



**CENTER FOR
INVASIVE PLANT
MANAGEMENT**

Lesson:

Whose Parts Are We?

Ages:

K-2nd grade

Time:

40-50 minutes

Overview:

Students match roots and seeds to the plants they belong to.

Goals:

Students will better understand how weeds spread and become established.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to match two roots with their plants.
2. Students will be able to match two seeds with their plants.
3. Students will be able to describe why weeds spread easily and are difficult to get rid of.

Materials:

Per class:

Several pictures of whole weeds

Pictures of weeds without roots and seeds (If available, use real plants)

Pictures of roots and seeds

Per student:

Matching worksheet

Outline:

1. Look at pictures with the class and discuss the roots and seeds of several weeds.
2. As a class, have students match weed roots and seeds with their plants.
3. Discuss how specific roots and seeds help a weed.

Details:

Explain to the class how important roots and seeds are to a plant. Roots help bring water and nutrients from the soil into the plant. Seeds spread new plants. Weeds often have great mechanisms for establishing themselves in new areas such as deep taproots which can resprout even after the above ground part of the plant has been pulled or eaten. Many weeds produce thousands of seeds that are blown by the wind into new locations.

Show the class pictures of whole weeds, including the root system and seeds. Ask the students to identify what makes these weeds such great spreaders. Ask the students possible ways to get rid of these weeds given their roots and seeds.

Next show the class separate pictures of plants and their roots and/or seeds and ask the students to match the parts with the correct plants.

Wrap-up/Evaluation:

After matching plant parts as a class, hand out worksheets and have the students draw lines between the weeds and their parts. Alternatively, have students draw complete plants (including above ground portions, below ground portions and seeds.)

Modifications:

This activity can be played as a game show-"The Match Game". Divide the class in two groups and have them take turns matching the plant parts. Keep track of points on the board.

Older students can work in groups to match their plants and then present their results to the class.

Extensions:

Do a similar study using native plants that would grow in the same habitat as the weeds used above. Ask students to compare natives and invasives. Is it possible to hypothesize potential advantages/disadvantages or ecological consequences?