

ZEBRA MUSSEL INVASION

GRADE LEVEL: 4 - 8

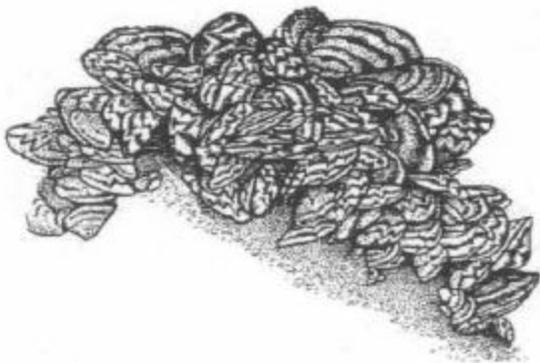
OBJECTIVE:

The student will come to understand the danger of introducing an invasive species into an ecosystem.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHER:

When the Falls of the Ohio State Park Interpretive Center opened in 1994, there were few zebra mussels to be found in the waters of the Ohio around Louisville. It did not take long for this invasive species to wreak havoc on the Ohio River ecosystem. Today there are large numbers of zebra mussel shells that can be found on the fossil beds. (Please note that it is illegal in Indiana to have in your possession any native or non-native mussel or clam shell.)

To learn more about zebra mussels, teachers are invited to check out the Falls "Ecotrunk" on Zebra Mussels which contains excellent resource materials explaining the life cycle of the Zebra Mussel and the dangers they bring to the Ohio River ecosystem. The "Ecotrunk" also contains materials and activities such as the one given below that can be done in your classroom and demonstrate the dangers of the zebra mussel.



Zebra mussels

"DON'T HAVE A CLUE" STORY PROCEDURES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative learning groups. Each group will carry out the entire activity.
2. Give each group a copy of the story, "What happened to Lake Michigan?" and the related questions.
3. Distribute one or more fact cards to each member of the group, and request that they keep them face down for the time being.
4. Read aloud the story "What Happened to Lake Michigan?" At the end of the story direct the students to take turns reading the questions to their group.
5. Have the students silently read their fact cards. If their fact card answers the question they will raise their hand and share the fact card with the group when called upon.
6. Have one student in the group be the recorder and write down the answers to the questions. Students may use all available information from the cards as well as outside knowledge that can be substantiated.
7. Conduct a class discussion on each question allowing each group to contribute its answers. Try to have the class come to a consensus about the answers to the questions.
8. Give each student a copy of the questions so that they can record the answers decided upon by the class.