

Classification of Aquatic Plants

Upper Elementary



Objective: Students will become familiar with native and non- native aquatic plants and their characteristics in order to classify the plants.

Materials:

At least one of the following:

- Aquatic Plant Identification Decks or flash cards
- Freshwater Recognition Guides
- Illustrated Glossary
- Flash cards or print out of from following website pages:
http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/education/regional_map.html
<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/guide/natplant.html>

K-W-L transparency

Activity:

1. Class discussion: What are native aquatic plants? What are non-native aquatic plants? What type of characteristics is used in grouping plants? Write answers on board.
2. Students should be paired with at least one other student and given a set of flash cards.
3. Using the flash cards, have students separate the cards into two main categories of native or non-native plants. Which category is the largest? Why do you think one category has more plants than the other?
4. Working within each category of native and nonnative, the students will now separate the aquatic plants by their characteristic habitat of emersed, submersed, or floating. Are there any common characteristics in each of the 3 categories?
5. Next, have the students divide the three categories further by classifying according to the shape of the leaf.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the difference between emersed, submersed and floating plants?
- What role do aquatic plants play in an ecosystem?

