

The Hydrilla Game

Tracking the journey of an incredibly invasive plant.

Attention Teachers

The following pages contain scenario cards for the Hydrilla Game activity. Pages are to be printed and 8 cards cut out for each station.
Laminating individual cards is recommended.

UPPER LEFT CORNER is the station where the cards are to be placed at the beginning of the game.

UPPER RIGHT CORNER is the station the student is to visit next.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Lake

A kid decides to release their pet sunfish into the neighborhood lake. You go into the lake along with the sunfish.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

An employee at a local pet store needs to clean out the fish tanks. She empties the plants into the drainage ditch behind the store. She thinks the hydrilla plants will just decay and fade away.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Creek

After her pet turtle dies, Molly empties her aquarium into the creek behind her house. You were enjoying the excess nutrients in the aquarium but it looks like the creek has plenty too.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Lake

Billy empties his aquarium into the lake behind his house, where you grow quickly in nutrient-rich waters. (He's hoping no one saw him empty the tank because the Lake Association is now asking everyone to pay \$2200 to control your growth.)

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HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Aquarium

The fish in the aquarium enjoy hiding among your whorled leaves and you're happy to stay as long as you can.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Retention Pond

A student finished with their science fair project empties their aquarium into the retention pond at the apartment complex. There is plenty of water in the pond, so you are happy.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Aquarium

The girl who puts you in her aquarium forgets about you. Soon, the tank is full of plants. The air pump breaks and you use more oxygen than you produce. Her pet fish dies when the oxygen levels in the tank drop below 4 parts per million.

HOME: Aquarium

NEXT: Lake

The owner of Marty's Pet Shop decides to close the business. Instead of putting aquarium plants in the dumpster, she tosses you into a nearby lake. You grow over the eel grass on the bottom and shade out other native plants at the surface.

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HOME: Creek

NEXT: Spring

A fisherman doesn't notice that you're attached to the lure on their fishing rod. They accidentally transport you to their next fishing spot, the spring.

HOME: Creek

NEXT: Lake

A careless boater forgets to clean off his boat propeller. You are transported to a local lake where you enjoy lots of nutrients and growing room.

HOME: Creek

NEXT: Creek

The fish in the aquarium enjoy hiding among your whorled leaves and you're happy to stay as long as you can.

HOME: Creek

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

The fish in the aquarium enjoy hiding among your whorled leaves and you're happy to stay as long as you can.

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HOME: Creek

NEXT: Retention Pond

A sprig of hydrilla is wrapped around the leg of a great blue heron feeding in the creek. His next hunting ground is the shore of the retention pond down the street, where you fall off.

HOME: Creek

NEXT: Hydrosol

As a small clump of hydrilla, you provide excellent habitat for juvenile fish. You put tubers down in the hydrosol because you want to stay awhile.

HOME: Creek

NEXT: Retention Pond

It's raining hard and water is rushing off the surface of a parking lot nearby. The creek at the bottom of the hill is so full of your plants, there is no place for the water to go. It floods and you catch a ride to the retention pond nearby.

HOME: Creek

NEXT: Creek

You completely fill the creek with your plants and keep sunlight from shining into the water. It's been hot and cloudy for days. Fish begin to die because they don't have enough oxygen and you stay a while.

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HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

It rained recently so there is plenty of water in the ditch: lots of sunlight too. You stay and grow as fast as you can.

HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Creek

A summer thunderstorm flushes you from the drainage ditch into the creek, where the water level is more dependable.

HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Lake

A raccoon feeding near the drainage ditch picks up a sprig of hydrilla in its thick fur. You fall off into a lake, a little while later, when the raccoon digs under a log for a juicy crawfish.

HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Retention Pond

A thunderstorm washes you from the drainage ditch into the retention pond. This is even better for you; the water level is more stable and nutrients provide plenty of food. With a little luck, you'll grow three inches a day!

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HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: River

An ibis is hunting for insects along the road and accidentally picks you up in its beak. You enjoy a quick flight to its next stop, the river.

HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Retention Pond

The public works department mows vegetation around the drainage ditch. They mow all the way down the road, to the retention pond nearby. You hitch a ride on the mower blades.

HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Hydrosol

Streets are flooding, even with very little rainfall. City workers discover you are clogging drainage pipes. Before they can clean you out, you've already put down tubers into the hydrosol.

HOME: Drainage Ditch

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

Road crews were so busy, they didn't clean hydrilla plants from the drainage ditch. You stay and continue to grow several inches per day. (Workers are in trouble a week later, when the ditch overflows during a rain storm and several homes are flooded.)

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HOME: Hydrosoil

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

Muck is dredged from the bottom of the lake. Hundreds of hydrilla tubers are exposed in the thick black hydrosoil. Piles of this material are left to dry along the road. A few of your tubers wash into a nearby drainage ditch during a hard rain.

HOME: Hydrosoil

NEXT: Lake

Hurricane Lisa blew through recently and uncovered some of your tubers. You suddenly find yourself in the lake. Now that you have access to sunlight, you begin to grow, grow, and grow!

HOME: Hydrosoil

NEXT: Lake

Manatees feed on submerged grasses dislodge you from the bottom. You float into the surface waters of the lake, where you sprout stems and whorled leaves.

HOME: Hydrosoil

NEXT: Creek

High winds and rain from a hurricane stir up the hydrosoil at the bottom of the lake. Many of your tubers are exposed. You are blown into a connecting creek, along with lots of other debris.

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HOME: Hydrosol

NEXT: River

Children playing along the shoreline dig deep into the hydrosol and find tubers. They leave these new treasures on the sand until the tubers wash into the river, where they sprout.

HOME: Hydrosol

NEXT: Hydrosol

An herbicide treatment is performed on the lake. It kills your leaves and stem, but your tubers remain healthy in the hydrosol. You stay here for a while.

HOME: Hydrosol

NEXT: Hydrosol

The hydrosol is full of nutrients and you are happy here. You stay and wait for the next move.

HOME: Hydrosol

NEXT: Hydrosol

Recent storms stir up the hydrosol. This gives you new nutrients as a food source. You like living here and continue to stay and grow.

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HOME: Lake

NEXT: Hydrosoil

You put down tubers while reproducing and sink into the hydrosoil where you'll soak up lots of nutrients.

HOME: Lake

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

A water-skier cleans off their boat and equipment. You are washed down the driveway and road to a nearby drainage ditch.

HOME: Lake

NEXT: River

A careless boater hauls you away on their trailer to their next fishing area...the river, where you'll sink into the water.

HOME: Lake

NEXT: Spring

A seaplane lands and then takes off for DeLeon Springs. You travel to the spring, get caught in a crack between the wing and body of the plane.

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HOME: Lake

NEXT: Creek

You have grown so much, people can no longer run a boat across the lake. After a tropical storm, you stick to heavy equipment used to clean up the shoreline. You're introduced to a nearby creek where you find nutrient-rich soil.

HOME: Lake

NEXT: Lake

You find a nice home in the lake. However, water-skiers get tangled in your stems, resulting in several injuries. Stay and keep growing.

HOME: Lake

NEXT: Lake

You have grown so much, you cover the lake surface. Sunlight can no longer get through your canopy. Dissolved oxygen levels are low. This morning, hundreds of dead fish float to the surface. Stay and keep growing.

HOME: Lake

NEXT: Aquarium

Tommy has a lake in his backyard. He likes to put plants from the lake into his fish tank, so you are transported to his aquarium.

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HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Lake

A summer thunderstorm brings three inches of rain and causes the retention pond to overflow. You travel with the runoff to the lake nearby.

HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Creek

You've grown so thick, you clog the stormwater outfall of the local retention pond. It overflows during a tropical storm. The excess water carries you into a creek downstream.

HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Retention Pond

City workers forget to treat the pond for hydrilla. You cover the surface now. Photosynthesis slows from the lack of sunlight. Oxygen levels drop, dozens of fish die and the odor is terrible. Stay and keep growing.

HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Retention Pond

Kids used to fish for bluegill in the retention pond. You grew so much, they can't get their baited hooks to sink into the water. The kids are sad but you are happy to stay and grow more.

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HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Retention Pond

You found your way to a retention pond in a housing development. You thrive on the constant fertilizers flushed into the pond from surrounding lawns. You stay and grow.

HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Aquarium

Natalie has an indoor goldfish tank. She decideds to collect live plants from the retention pond behind her house. You end up in her aquarium with annoying goldfish nibbling at you!

HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Retention Pond

You are constantly maintained by city workers. For now, you are stuck in the retention pond and you are shrinking.

HOME: Retention Pond

NEXT: Hydrosol

The retention pond receives lots of sunlight and is full of nutrients, thanks to the nutrient-rich soils. You think this is a nice place to hang out. When it is time to reproduce, you put down tubers in the hydrosol.

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HOME: River

NEXT: Retention Pond

An osprey catches a fish (and also a clump of hydrilla) with its talons. You end up in the osprey nest but several sprigs fall into the retention pond below.

HOME: River

NEXT: Creek

A barge delivers goods to a town along the river. When the barge pumps out its bilge water, hydrilla is accidentally introduced into a pristine creek that feeds into the river.

HOME: River

NEXT: River

You thrive on the nutrients in the river, thanks to all of the folks who over-fertilize their lawns. As a result, you successfully outcompete the native plants. Stay where you are.

HOME: River

NEXT: Aquarium

George collects river water and plants for his new pet fish. You end up in his aquarium, where you grown an inch a day!

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HOME: River

NEXT: Spring

An eagle spots a big mullet in the river. It scoops up the fish with its talons, along with some hydrilla. It devours the mullet from the top of a tall tree. The clump of hydrilla falls into the spring below.

HOME: River

NEXT: River

Sometimes it's difficult for hydrilla to grow in fast-moving waters. You find a cove, where the water is calm. You stay. Soon, you've grown so much, boaters cannot move their boats into the cove.

HOME: River

NEXT: Lake

A boater leaving the river does not clean his propeller or trailer. You travel with him to the lake.

HOME: River

NEXT: River

Manatees were enjoying lazy days in the sun on the river. But now, you have grown so thick they are having difficulty swimming. You stay, but the manatees leave.

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HOME: Spring

NEXT: Lake

A scuba diver emerges from the spring with a sprig of hydrilla attached to his scuba tanks. You travel to his house, where he cleans off his tanks in the backyard. You are washed into the lake behind his house during a heavy rain that afternoon.

HOME: Spring

NEXT: Spring

You are enjoying the undisturbed spring waters and the sunlight shining through the clear water. You stay and take advantage of the nutrients and sunlight.

HOME: Spring

NEXT: Creek

A kayaker paddling the spring picks you up and transports you miles downstream to a creek. You fall into the water when the kayaker accidentally flips over!

HOME: Spring

NEXT: Spring

Many swimmers enjoy the spring. However, you are growing so thick that it's hard to swim -- it's dangerous. The park is closed and swimmers have nowhere else to go. Stay and continue growing.

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HOME: Spring

NEXT: Lake

Swimmers dislodge you from the sandy bottom. You travel downstream where you wrap around a boat propeller. You end up in a lake the next day, when the boater launches their boat to water ski.

HOME: Spring

NEXT: Drainage Ditch

A volunteer at the spring wants to help by removing hydrilla. She picks you up and tosses you into the drainage ditch behind the property.

HOME: Spring

NEXT: Aquarium

An aquarium-store owner decides to save money by collecting plants from the local spring. He picks up a big clump of hydrilla to put in his aquariums.

HOME: Spring

NEXT: Spring

The spring used to be a place where scuba divers could enjoy seeing wildlife underwater. You have grown so thick, it is now difficult for them to swim safely. They stop coming to the spring and the local economy is impacted. Stay and keep growing.