

# Pineland Invaders

**Subject:** Science, Physical Education, Resource Management

**Duration:** 30 - 45 minutes

**Location:** Gymnasium / Outdoors

**Key Vocabulary:** Hammock, pineland, fire tolerance, crown fire

**Related Activities:** The Giving Tree; The Lorax Activity; Habitat Hold-Up; Hurry for a Habitat

**Florida Sunshine State Standards:** SC.4.L.17, SC.5.L.17



**Objectives:** Students will be able to show and/or hypothesize about the relationship between fire and the plants in the hammock and the pinelands.

**Method:** This is a fast-moving, team, freeze-tag game which sets the pineland plants against the hammock plants.

**Background:** Refer to the information on pinelands, hammocks and fire in the “Natural History” section.

## Materials

Enough of the following for each group of 16 students:

- Two kick balls, “koosh,” or “nerf” balls
- Two red “road worker” vests
- Seven life-preserver vests or equivalent (color other than red)

## Suggested Procedure

1. Review data on fire in the Everglades/South Florida with your students.
2. In a group of sixteen students choose two students to be crown fires (good for slow or small children), and divide the remaining students into two equal groups (7 each). The groups of 7 will be either pineland plants or hammock plants. The pineland plants wear the life vests. If you have a group of more than sixteen students you will have to increase the number of crown fires, fire balls (kick balls), hammock plants, and pineland plants correspondingly.
3. To start the game, set up the boundaries of the playing area and have the pineland and hammock teams go to the opposite ends. Place the fire balls (kick balls) in the middle of the playing area. Have the crown fires (students in road vests) also stand near the middle of the field.
4. RULES:
  - Balls are FIRE!
  - Any plant killed (tagged) must kneel and not participate in the game in any way until they are tagged by a member of their own team to bring them back to life (repopulation). Guarding killed plants is allowed.
  - Hammock plants - Cannot touch fire (kick balls)! They take over the pineland by overcrowding and killing (tagging) pineland plants. Hammock plants can tag any pineland plant that is not holding fire (a kick ball). If they do so, they are killed by the fire. Hammock plants cannot survive fire so even if they touch a fire ball on the ground they are killed.
  - A pineland plant - Must have fire (a kick ball)! They must be carrying a fire ball (kick ball) to kill (tag) a hammock plant. Since pineland plants are fire tolerant, the fire ball does not hurt

them at any time. They may also throw the fire ball at hammock plants to kill them, but must throw underhanded and the ball must hit below the waist.

- Crown fires - Cannot be killed (tagged)! They can kill either pineland or hammock plants but only by tagging (not throwing the balls).

5. The game is over when all of the members of one team have been killed (are kneeling). The team with at least one member still running has won. Crown fires cannot win or lose.

## Evaluation

Discuss the results of the game. Ask for a comparison between this game and what really happens in the Everglades/South Florida relating to fire in the pinelands and hammocks. Ask the students to hypothesize how crown fires get started (too much fuel) and how they could be prevented (a controlled burn program before too much fuel builds up). Make the discussion as open ended as possible. Let the students come up with possible hypotheses and solutions. Encourage discussion by asking them what can be done to prevent fires? Do we want to prevent all fires?

