

Seaweed Evolution Game

Adapted from “Good for Kids Good for Life” evolution activity

Purpose:

To engage students in movement through the evolutionary process seaweed went through since early earth.

Process:

Students will all begin as cyanobacteria, they will play one round of rock paper scissors, the winner will progress to the next stage of evolution: Red algae. The loser will remain a cyanobacteria. The red algae will play rock paper scissors with other red algae, the winner will move on to become green algae, and the loser will remain red algae. Green algae will play rock paper scissors with other green algae, winners will become brown algae. In the event of a tie, they should go find a new member of the class in the same phase.

Begin the process with the students to come up with body motions they will use to indicate which type of algae they are. Example: When they are cyanobacteria they will crouch down, when they are red algae they will sway like they're in water etc. It can be fun for students to make these up.

Note: It can be helpful to establish a rock paper scissors protocol ahead of starting the game because there is some variation on the reveal of the rock, paper, or scissors.

Some things to reinforce:

The reason students are able to ‘evolve’ into the next stage is because they have had traits that make them better at the rock paper scissors game that causes them to separate from their other fellows. Also, that there is no ‘end point’ to evolution as there are going to be cyanobacteria present even when there are brown algae present as well.