

# TEACHER OVERVIEW

Invasive Plants

Kindergarten — 2nd Grade

## Nature Vision Student Packet

The materials contained within have been created by Nature Vision, an environmental education nonprofit organization that brings programming to schools and local greenspaces for over 70,000 PreK-12th grade students each year in King and Snohomish Counties. This work from home curriculum materials packet is designed to foster an understanding of invasive plants. Packets can be completed either independently, or with the help of an adult caregiver. Each day of the week offers materials building on previous days learning, offering a variety of activities including art, writing, and field exploration.

These materials are provided to you by King County Noxious Weed Control Program. The program works throughout King County to prevent and reduce the economic, environmental, and social impacts of noxious weeds in King County, Washington. Their focus is to provide education and technical assistance to landowners and public agencies to help everyone find the best control options for noxious weeds on each site and to reduce the overall impact of noxious weeds throughout the county. Learn more by visiting: <https://kingcounty.gov/weeds>.

This unit supports NGSS Performance Expectations across various disciplines, as well as supporting K-12 Integrated Environmental and Sustainability Standards. These are listed at the bottom of this page. Teachers will be supplied with PDF formats of materials to be emailed to families, or teachers may print and send to students to complete at home.

In this packet, students will explore the role of native plants in a healthy Pacific Northwest ecosystem. They will learn about several different native plants and think about how all organisms have important roles creating good habitats within an ecosystem. This will provide a background for understanding how invasive species and noxious weeds can disrupt the flow of energy and nutrients within an ecosystem. Students will learn about ways we can all help to remove invasive plants and counteract the spread of noxious weeds in King County.

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this packet, please email our Office Coordinator at [info@naturevision.org](mailto:info@naturevision.org).

### Grades K-2

**Supports NGSS Performance Expectations:** K-LS1-1, LS1.C, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3, ESS2.E, ESS3.A, ESS3.C, ETS1.A, ETS1.B, LS4.D, 2-LS4-1.

Grades K-2
Day 1 - Native Plants
Day 2 - Invasive Plants
Day 3 - Stopping Noxious Weeds
Day 4 - Weeds Harm Habitats
Day 5 - What Can We Do?

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# PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW

Invasive Plants

Kindergarten — 2nd Grade

Welcome to Nature Vision's student packet for home use. Nature Vision is an environmental education nonprofit organization that brings programming to schools and local greenspaces for over 70,000 PreK-12th grade students each year in King and Snohomish Counties. We are excited to be offering this version of our programming directly to students at home!

This packet is designed to be completed over the course of one week, with each day focusing on a different aspect of environmental science and stewardship. The majority of these materials can be completed independently, but we thought it would be important to provide background information for any adults who may be helping to complete or answer questions. We've included the basic learning objectives for each day along with some vocabulary.

These materials are provided to you by King County Noxious Weed Control Program. The program works throughout King County to prevent and reduce the economic, environmental and social impacts of noxious weeds in King County, Washington. Their focus is to provide education and technical assistance to landowners and public agencies to help everyone find the best control options for noxious weeds on each site and to reduce the overall impact of noxious weeds throughout the county. Learn more by visiting: <https://kingcounty.gov/weeds>.

Challenge yourself to post all the things you are doing with your friends and family to help control the spread of noxious weeds! Don't forget to use the hashtags #kingcountyweeds and #wainvasives and tag @kingcountyweeds @WAINvasiveSpeciesCouncil @PlayCleanGo @naturevisionorg in your post so we can see your work!

*Please contact [info@naturevision.org](mailto:info@naturevision.org) with any questions or concerns  
Stay connected with Nature Vision! Follow us for updates @naturevisionorg*



**NOTE: Students may require support in reading directions and/or completing some tasks. While many activities in this packet are creatively oriented and open ended, you may consult the answer key located at the back of the packet for additional assistance or guidance.**

Unless otherwise noted, images courtesy of  
King County Noxious Weed Control Program

# PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW: DAY 1

## Native Plants

**Background Information:** Native plants are those which have existed in an area for a very long time, maybe even for longer than humans have lived in those areas. Native plants provide some of the essential parts of a habitat for animals: food and shelter.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will learn about native plants, their importance to animal habitats, and be able to identify a native plant in their own community.

### **Main Activity: Native Habitat**

- **Overview:** Students draw a habitat, thinking about resources and species balance
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** None

### **Optional Activity: Native Plant Tour**

- **Overview:** Students watch a video from Nature Vision showing some of the most common native plants in Magnuson Park
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Help students safely access the internet

### **Optional Activity: Ask an Adult**

- **Overview:** Students ask a family member about their own experiences with native plants
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Share your knowledge and cultural background with your student OR assist your student in reaching out to another family member

### **Optional Activity: Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge**

- **Overview:** Students complete a daily stewardship challenge related to noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Accompany the student outside if it is okay to do so and, if possible, help the student share their work on social media



# PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW: DAY 2

## Invasive Plants

**Background Information:** Invasive plants are fast-growing, fast-seeding, and quick to take over ecosystems. Noxious weeds are even worse, as they are invasive plants that damage ecosystems and animal habitats.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will understand why invasive plants are a problem for other plants and identify one noxious weed in their community.

**Main Activity: Build-a-Weed**

- **Overview:** Students pick out adaptations, or characteristics, to design and draw their own noxious weed
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** None

**Optional Activity: Pressing a Plant**

- **Overview:** Your student will locate and preserve a plant to teach others about it
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Determine whether it is okay for your student to head outside and provide supervision when handling certain plants

**Optional Activity: Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge**

- **Overview:** Students complete a daily stewardship challenge related to noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** If possible, help the student share their work on social media



# PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW: DAY 3

## Stopping Noxious Weeds

**Background Information:** A noxious weed is an invasive plant which negatively impacts the health of other nearby plants and animals. They can spread to new areas in a variety of ways. Sometimes we introduce noxious weeds accidentally. Personal aquarium plants which are dumped into lakes by fish owners releasing their pets can also become noxious weeds.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will be able to identify a few ways noxious weeds can travel into new habitats. They will learn how noxious weeds harm local flora and fauna and identify some of the most common species found in King County.

**Main Activity: Spot the Weed**

- **Overview:** Students learn about several types of plants, some native and some noxious
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** None

**Optional Activity: World Traveler Scavenger Hunt**

- **Overview:** Students search their home for objects which have been shipped long distances to think about how noxious weeds might travel long distances
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** None

**Optional Activity: Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge**

- **Overview:** Students complete a daily stewardship challenge related to noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Discuss several types of noxious weeds with your student, and if possible, help the student share their work on social media



# PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW: DAY 4

## Weeds Harm Habitats

**Background Information:** Once in a new environment, noxious weeds harm other local species in a variety of ways, including crowding out native plants, outcompeting native plants for water or sunlight, or using chemicals to keep nearby plants from growing. Some are even toxic to native plants and animals. Controlling these noxious weeds is important to maintaining healthy ecosystems. There are many community efforts throughout King County to remove noxious weeds.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will understand the ecosystem impacts of noxious weeds and explore steps to remove noxious weeds in their own communities.

### **Main Activity: Stretch Like a Plant**

- **Overview:** Students use paper tokens to represent how plants collect the resources they need
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Help students print and cut out tokens if possible

### **Optional Activity: Weed Pulling Party**

- **Overview:** Students tell the story of people pulling English ivy
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** None

### **Optional Activity: See What Your Neighbors are Doing**

- **Overview:** Students explore the Noxious Weeds Blog for King County and see what is going on right now
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Help students safely access the internet

### **Optional Activity: Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge**

- **Overview:** Students complete a daily stewardship challenge related to noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** If possible, accompany your student outside and help the student share their work on social media



# PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW: DAY 5

## What Can We Do?

**Background Information:** Noxious weeds are a problem caused by humans, and humans have to be part of the solution. One of the most important things we can do to help control noxious weeds is preventing their spread. We can take precautions like brushing hiking boots to prevent seed spread and organizing community events to remove noxious weeds.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will learn ways to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Students will share what they have learned this week with others, and pledge to be a noxious weed warrior.

### **Main Activity: Steps We Can Take**

- **Overview:** Students think about behaviors which may spread noxious weeds, and some ways we can prevent weeds from spreading
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** None

### **Optional Activity: Letter Writing**

- **Overview:** Students draw a picture or write a letter to an adult describing the importance of removing noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** If possible, help students share their work on social media with the hashtag #kingcountyweeds

### **Optional Activity: More Information**

- **Overview:** Students can research more information on noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** Help students safely access the internet

### **Optional Activity: Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge**

- **Overview:** Students complete a daily stewardship challenge related to noxious weeds
- **Parent/Caregiver Tasks:** If possible, help the student share their work on social media



## PARENT/CAREGIVER OVERVIEW: VOCABULARY

### DAY 1

**Habitat:** The home of an animal, which provides the food, water, shelter, and space the animal needs

**Native Plant:** A plant that gives animals things they need like food and shelter

**Shelter:** Something animals can safely hide and rest in or under, like a hollow log or a leaf

**Survive:** To live

**Traditional:** Something people have been doing for a very long time

### DAY 2

**Invasive Plant:** A plant brought from somewhere else that escapes into natural places and takes up the good things in a habitat

**Noxious Weed:** An invasive plant which can hurt other plants and animals and needs to be stopped

**Poisonous:** Makes people or animals sick if we eat it

**Soil:** Healthy dirt that plants can grow out of

### DAY 3

**Observation:** Looking at something carefully to see all the details

### DAY 4

**King County Noxious Weed Control Program:** A group of local government staff that help stop noxious weeds around us

**Pledge:** A promise to do something that helps others

**Prevent:** To stop something

### DAY 5

**Report:** To let an adult know about a big problem

**Compost:** A place to throw plants and some kinds of food away so they can turn into soil



# DAY 1

## Native Plants

This week, we are going to learn about many kinds of plants. Plants are important because most of them make healthy habitats for animals. One kind of plant that is helpful for lots of animals that live here is a native plant. **Native plants** are plants that have grown here for a very long time. Maybe that type of plant was here when dinosaurs still walked the Earth!

Because these plants grew here before humans, they make good **habitats** for animals. Good habitats give animals four things they need to live. Those things are food, water, shelter, and space. Birds, butterflies, bees, squirrels, deer, and bears all need native plants. They give these animals food to eat like berries, leaves, and roots. They give these animals places to hide. Humans need native plants too!



### **Vocabulary**

**Habitat:** The home of an animal, which provides the food, water, shelter, and space the animal needs

**Native Plant:** A plant that gives animals things they need like food and shelter

**Shelter:** Something animals can safely hide and rest in or under, like a hollow log or a leaf

**Survive:** To live

**Traditional:** Something people have been doing for a very long time



# Main Activity

## Native Habitat

Why are native plants so helpful? They give animals food and **shelter**. Along with water and space these things make up the habitat that animals need to **survive**. Let's draw a good habitat for animals.

**Materials:** Writing utensil, crayons/markers/colored pencils

On the picture below, draw a good habitat where lots of kinds of animals can live. Draw three plants that grow food for animals to eat. Draw one plant giving an animal shelter. After, answer the questions on the following page.





## Optional Activity

### Native Plant Tour

Native plants are everywhere, and they make the building blocks for habitats in our parks, our schools and our neighborhoods.

**Materials:** Computer/phone/tablet, internet connection

You have probably seen a native plant before! They are all around us, in our local and national parks, and also in our school yards and gardens. To learn more about some of our most common native plants, watch this video **with an adult** or look at these picture cards.

Video Link: <https://www.facebook.com/NatureVisionorg/videos/221585832442175/>



**Western Red Cedars make good homes for woodpeckers.**

## Red Alder



**Red Alders have lots of branches for birds to build nests.**

## Douglas Fir



**Douglas Firs make good shelter for squirrels and birds.**



## Oregon Grape



**Oregon Grape grows bright blue berries for birds to eat. Their flowers are full of nectar for bees and hummingbirds.**

## Salal



**Salal grows dark colored berries for birds and bears.**



## Cattails



**Cattails grow next to water and help keep the water clean for all animals to drink.**





Draw a picture below showing what your family member told you about native plants.

## Optional Activity

### Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge for Day 1

Plants and animals make their homes everywhere, even in places we share with them.

**Materials:** Writing utensil, computer/phone/tablet, internet connection

If it is okay, go outside with an adult and look at the plants around you. This might be at a park, in your own backyard, or even just a bush you can see from your window.

Are these plants the same as the habitat you drew earlier? If an animal lived around these plants, would they be happy? Do you see all four parts of a habitat? Write down what you see that is giving animals the parts of habitat that they need in the space below. Are there any things an animal would still need for this to be a good habitat?

Food: \_\_\_\_\_

Water: \_\_\_\_\_

Shelter: \_\_\_\_\_

Space: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you find any of the native plants listed in the “Native Plant Tour” activity? If so, take a photo or draw a picture of one you spot and post it on social media with an adult’s permission. Don’t forget to use the hashtags #kingcountyweeds and #wainvasives and tag @kingcountyweeds @WAINvasiveSpeciesCouncil @PlayCleanGo @naturevisionorg in your post so we can see your work! Your neighbors might be surprised to know we have native plants all around us!



## DAY 2

### Invasive Plants

Imagine it is snack time at school. You go and get your snack and put it at your table. You look away, and someone else takes the snack from your table spot and eats it! You tell the teacher and ask for a new snack, but there aren't any snacks left! This is what it's like to be a native plant with **noxious weeds** around.

What is a noxious weed? A noxious weed is a plant that bullies other plants. Noxious weeds are a kind of **invasive plant**, meaning people planted them in our yards or farms, but they grew into the habitats of animals. Noxious weeds started taking away things that animals need, just like someone took your snack in the story.



*This kid has noxious weeds on the mind.*

While native plants give, noxious weeds take things away from habitats. A noxious weed can cause so many problems that birds, squirrels, deer, bees, and butterflies don't have food to eat or homes to live in. That's because noxious weeds hurt habitats.

One kind of noxious weed is a plant called Himalayan blackberry. You've probably seen this plant's long stems covered in sharp thorns. When people planted Himalayan blackberry here, it grew quickly and covered up native plants like Salal and Oregon grape so they could not grow. With no Salal and Oregon grape making berries, the birds didn't have much food to eat. Himalayan blackberry also covered up wildflowers, so insects like butterflies and bees no longer had their favorite nectar to drink.

A noxious weed can be a hard plant to get rid of once it is planted. Himalayan blackberry is hard to dig out because of its sharp thorns.



*Himalayan blackberry thorns. Ouch!*

### **Vocabulary**

**Invasive Plant:** A plant brought from somewhere else that escapes into natural places and takes up the good things in a habitat

**Noxious Weed:** An invasive plant which can hurt other plants and animals and needs to be stopped

**Poisonous:** Makes people or animals sick if we eat it

**Soil:** Healthy dirt that plants can grow out of

# Main Activity

## Build-a-Weed

Let's find the things that make invasive plants and noxious weeds such a problem.

**Materials:** Writing utensil, drawing supplies

Noxious weeds have many ways of being bullies. Look at the pictures of some noxious weeds, then circle the part of the weed that helps it be a bully. At the end we'll draw our own noxious weed.



Himalayan blackberry has sharp thorns



Bittersweet nightshade's bright red berries are **poisonous** for people and pets to eat



Bull thistle uses sharp spines to protect its seeds





Knotweed has big leaves that make too much shade and keep other plants from getting sunlight



English ivy grows much faster than native plants, covering them up.



Hairy willow-herb has long, deep roots that make it hard to pull up

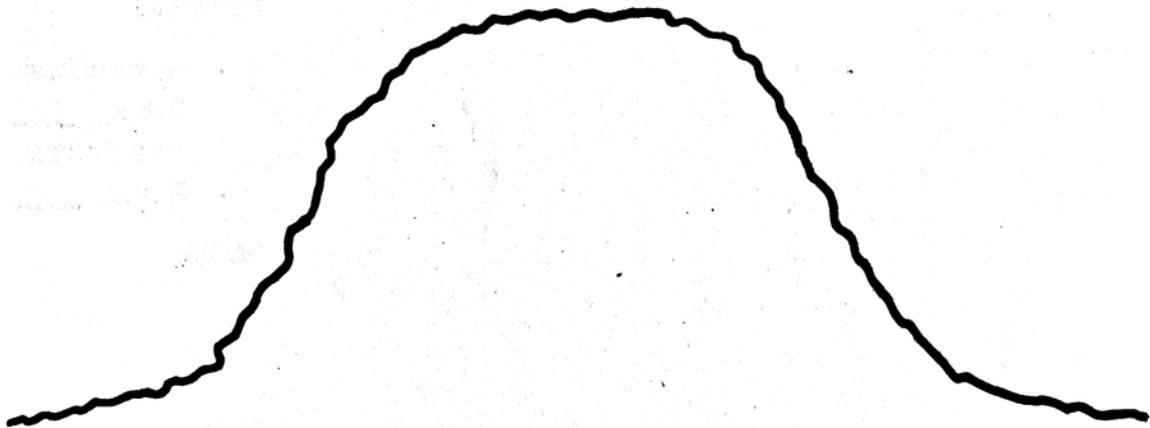


Milk thistle seeds spread very far using the wind



Brazilian elodea tangles around animals (and sometimes people) who go swimming

Now it's your turn to draw! Choose 3 things you learned about from the pictures on the last pages that makes weeds bullies. Draw your own noxious weed growing out of the soil below. Give it the 3 things you chose. Draw arrows pointing to the things this plant has that makes it a bully and label them.



## Optional Activity

### Pressing a Plant

One way to stop noxious weed bullies is to pull them up from the ground. After that, we can save a piece from them to show others what a noxious weed looks like.

**Materials:** A big book, paper towels, gloves (if you have them), a noxious weed, a small string

#### ***An adult must accompany you!***

1. Head outside and see if you can find a noxious weed. Use the pictures from the Noxious Weed Challenge for today to help you know which plants are noxious. *Pick a plant that does not have thorns or spikes.*
2. Wearing gloves, pull the entire plant up out of the soil. Make sure to also pull up the roots! An adult may need to help you get the roots out of the soil using a shovel.
3. Pick a part of the plant that has leaves, stem and flowers to keep. Throw away the rest in a garbage can or compost bin (not in a compost pile).
4. Place the plant flat on a paper towel, then place another paper towel on top to make a "leaf sandwich."
5. Put your leaf sandwich in the middle of the book. Close the book, then put something heavy (like another, bigger book) on top.
6. Let the leaf sandwich sit in the book for at least one whole day. Your plant should be flat and dry. Use a small piece of string to tie a piece of paper to the stem with the name of the noxious weed. Now you have a real-life example to show others!



*English ivy ready to be pressed*

## Optional Activity

### Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge for Day 2

Most likely, you have seen some noxious weeds before. Let's see if we can find some together.

**Materials:** None

With an adult, take a look around outside, in your own backyard, or maybe just look out from your front door. If you cannot see any plants from your house, then think about a place that does have plants like your school or a park near you. Now look at the pictures of noxious weeds below. Do you find any of these plants in the places you are thinking about?

If you find any noxious weeds, see if you can take a picture and share it on social media (with an adult's help!). Don't forget to use the hashtags #kingcountyweeds and #wainvasives and tag @kingcountyweeds @WAINvasiveSpeciesCouncil @PlayCleanGo @naturevisionorg in your post so we can see your work!



*English ivy is a vine that covers the ground and wraps around trees*



*Himalayan blackberry has long, thorny stems that cover up smaller plants*



*Herb Robert makes a gross smell when it is crushed. This is why it is also called "stinky Bob"!*

# DAY 3

## Stopping Noxious Weeds



Now that we know about native plants and noxious weeds, let's learn how noxious weeds get into places they shouldn't be so we can stop them.



*English ivy is one noxious weed that came here from very far away in Europe*

Some plants move from place to place as people travel across the world. This is how English ivy became a noxious weed. People who traveled from England to the United States missed growing English ivy in their gardens. They brought English ivy with them so they could grow it around their new homes.

Whoops! English ivy became a noxious weed when it was brought here. It grew out of people's gardens and into forests. In the forests, English ivy wraps itself around trees and takes what trees need, like sunlight and food. If no one stops it, the English ivy can even knock the trees down.

Sometimes people plant noxious weeds by mistake. Brazilian elodea is a plant that looks very nice in fish tanks. But someone dumped their fish tank into a lake, and suddenly Brazilian elodea was everywhere, not giving any space to other plants and animals that live in the water.



*Can you even see this poor tree under all the ivy?*



*Brazilian elodea looks pretty in fish tanks... but it takes up too much room in our lakes!*

### **Vocabulary**

**Observation:** Looking at something carefully to see all the details

# Main Activity

## Spot the Weed

It can be hard to tell if plants are noxious weeds. Let's take a look at just a few of these plants using the chart below and on the next page to find the differences.

**Materials:** Writing utensil

Take a look at the following plants. Read the sentence below the picture. Is this plant a noxious weed or not?

Circle the part of the sentence that makes you think that!



**Salal:** This plant has berries for birds to eat.



**Garlic mustard:** This plant uses poisons to harm other plants in the soil.



**English ivy:** This plant wraps around trees and knocks them down.



**Sword fern:** This plant makes a great home for insects and frogs.





**Bleeding heart:** This plant's flowers give nectar to bees and butterflies.



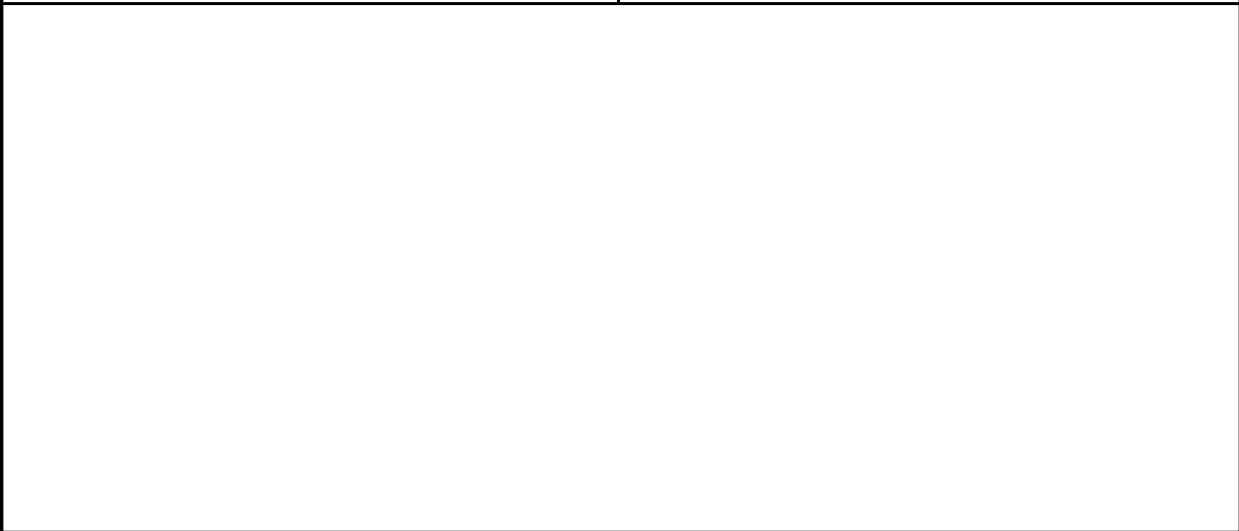
**Osoberry:** This plant makes fruit for bears and raccoons.



**Tansy Ragwort:** This plant makes cows, horses, and deer sick.



**Herb Robert:** Also called "stinky Bob", this plant spreads quickly through the forest.



## Optional Activity

### World Traveler Scavenger Hunt

Noxious weeds can travel the world when people send things from place to place. Can you find some things from around the world in your own home?

**Materials:** The power of **observation!**

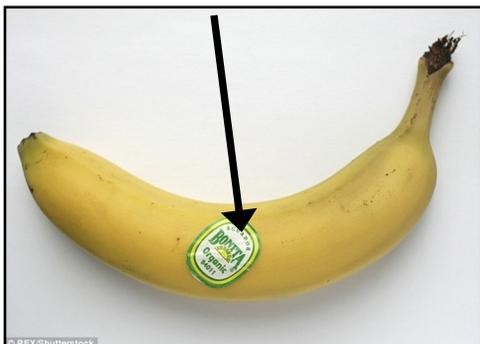
Look around your home for things that aren't from the US. Check to see if the things in your home have labels that say "made in \_\_\_\_".

Check clothing tags.



Source: freepik.com

Look at the stickers on fresh fruits and vegetables, and the labels on cans.



Source: shutterstock

Where were the fruits and vegetables grown? If your favorite socks can travel across the whole world, think how easy it would be for a noxious weed to go the same way.

There are different kinds of plants all across our planet! In fact, we wouldn't have most of our favorite foods if not for sugarcane, wheat, and cocoa beans, all of which came from somewhere else in the world. Most plants from other places don't become noxious weeds — less than 1 in 1,000!



## Optional Activity

### Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge for Day 3

Now that you know some noxious weeds, it's time to share what you know so you can help others.

**Materials:** The plant pictures from the "Spot the Weed" activity earlier in Day 3

Using your cards from the "Spot the Weed" game above, see if a person in your family can guess which plants are noxious weeds. Write their answers below.

With an adult's help, post a picture of one of your plants on social media and challenge people to guess if it is noxious or not. Don't forget to use the hashtags #kingcountyweeds and #wainvasives and tag @kingcountyweeds @WAINvasiveSpeciesCouncil @PlayCleanGo @naturevisionorg in your post so we can see your work!

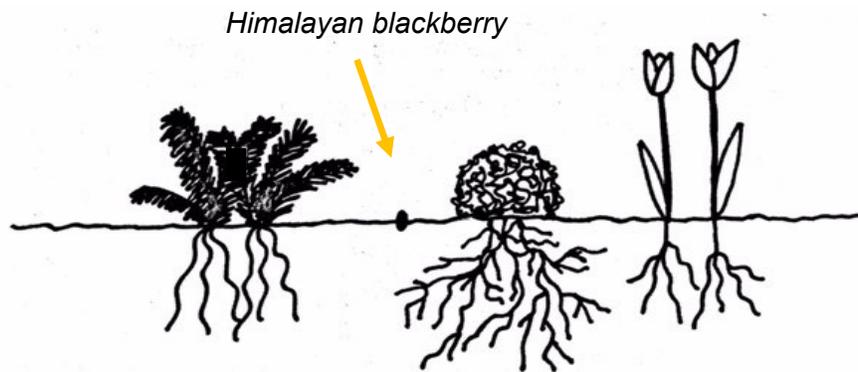


## DAY 4

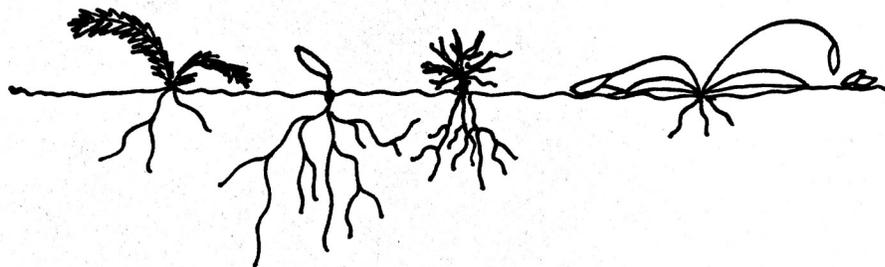
### Weeds Harm Habitats

Now that we know why noxious weeds are a problem, it's time to look closer at how one seed can harm or hurt an animal if it grows inside its habitat.

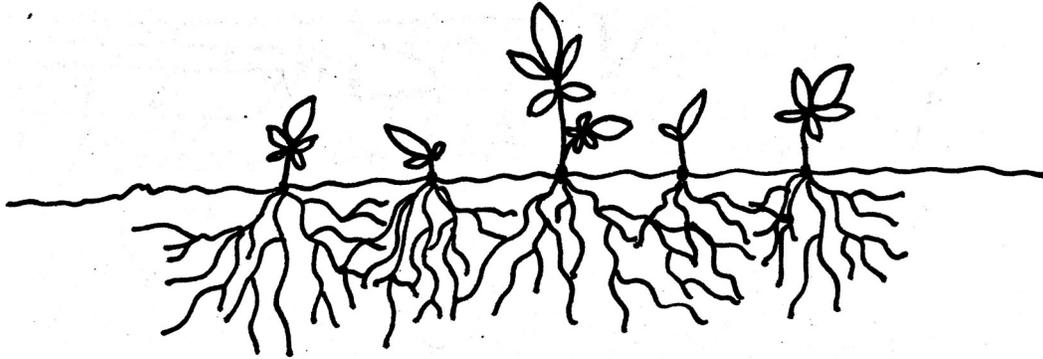
One noxious weed is Himalayan blackberry. This plant was planted here by people who liked to eat its tasty berries. But this plant spread out of control. A single Himalayan blackberry plant makes many vines with sharp thorns. Its berries get spread by people who like to eat them.



The tiny seeds in the berries will start a new plant if they are dropped in soil. These seeds grow faster than the seeds of native plants. Then, Himalayan blackberry spreads its roots to suck up lots of water. Its big leaves cover up other plants and block sunlight.



Pretty soon, only Himalayan blackberry is growing in the soil. It has bullied everything else out. Animals, like deer, don't eat Himalayan blackberry, so the food in the deer's habitat is all gone.



This doesn't have to happen! Adults in our area called the **King County Noxious Weed Control Program** work with scientists to stop every noxious weed that is planted here.

Remember, every noxious weed is different. If a plant has thorns, we can't pull it up with our hands. If a plant lives in the water, we will need special nets or tools to take it out.



*Milk thistle is another plant that makes lots of seeds and then grows very big so native plants can't grow here*

### **Vocabulary**

**King County Noxious Weed Control Program:** A group of local government staff that help stop noxious weeds around us

**Pledge:** A promise to do something that helps others

**Prevent:** To stop something

# Main Activity

## Stretch Like a Plant

To learn why noxious weeds cause problems, let's practice collecting the things plants need to survive.

**Materials:** Printer, paper, scissors

In this game, you are acting like a plant gathering the things it needs to survive. Here's what you need:



Sunlight



Water



Nutrients (like vitamins for plants)

You'll use your hands as the roots and leaves of plants, moving across the floor to collect the sunlight, water, and nutrients you need. Remember, plants can't walk. For this stretch you can only move your arms. You can't move your feet.

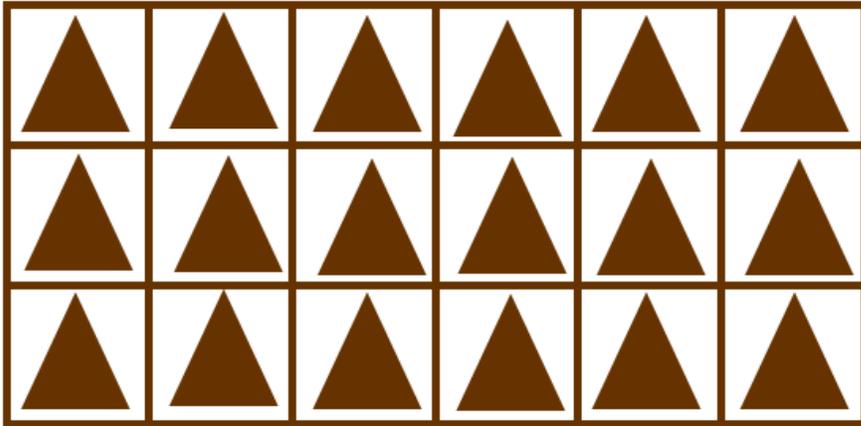
1. Have an adult help you print out and cut the pictures on the next page into 12 squares each. You can draw your own on a different piece of paper too!
2. With an adult, find an open space in your house where you can spread your arms without bumping into anything. Close your eyes and toss your squares like confetti. Remember, you will need to pick them all up on your own after the game.
3. Now, stand in the center of the area you've made and be careful not to step on any of your pieces of paper. Plant your feet on the ground. Bend your knees and bring your hands low to the floor. WITHOUT moving your feet, collect as many of the squares as you can reach.
4. Count all of the squares you collected. How many water, sunlight and nutrient squares were you able to collect? If you were a plant, do you think you'd have enough to survive?
5. Clean up all of the squares and recycle them.



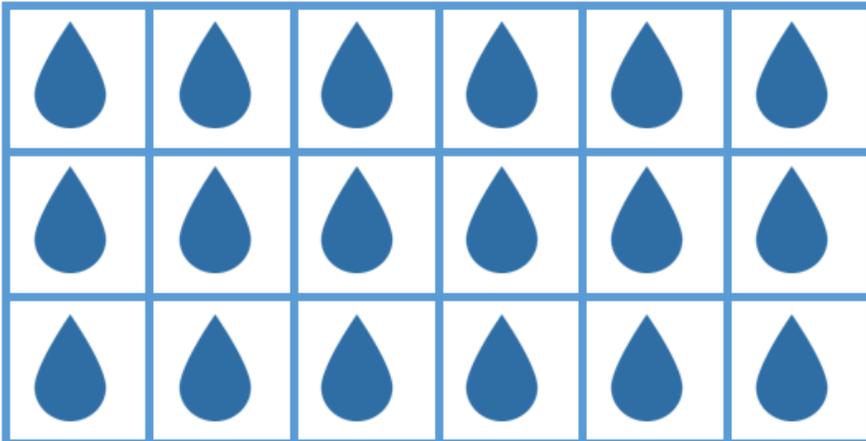
Imagine you played this game with a friend or a younger brother, sister, or friends who has shorter arms than you. Who would be able to collect more tokens? Would the game be fair?

Having longer arms is like the unfair way noxious weeds bully native plants. They can collect more sunlight, water and spread their roots longer into the soil to get more nutrients because they grow faster.

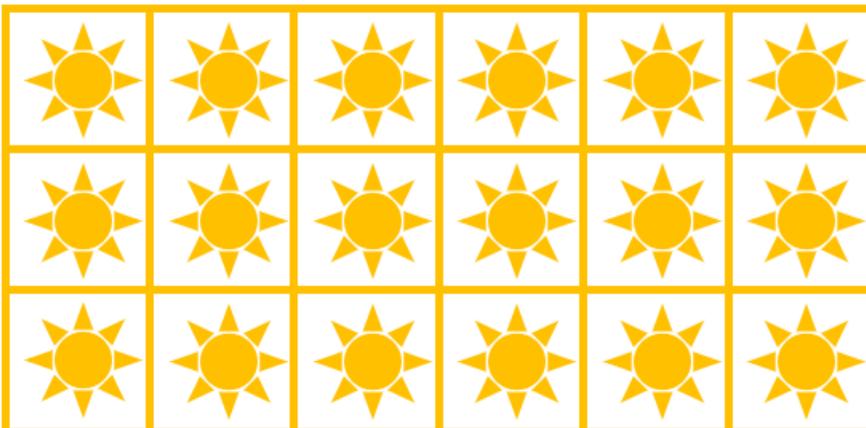
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**Nutrient Tokens**



**Water Tokens**



**Sun Tokens**

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# Optional Activity

## Weed Pulling Party

It's always more fun to pull weeds with a group of your friends. Let's see what it looks like to have a weed pulling party when it is okay to have one.

**Materials:** Writing utensil

The pictures below show a group of people who got together to pick some English ivy and help a habitat. The pictures are all out of order. Under each picture, write 1, 2, 3, or 4 to show which picture came first, second, third, or fourth. Then, write down the story of what is going on in these pictures on the next page.





## Optional Activity

### See What Your Neighbors Are Doing

People all around King County are working together every day to stop noxious weeds. Let's see what they're up to.

**Materials:** Computer/phone/tablet, internet connection

**With the help of an adult,** go to [kingcountyweeds.com/](http://kingcountyweeds.com/) to see what's going right now. See if there's an event you want to go to, or a story from your own neighborhood to read.



*Elementary school students and Seattle Parks staff show off the fruits of their hard work removing invasive plants from a neighborhood park*

# Optional Activity

## Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge for Day 4

Now that we know how noxious weeds hurt animal habitats, let's help stop them!

**Materials:** Gloves, computer/phone/tablet, internet connection, writing utensil

Look back at the noxious weeds you saw in the Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge for Day 2. Have you seen any of these plants before? In local parks, or in dirt on the side of the road, around your school or even in your own backyard? Noxious weeds can grow everywhere!

If it is okay, go outside with an adult. Pick one plant that you would like to pull out of the ground. Have your adult help you answer the questions below about this plant

How do we know it's okay to pull up a plant? Remember, most plants help habitats. We don't want to pull them. Only a few plants are noxious weeds. Answering these questions will help you know for sure:

- Do you know what this plant is? (If NO, don't pull it!)
- Is this plant a noxious weed? (If NO, don't pull it!)
- Did this plant grow here by accident or did someone plant it? (If someone planted it, don't pull it!)
- Would anyone be sad if you picked this plant? (If YES, don't pull it!)
- Could this plant hurt you if you try to pick it? (If YES, don't pull it!)
- Do I have an adult's permission to pick this plant? (If NO, don't pull it!)

Can you answer all of the questions the right way? Feel free to use the mind map below to help you and an adult decide if it's okay to pull the plant. Then have an adult help you pull or dig out the plant! Wear gloves, and pull or dig out as many of the plant's roots as you can.



If there aren't any noxious weeds you can pick right now, you can still help in a big way. Make a **pledge** today to **prevent** noxious weeds from growing in local habitats. Check off the boxes next to the things you will do to help fight noxious weeds, then write your name in the box at the bottom to show you will do those things.

I promise to root out noxious weeds by:

- Always checking my clothing, boots, and bicycle for "hitchhiking" seeds.
- Never dumping aquarium pets or plants in a stream or lake.
- Helping my household pick native plants to grow in our yard or garden.
- Teaching others about noxious weeds!

**SIGN YOUR NAME HERE:**

**ROOT OUT NOXIOUS WEEDS PLEDGE CARD**

 King County  
Department of  
Natural Resources and Parks  
Water and Land Resources Division  
Noxious Weed Control Program

MAKE A PROMISE TO ROOT  
OUT NOXIOUS WEEDS!

 Nature  
VISION

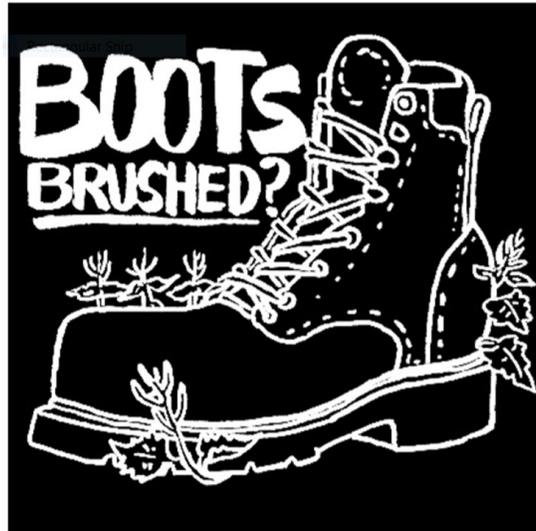
If you can, have an adult help share your work today on social media. Don't forget to use the hashtags #kingcountyweeds and #wainvasives and tag @kingcountyweeds @WAINvasiveSpeciesCouncil @PlayCleanGo @naturevisionorg in your post so we can see your work!

## DAY 5

### What Can We Do?

Noxious weeds can be a big problem, but there are lots of things we can do to help keep them away so our native plants are safe, and there are good habitats for lots of animals to live in!

One thing we can do is stop noxious weeds from being planted in a new place. We can plant only native plants in our gardens. When we go hiking, we can brush our boots and shoes off before we go home to leave behind any seeds that might stick to them. We can make sure we never dump fish tanks into rivers or lakes. If we're ever on a boat, we can help clean the motor off when it gets pulled out of the water.



After noxious weeds spread, there are many things we can do to help them go away. If you see a noxious weed, tell an adult and they can help you **report** it to the King County Noxious Weed Control Program at this website: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/animals-and-plants/noxious-weeds/infestation-form.aspx>.

You and your neighbors can also get together to pull weeds if it is okay. Be sure to wear gloves, dig up all the parts of the weed including the roots, and put them somewhere where they won't be able to grow again (like your **compost** bin or trash). An adult should help you check the King County Noxious Weed Control Program website to make sure you're pulling the right plants and doing it the right way. Also an adult can make sure they go in the garbage if they belong there, or compost if they belong there.

#### **Vocabulary**

**Report:** To let an adult know about a big problem

**Compost:** A place to throw plants and some kinds of food away so they can turn into soil

# Main Activity

## Steps We Can Take

Stopping noxious weeds is a little bit like cooking. If we are careful not to make a mess, then we won't have to clean it up later! This means we won't have to pull lots of noxious weeds if we are very careful not to spread them around in the first place.

**Materials:** Writing utensil

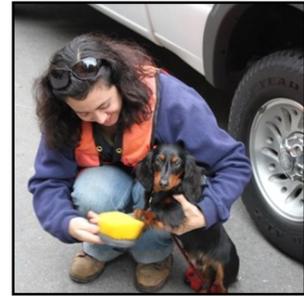
There are several pictures on the following page. All the pictures on the left side show us ways we might plant noxious weeds in a new place by mistake. Draw a line from each of those to the picture on the right that shows us how to stop noxious weeds from spreading that way.

Blank area for drawing lines connecting pictures.





*Dumping fish tanks into lakes or rivers*



*Brushing off your pet's fur*



*A boat motor covered in weeds*



*Brushing off your boots*



*Some seeds stick to animals' fur*



*Pulling weeds by hand*



*Seeds stuck to a hiking boot*



*Keep fish in their tanks*



*Using a lawn mower to cut weeds*



*Cleaning off a boat*

## Optional Activity

### Letter Writing

You've done a lot of hard work this week! Let's share the cool things you've done with the King County Noxious Weed Control Program in a letter.

**Materials:** Writing utensil, paper

Write a letter to the King County Noxious Weed Control Program letting us know about the cool stuff you did this week! You can use the fill-in-the-blank letter provided on the following page, or write your own. You may also draw a picture instead!

If you would like to send your letter, you may send it to:

King County Noxious Weed Control Program  
201 S. Jackson St., Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98104



Dear King County Noxious Weed Control Program,

This week, I learned a lot about noxious weeds. One thing I learned is: \_\_\_\_\_

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One way I helped stop noxious weeds is: \_\_\_\_\_

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Check out the picture I drew:

Sincerely,

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## Optional Activity

### More Information

If you want to know more about noxious weeds and what we can do to help, there are lots of great things an adult can help you check out on the internet.

Report noxious weeds you see near you here: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/animals-and-plants/noxious-weeds/infestation-form.aspx>

Check out a noxious weed coloring book by Karen Peterson here: <https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/water-and-land/weeds/Brochures/Noxious-Weed-Coloring-Book-King-County-March-2020.pdf>

If you'd like to know what kind of work is being done in your neighborhood, check out the KCNWCP Volunteer Information page here: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/animals-and-plants/noxious-weeds/volunteer-information.aspx>

For pictures of noxious weeds in King County, check out the KCNWCP Neighborhood Bullies Handout: <https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/water-and-land/weeds/Brochures/Neighborhood-Bullies.pdf>



## Optional Activity

### Noxious Weed Stewardship Challenge for Day 5

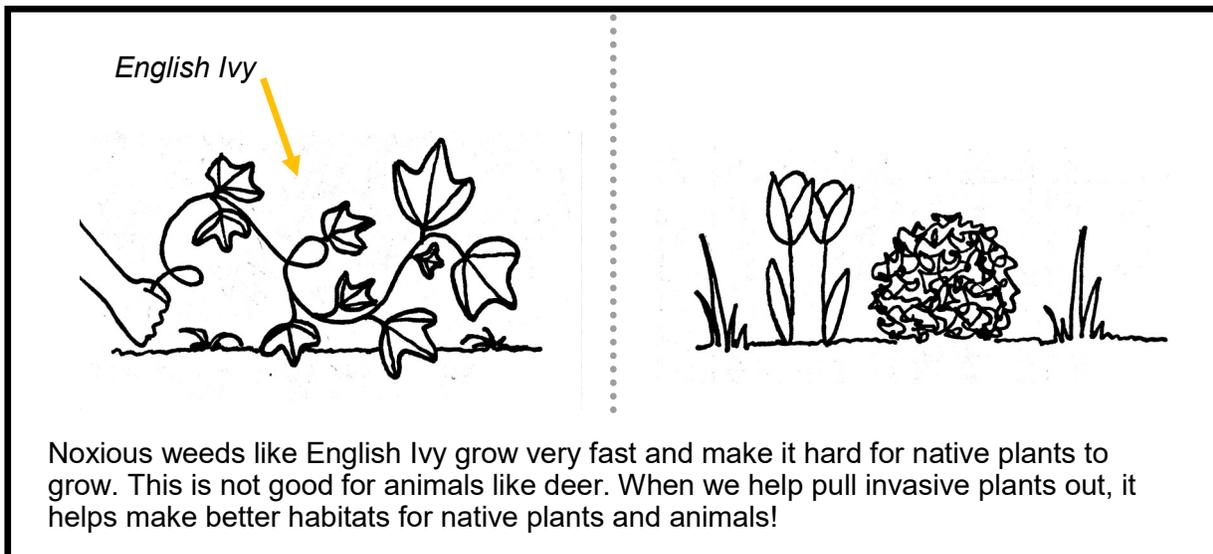
One way we stop noxious weeds is teaching people more about them.

**Materials:** Pencil/pens, paper, colored pencils or crayons or markers

Draw and color a poster to hang in a window to help teach your neighbors about a noxious weed.

1. Fold a piece of paper in half
2. On one half of the paper, draw a picture of yourself pulling noxious weeds. Write what kind of noxious weeds you are pulling above the plants.
3. On the other half, draw what happens to native plants and animals after the noxious weeds are gone.
4. Write a sentence or more at the bottom of the paper telling people about your work.
5. Hang your poster up in a window. Now, when someone walks by your window, your poster will remind them to be a noxious weed warrior!

#### Example Poster:



If you can, have an adult help share your poster today on social media. Don't forget to use the hashtags #kingcountyweeds and #wainvasives and tag @kingcountyweeds @WAINvasiveSpeciesCouncil @PlayCleanGo @naturevisionorg in your post so we can see your work!

## Answer Key

### Day 3 Main Activity: Spot the Weed

#### Answers:

Native plants: Salal, Sword fern, Bleeding heart, Osoberry,

Noxious Weeds:

*Garlic mustard*: small seeds can stick to clothes. Garlic mustard was brought to the Americas as a food for its flavor. Brushing clothes off can prevent spread of garlic mustard.

*English ivy*: harms other plants and trees and can have pests like rats. English ivy was brought to the Americas as a garden plant. Pulling ivy up by the roots and throwing it in the garbage (not compost– it will grow back) or storing it up in a tree where the roots can't get to the ground will keep it from spreading

*Tansy ragwort*: can poison wildlife and domestic animals. Tansy ragwort arrived in the Americas in hay transported for animals. Try to pull up tansy ragwort after it forms a shoot but before it flowers and makes seeds

*Herb Robert*: spreads quickly and chokes out understory plants. Herb Robert was used for gardens then escaped. Herb Robert is fairly easy to pull because the roots are shallow.

## Answer Key

### Day 4 Optional Activity: Weed Pulling Party



What is going on in this weed pulling party?

*First, there is lots of ivy covering all of the soil and the trees. Then, people get together and pull all of the ivy. They work together and use tools. Then, they take all the ivy away in a wheelbarrow. Finally, the soil and trees are not covered in ivy and have space to grow.*

# Answer Key

## Day 5 Main Activity: Steps We Can Take

*Dumping fish tanks into lakes or rivers*

*Brushing off your pet's fur*

*A boat motor covered in weeds*

*Brushing off your boots*

*Some seeds stick to animals' fur*

*Pulling weeds by hand*

*Seeds stuck to a hiking boot*

*Keep fish in their tanks*

*Using a lawn mower to cut weeds*

*Cleaning off a boat*