

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Invasive Species Project

Adapted with permission from a similar project by Erin Cole

Your Assignment

Research an invasive species that is impacting an ecosystem near you. Create an “eradication sales pitch” to share your information and warn others about the dangers of these invasive organisms.

Overall Guidelines

You will be trying to convince your classmates that your animal or plant is the MOST damaging to the ecosystem it has invaded. Our money and other resources should go to eradicating it NOW! Some things to think about in your sales pitch:

1. What kind of damage is your organism causing? Economic? Environmental? Aesthetic (natural beauty)?
2. If it is not a big a problem in our area yet, could it become really damaging? How?
3. What are cost-effective ways to get rid of it?
4. Is there an organization that is already trying to get rid of it? If so, could they use help?

Information Requirements

1. Common and scientific name of your plant or animal
2. Detailed description of what it looks like; how to not confuse it with similar organisms
3. Its original ecosystem (where it is native and originally from)
4. Where it can be found now (region, specific place in ecosystem)
5. How scientists think the organism arrived in its new location
6. How it harms humans and ecosystems (Be specific: for example, if it takes over land from other plants, How does it do it? If it causes economic damage, to what industries or structures?)
7. What humans are trying to do to stop the invasion (Again, be as specific as possible: is there a specific organization that is already trying to stop it? What tools/chemicals/methods are they using, and are there pros and cons to the various methods?)
8. All sources of information, including photos, are cited in MLA format

Formatting Requirements

1. 4–10 slides created with PowerPoint, Google Slides, Prezi, or another program, including a sources page at the end
2. A title slide with a photo or drawing of the plant or animal (created with graphics software or drawn by hand and scanned or photographed)
3. The presentation should last **no longer** than 3 or 4 minutes and should seem like a “sales pitch,” not just an informational speech—be persuasive!

Evaluation

Your presentation will be scored as follows:

Requirement	Score
Information: All information accurate and requirements met; sources listed	/ 20
Organization: Presentation is neat and organized	/ 5
Visual Engagement: Photo or drawing on first slide and other visuals engage the audience and help to communicate information	/ 5
Persuasiveness: Presentation is persuasive about the need to control the species	/ 5
Conventions: Correct grammar and spelling used	/ 5
Total	/ 40

Choices Include:

Invasive Animals

1. Zebra mussels or quagga mussels
2. Chinese mitten crab
3. Nutria
4. European starling
5. English house sparrow
6. Sea lamprey
7. American bullfrog
8. Rusty crayfish
9. Feral pig/feral swine
10. Red-eared slider
11. Pond Loach
12. Northern snakehead
13. New Zealand mud snail
14. Round goby
15. Asian clam
16. Silver, bighead, black, or grass carp
17. Red swamp crayfish
18. Spotted lanternfly
19. Emerald ash borer
20. Marbled crayfish

Invasive Plants

1. Cheatgrass (downy brome)
2. Honeysuckle
3. Curly-leaf pondweed
4. Bull, Canada, or musk thistle
5. Common or cutleaf teasel
6. Brazilian waterweed
7. Common reed
8. European frogbit
9. Purple loosestrife
10. Spotted or Japanese Knapweeds
11. Hydrilla
12. Brittle waternymph
13. Starry stonewort
14. Garlic mustard
15. Narrow-leaved cattail
16. Eurasian watermilfoil
17. Tree of heaven
18. Butterfly bush
19. Kudzu
20. Reed canary grass

Resources

- “Exotic Species in Illinois.” Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources: dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/iwap/invasivespecies.html
- MLA citation guide, Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02
- USDA Invasive Species resources: invasivespeciesinfo.gov/us
- USDA Plants database: plants.usda.gov
- USGS Nonindigenous Aquatic Species database: nas.er.usgs.gov