

“Oh Deer” Teacher Instructions

Preparation prior to class:

- Cut up strips of colored construction paper (blue, green, brown) so that each student will have one of each color.
- Copy the handout "Oh Deer" for a closure activity
- On the board, write:

Blue: water

Green: food

Brown: shelter

Set up the following table:

Rounds	Starting # of Deer	Surviving # of Deer
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Class Procedure:

- Ask for a volunteer scorekeeper.
- Divide students into two **slightly uneven** groups.
- Spread desks/tables apart so that one group is on one side of the classroom and the other group is on the other side of the classroom.
- One group represents the deer and the other group represents the limiting factors (water, food, shelter). Ask the scorekeeper to record the starting number of deer for Round 1.
- Students should be reminded that there is no running and shoving or the game will end. At this point ask all students to hide their three colored sheets behind their back. Both groups should then be instructed to choose one of their colored strips without peeking. Students should hold their selected strip in front of them.
- At this point give instructions for the deer to move to the limiting factors. Both groups will have their one strip visible and the deer will go to the limiting factors and pair up with a student representing a limiting factor that matches the one the deer is holding. The deer then brings the "matching" student back with them. The deer that matches up with a limiting factor survives and now the student who was formerly a "limiting factor" becomes a deer as well. Any deer that did not match up with a

- limiting factor becomes a limiting factor. Any limiting factor that did not get matched up in Round 1 remains a limiting factor.
- Before starting the next round, count the number of surviving deer and have the scorekeeper record the number of surviving deer in round 1. This is also the starting number of deer for round 2.
 - Keep repeating rounds as desired and watch the pattern that develops.

Possible Follow-up Ideas:

- Have students complete the "Oh Deer" handout by themselves in class, with a small group or on their own for homework.
- Discuss the importance of limiting factors on the deer population.
- Graph the data in the table to show the cyclic pattern.
- Discuss why the deer moved and not the limiting factors.
- Discuss the role of decomposers in an ecosystem (how did deer become limiting factors?).