

Predator/Prey Game

Overview: Students (prey) will hide and the guide (predator) will attempt to find them. This game portrays an excellent example of animal adaptations for survival.

Goal: Define adaptation in animals, generalize that all animals are adapted to survive.

Objectives:

1. Students will define at least three types of adaptations for avoiding predators or finding prey.
2. Students will understand predator and prey relationships.

Time: 15 minutes, but as always, use your discretion

Materials: None

Procedure:

1. Explain that you are going to play a game called Predator/Prey, and ask the students to define those terms. You will be the predator (choose a freshwater marsh predator, perhaps a Great Blue Heron or Garter Snake) and they are going to be the prey (choose freshwater marsh prey for them to be, such as Pacific Tree Frogs).
2. Give the students boundaries and tell them they may not climb trees. Explain the rules and how the game works (see below).
3. Close your eyes and count to 20 while students find their first hiding place within the boundaries. Assign an adult to ensure students stay within boundaries.
4. After counting, open your eyes and look for prey. You can turn around, squat and stand on tip-toe, but not walk or change locations. Identify students out loud (by name if possible) and describe where they are/what you see. When identified, the prey is “eaten” and must come stand quietly next to the predator. Eaten prey cannot tell the predator where anyone else is hiding.
5. When the predator cannot see any more students, a new round starts. Close your eyes, count to 10 and anyone not yet “eaten” must find a second hiding spot 5 steps closer to. Then open your eyes and “eat” anyone you see, the same as before.
6. When you cannot see any more students, the final round starts. Close your eyes and count to 5 and anyone still remaining must find their final hiding spot. The goal is to get as close to the predator as possible by the end without getting caught. Then open your eyes and “eat” anyone you see. After that, anyone still remaining is The Great Frog (or whatever animal you chose) and lives to see another day.
7. Wrap up the game by asking students what kinds of things they did to keep the predator from finding them. Were they quiet, low to the ground, camouflaged, very still? What were things that resulted in being eaten? (Moving, talking, peeking, wearing hot pink, etc.) Ask students to identify animals that are adapted with similar characteristics to survive.