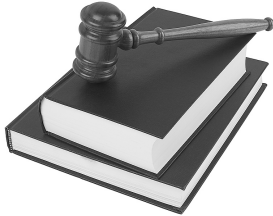


Stand Your Ground

Location: RiverWalk Learning Station 3

Program Levels: Senior, Ambassador

Objective: Girls will become familiar with the concept of invasive plants. They will also realize that there are a variety of viewpoints on any environmental issue and refine their own positions on invasive species control.



Materials Provided

- Envelopes with quote cards

Activity Steps

1. Give each girl an envelope of quote cards. Briefly introduce the concept of invasive species (plants that are not native to an area, and when introduced take over the habitat, killing native plants).
2. Have the girls read each quote and try to decide whether the writer/speaker was in favor or opposed to controlling invasive species.
3. Once everyone is done, go through the different quotes so girls can compare how they categorized the quotes. Did they all agree on the writer's viewpoint? Look at the ways the writers express their views, using the discussion questions to help you get started.

Discussion Questions

- **Do the writers appear to be simply stating their viewpoints, or are they trying to convince others of their opinions? What methods do some writers use to try to persuade others?**
- **What does the source of the quote say about its reliability? Can you assume that quotes from authors and professors are based on research, not opinions? Do you “trust” quotes from blogs as much as you “trust” quotes from published writers? What about quotes from elected officials?**



Extensions

On the Trail

Debate the issue! Have girls split into two groups, each representing one side of the topic “Should we control invasive species?” Using the quotes and their own knowledge on the topic, have each side present at least two arguments during the debate. Allow time for teams to rebut the other side’s arguments as well. Afterwards, invite girls to talk about their personal viewpoints on the issue. Did anyone represent a viewpoint in conflict with their beliefs? Was that difficult to do? Why or why not? Were there any arguments presented by the other side that you found convincing?

Beyond the Trail

Check out local and national newspapers for articles relating to invasive species management. Are most of them for control or against it? Respond to arguments by writing letters to the editor.

Help with a local effort to remove invasive plants and restore native habitats. Here are a few of the area organizations with non-native plant removal programs:

Anacostia Watershed Society -
<http://www.anacostiaws.org>

Maryland Native Plant Society -
<http://www.mdflora.org>

Virginia Native Plant Society -
<http://www.vnps.org>

West Virginia Native Plant Society -
<http://www.wvnps.org/>