in all aspects of the program (e.g., tag games, outdoor pursuits).
- Follow the rules of fair play in games and activities (e.g., giving everyone a chance to play).

#### Health and Physical Education – Fundamental Movement Skills (Grade 3)

##### Specific Expectations

- Combine various locomotion/travelling movements with changes in direction and level, both with and without equipment (e.g., selecting two ways to travel on a bench while performing a change in direction and level).
- Travel in various ways, and dodge stationary objects or opponents.

#### Science and Technology – Life Systems (Grade 3)

##### Overall Expectations

- Demonstrate an understanding of the similarities and differences in the physical characteristics of different plant species and the changes that take place in different plants as they grow.

##### Specific Expectations

- Identify the major parts of plants (e.g., seeds, stem, pistil) and describe their basic functions.
- Compare the requirements of some plants and animals, and identify the requirements that are common to all living things (e.g., the need for water and minerals).

**Preparation Time:** 10 minutes

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** 8 pylons or other materials for marking boundaries and lines

### Preparation:

This game can be played either outside or in the gymnasium.

1. Before beginning, mark off two lines through the middle of the play area that are 3-5 metres apart.
2. Mark off a safety area about 30 metres behind each line (lines can be marked by placing pylons along the sidelines or with chalk; you want to keep the play area free of obstacles so students don't trip).

## Procedure:

### Game Instructions

1. Divide your class into two teams: Plants and Animals.
2. Instruct the two teams to stand facing each other along the middle lines (3-5 metres apart).
3. When the students are ready, call out the name of a plant or an animal. If it is an animal, the Plant Team chases the Animal Team (trying to tag them) until all of the animals are in their safety area. If it is a plant that is called out, the Plant Team tries to run to their safety area without being tagged by the Animal Team. Those students who are tagged become members of the opposite team.
4. Continue playing until students are worn out!

### Discussion Questions

Following the game, lead a discussion on the characteristics of plants. Ask your students a number of questions that encourages them to think about the differences between plants and animals. Your questions may include:

- Is it difficult to decide if something is a plant or an animal? Why or why not?
- How do we know if something *is* a plant?
- What characteristics do plants have?
- What characteristics to *all* living things (plants and animals) share?

(Plants usually remain in one place, plants make their own food, and most plants are green. Most plants also have the same major plant parts: roots, stems, leaves and flowers (although not all plants have flowers, the majority do).

### Extensions:

Before leading the discussion, take a walk outside with your class to look at some plants. Instruct students find as many different plants as possible (but do not pick them!) and try to decide on their own what all plants have in common and what makes them different from animals.

### Resources:

- Starting with Science: Plants by The Ontario Science Centre, Kids Can Press Ltd., 1994.
- Plants: Mind-Boggling Experiments You Can Turn Into Science Fair Projects by Janice VanCleave, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997.
- Science Is... by Susan V. Bosak, Scholastic Canada Ltd. and The Communication Project, 2000.
- Play and Find Out About Nature: Easy Experiments for Young Children by Janice VanCleave, John Wiley & Sons, 1997.
- The Kids Canadian Plant Book by Pamela Hickman, Kids Can Press Ltd., 1996.



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