The Great EAB Escapade

Outdoor Activity

Primary Objective:

Kids will test their knowledge about the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) beetle. At the conclusion of the activity, kids will also discover how the movement of firewood may or may not spread the pest and therefore, you should never move it.

Overview:

Use this activity to introduce your campers/scouts/students to the EAB. You can alert them to the EAB's destructive habits, and how they can take action and ***Stop The Beetle***! The activity is fun to play outside … but it can work inside on a rainy day, too! "Location Leaders" will challenge teams with EAB trivia questions during the activity.

Supplies Needed:

- Bundles of sticks, one for each team or individual (5 sticks of *long* and *short* lengths per bundle. Be sure the sticks are easily distinguishable as long or short; quantities of long versus short should vary per bundle.)

- 5 Copies of the *EAB Investigator* (one per "location"), assembled. Circle a different question on each *Investigator*. (This will be the question asked at a specific location.)

Getting Ready:

1. Familiarize yourself with the EAB information in the Leader's Folio, to be able to answer questions.
2. Choose 5 separate spots to serve as imaginary "locations" (they can be outside or inside, but should be within sight distance of each other):
   Note: you may choose to invite Team Leaders to designate their own locations in Activity Step 1; see back page.
   - — Forest
   - — Backyard
   - — Campground
   - — Neighborhood Park
   - — Fishing area

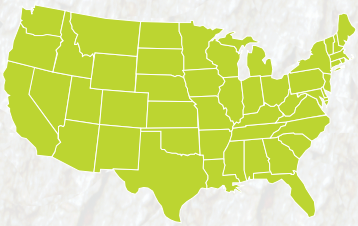
"Back Story"

Introducing the Activity

Gather your group together and tell them: *There's something happening to the ash trees in our state. They're dying! Ash trees are important to both our environment and our economy.*

A beetle called the Emerald Ash Borer beetle (EAB for short) is killing these trees. It's called "Emerald" because it's a beautiful metallic green color. But it's so small that it can fit on a penny – so in fact, you probably won't ever see one. The EAB lays its eggs on the bark of the tree, and when the eggs hatch, the larvae eat into the tree. They hide inside the tree where they develop and grow, disrupting the systems that transport food and water to the tree and eventually killing it.

We think the EAB got to the U.S. from Asia by "hitchhiking" in shipping materials. It was first detected in Michigan in 2002. Now, it has been detected in other States. So we have to wonder: How did it get to so many States?



Today, we'll visit fictional "locations" like the ones we have around our state. These are the types of places that may have ash trees that could be destroyed by the beetle. We're going to learn more about ash trees and the EABs that can harm them!

Activity Steps

1. Choose five kids to serve as Location Leaders, one for each fictional location. Give each Leader an assembled *EAB Investigator* (be sure a question is circled), and have him/her go to their "location."
2. Divide the remaining kids into teams of two or three (or, kids can work individually).
3. Give each team (or individual) a bundle of five (long and short) sticks.
4. As fast as they can, each team must go to each "location." (Encourage them to start in different directions, to avoid "crowding" in the closest location.) Once there, the Location Leader will pose his/her circled question from the *EAB Investigator*.

   If answered correctly: The team (or individual) will leave any stick from their bundle at the location, and move on to another location.

   If answered incorrectly: The team/individual can move on, but they can't leave a stick.
5. The winning team (or individual) is the first to visit every location and have no sticks (or the fewest number) left.

Extra copies of the *EAB Investigator* may be downloaded FREE at **www.HungryPests.com**

Wrap-Up

Once all teams have returned to the starting point, explain to them that sticks they were carrying were "firewood." The long sticks represented EAB-infested firewood, while the short sticks were healthy logs. Where did the EAB firewood end up?

Walk with the group back to each location, and see how much EAB firewood was left behind. Ask the group:

- *Which locations had firewood moved to them?* (probably, all of them)
- *Could you tell whether the firewood had the EAB hidden inside?* (NO!!)
- *What do you think will happen to the ash trees in the locations if the firewood is infested with the EAB?* (The trees in the area will become infested with the EAB)
- *Who put the infested firewood in the location?* (The kids did … but they didn't know which firewood was infested!)
- *What does this tell you about how the EAB has moved from state to state?* (People helped the beetle move, by moving firewood from one place to another. Just as the kids didn't know which sticks may be infested with EAB larvae, people can't tell if actual firewood may have EAB larvae in it.)

Closure Message:

Even though they may not realize it, *people* are moving the beetle by moving firewood. If you move infested firewood to a new location, you can cause that location to become infested and ash trees will die. Since you can't tell if firewood is infested, the simple rule is to never move it.

Bottom Line: **Stop the Beetle . . . Now!**
Everyone shouts: **Don't Move Firewood!**

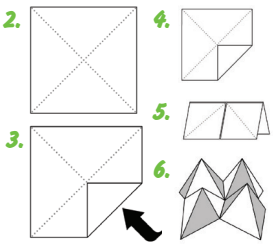
EAB Investigator

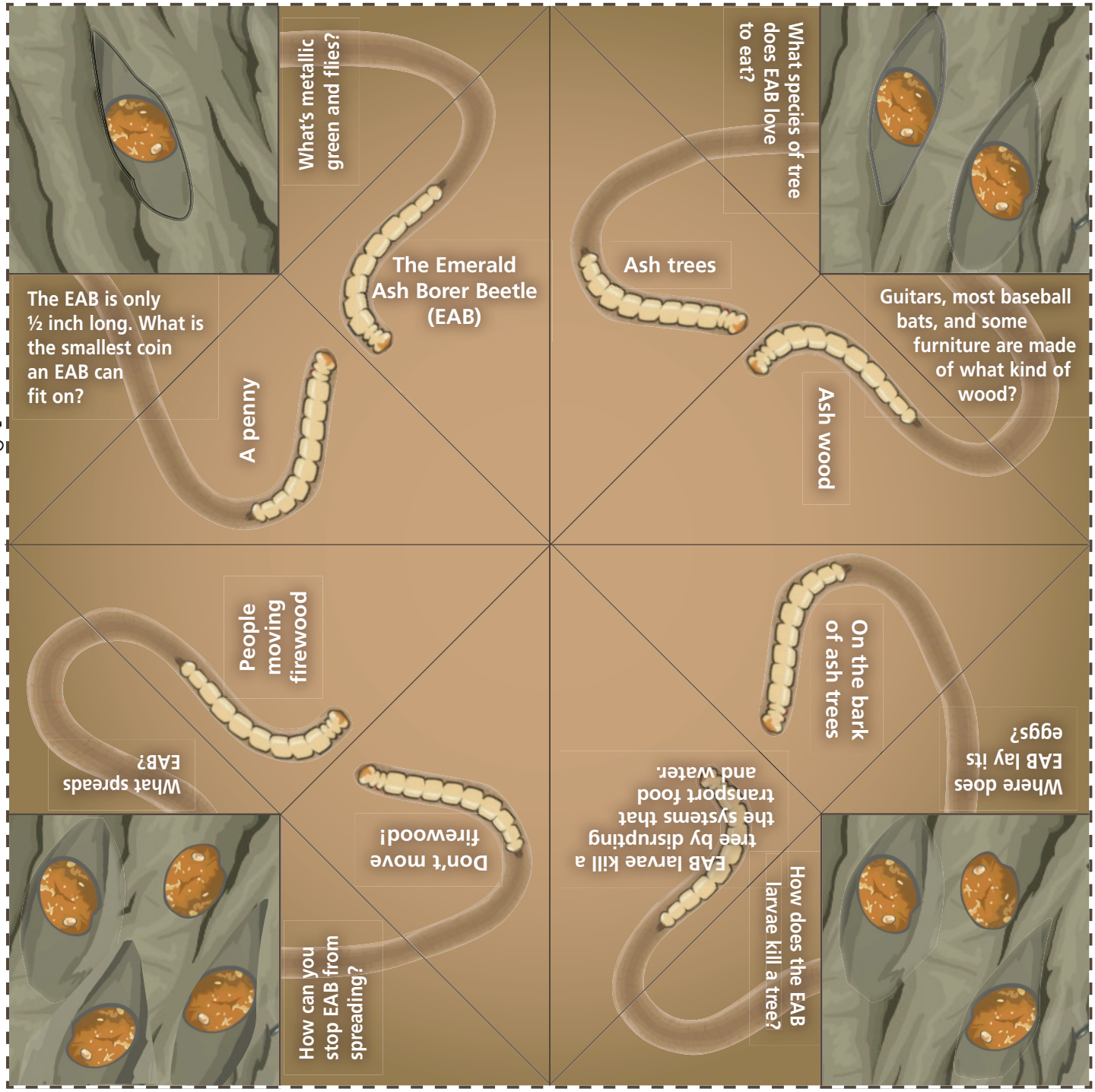
www.HungryPests.com

You now know about the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) beetle: how it hides under bark and destroys ash trees. You've discovered how important it is to stop it, so now *you* can share this news with others, too! Use this *EAB Investigator* to alert your family, friends, and neighbors. First, try to stump them with the EAB "investigation questions." Then, share what you've learned through your own *Stop the Beetle: Now!* exploration: EAB larvae can be hidden under the bark, so you should **never move firewood**. You never know what could be lurking inside!

Folding Instructions

1. Cut along the dotted line.
2. Place the *EAB Investigator* image-side down. Fold 2 opposite corners together to form a triangle. Crease and unfold. Now fold the other 2 corners together; crease and unfold. You'll see the "center point."
3. Fold each corner to the center point.
4. Turn the folded paper over and fold each corner into the center.
5. Fold the square in half. Unfold it and fold it in half the other way.
6. Using both hands, place your thumbs and index fingers under the bark flaps.



How to Play

- Have a player pick a number between 1 and 5. Open/close the EAB Investigator that many times.
- Now have the player choose a number on a bark flap (noted by EAB eggs), from 1 to 4.
- Ask the question under the chosen flap.
- Invite the player to answer, then lift the flap to see if correct.
- Be sure to show the player the EAB larvae hidden under the bark!