

Oh Deer! Game Directions

Name: _____

1. Mark two parallel lines on the ground 10 to 20 yards apart. **Ask students to count off in fours.** The **ones become the “deer”** and line up behind one line with their backs to the other students. The other students become habitat components necessary to survive (*food, water, and shelter*) and line up behind the other line with their backs to the “deer”.
2. Explain that the *deer need to find food, water, and shelter* in order to survive in their environment. If they do not then they will die.
3. In this activity when the “deer” is looking for food, it should clamp its hands over its stomach. When a “deer” is looking for water, it should put its hand over its mouth. When a “deer” is looking for shelter, it holds its hands together over its head.
4. A “deer” can choose to look for any one of its needs during each round of the activity. Emphasize that the “deer” *cannot change what it is looking for during a round*. It can only change what it is looking for at the beginning of each round .
5. The other students are the food, water, and shelter. Students get to choose what they want to be at the beginning of the round. *They show their choice in the same way as the “deer” have*. Emphasize to these students that they cannot change what component they are during a round. They can only change at the beginning of each round.
6. The teacher should begin the first round by asking all students to make their signs—hand over stomach, mouth, or head. *Emphasize that students should choose one of these symbols before turning around to face the other group*.
7. When the students are ready tell them to **“GO!”**. At this time each “deer” and each “habitat component” turns to face the opposite group continuing to hold their sign clearly.
8. When the “deer” see the **“habitat component” that matches what they need**, they are to ***run to it***. Each “deer” must hold the sign of what it is looking for until getting to the matching “habitat component.”
9. Once the “deer” find their correct component ***they should take it back to their line, and the “habitat component” becomes a “deer”***. Any “deer” who fails to find its “habitat component” dies becomes a “habitat component” on the other side and becomes available as food, water, or shelter to the “deer” who are still alive.

10. “Habitat components” not taken by a “deer” continue to be “habitat components”.
11. The activity should consist of **12-15 rounds**. The teacher records the number of “deer” at the beginning of the activity and at the end of each round so that students can graph the results in the classroom.

Oh Deer Student Response Sheet

1. Name **three essential components** of habitat (*things animals need to survive*).
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.

2. Explain what caused the *increase of “deer”* during the activity you participated in.

3. Explain what caused the *decrease of “deer”* during the activity you participated in.

4. Define the term **limiting factor**. Give examples of limiting factors for the deer in our activity.

5. Graph the data from the activity and attach to this sheet (*make sure to correctly title and label the axes*). Describe what the graph of our data looks like. *How and why did our deer population change?*

6. Often we use the phrase “*balance of nature*” to describe a healthy ecosystem. Based on our graph, what does the “balance of nature” look like? Should we expect populations to be static (*unchanging*) or do they naturally fluctuate? **Explain.**

7. What did you learn about *population dynamics* by doing this activity?