

# Investigating Invasive Species Impacts

In this lesson, students will investigate the recent effects of invasive species on land-based ecosystems and analyze how these species disrupt resource availability and ecosystem balance.

Grades: 6-8		Subject(s): Science
Focus Standard(s)	NGSS MS-LS2-1 Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence for the effects of resource availability on organisms and populations in an ecosystem.	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to use descriptive information to study the effects of invasive species on land-based ecosystems to support claims about cause-and-effect relationships in ecosystems.	
Materials/Resources	<a href="#">Stop the Stinknet!</a> <a href="#">AI Vs. Hornets!</a> <a href="#">The Truth About Tumbleweeds!</a> Invasive Species Impact Analysis worksheet	
Vocabulary	Varies by article	
Anticipatory Set	Pose the following questions to students: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you think happens when a new species takes over an area?</li> <li>2. How might this affect other plants, animals, and humans in the ecosystem?</li> </ol> Allow time for students to discuss with each other and then share their thoughts with the class.	
Mini-Lesson	Begin by introducing the concept of invasive species. (i.e. examples of these species, where invasive species can be found, and why they are considered invasive) Explain to students that today they'll learn how invasive species like stinknet, hornets, and tumbleweeds affect ecosystems and resource availability.	
Guided Practice	Divide students into small groups and assign each group one of the three articles. Group Task: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the assigned article.</li> <li>2. Identify the invasive species, how it affects the ecosystem, and the population changes caused by the species.</li> <li>3. Record findings on the Invasive Species Impact Analysis worksheet.</li> </ol>	
Closure/Assessment	Have students from each group report their findings to the class. Facilitate a discussion: <i>What patterns do you notice about how invasive species disrupt ecosystems?</i> Collect student analysis worksheets to check for understanding.	
Differentiation	Adjust lexile® levels as needed; answer questions as a whole group; use accessibility features or read-to-me feature as needed; print copies of article	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Invasive Species Impact Analysis Worksheet

### Part 1: Background Information

Name of Invasive Species: *(e.g., Stinknet, Asian Giant Hornets, Tumbleweeds)*

Ecosystem Affected: *(e.g., desert, forest, grassland, farmland)*

Native or Introduced Location:

Native to: \_\_\_\_\_

Introduced to: \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 2: Effects on Resources and Populations Key Resources Affected

*(Check all that apply and provide a brief explanation.)*

Water: \_\_\_\_\_

Food: \_\_\_\_\_

Shelter: \_\_\_\_\_

Space: \_\_\_\_\_

Impact on Native Species

*(How does this invasive species affect the plants, animals, or humans in the ecosystem?)*

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### Part 3: Reflection Questions

Why do you think invasive species cause such large disruptions in ecosystems?

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What might happen to this ecosystem if the invasive species is not controlled?

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### Part 4: Possible Solutions

Suggest one way people can help reduce the impact of this invasive species.

*(Example: Remove stinknet plants before they spread.)*

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