

## Learning Outcomes

Student will:

- ✓ Know and understand the cycle of life
- ✓ Understand the role of decomposers in the food cycle.

# Play a Game of Decomposition Tag

## Process

Students will:

- Recount knowledge
- Play together

## Skills

Students will:

- Reinforce knowledge of the decomposition process

## Values and Attitudes

Students will:

- Enjoy learning about decomposition

## Background Information

Without decomposers such as bacteria, fungi, worms, ants, beetles, and mites, decomposition would stop and resources which sustain life would be depleted. A seemingly endless variety of decomposers all serve different functions in the decomposition process.

## Management Skills

This game can accommodate any number of participants. It can be a “walking” tag game if it is to be played in a confined area.

## Activities

In undertaking this activity, students will:

- Discuss the life cycle and the role of decomposers in nature and in composting.
- Play a game of tag involving any number of participants, as follows:
  - One participant plays the character ‘death’ and wears a dark coloured armband (in a large group, appoint two ‘death’ characters).
  - Appoint one fifth of the class to be ‘decomposers’ – they wear light coloured armbands.
  - The rest of the class are animal or plant characters.



## Rules of the game:

- When tagged by the death character, plant and animal characters must freeze in place until a decomposer is able to unfreeze them by walking around them three times.
- The decomposers unfreeze plants and animals as fast or faster than death freezes them.

The game has no natural end. Let participants play long enough to experience the concept, and stop the game well before they become exhausted or lose interest.

## Other Options

- To demonstrate that life would stop without decomposers recycling dead things, allow the death character to tag and freeze the decomposer characters along with the plants and animals. The game, and life on earth ends when everyone is frozen except the death character.
- Once everyone is dead on the ground, use guided imagery to encourage students to feel what it might be like to be part of the soil and, slowly, with water and sunlight grow into a plant.
- Students work in groups or as a class to review the life cycle and role of decomposers; discuss their feelings during the game, and what they learned.

