



Curriculum Set: Climate Initiative

Young Ambassadors for Birds in the Face of Climate Change

Lesson 7: Migration

Goal: Students are introduced to the topic of migration, and the impacts climate change will have on it. They learn about why birds migrate, which birds migrate, and how they migrate. Energy is discussed, as well as the fine balance between having enough fat reserves to migrate and eating so much that a bird is unable to fly.

Science

Grades 4-8

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Migration Obstacle Course

1. Set up obstacle course and explain each obstacle to the students:

Colored paper	Breeding territories at the end of migration	Only one student can stand on a territory at a time.
Saran wrap between chairs	Window	Fly under
Plastic bags/bandanas	Pesticide-ridden fields	Jump over
Traffic cones	Bright lights and communication towers	Put on blindfold and weave through cones
Boxes	Tall buildings	Jump over
Rope grid on floor (2 squares wide by 5 squares long)	Power lines	Jump in every square without touching the ropes
Stationary person with arms out, turning back-and-forth	Wind farm	Fly around
Hula hoops	Shrinking habitat	Jump in each one without missing
Person crawls along a straight horizontal line	Cat	Fly past the cat without being touched
Milk jugs/pillows/small boxes/bean bags/balloons	Fat/energy reserves	Carry as much fat as you can to help you migrate.

2. Explain that you are a migratory bird flying back to Wisconsin for the summer. The goal is to avoid all the hazards in order to survive AND to find habitat in the summer breeding grounds.
3. Pass out the bird game cards. Tell each student to determine what type of migrant they are (long distance or short distance). Also have them identify the type of habitat they require.
4. To make the obstacle course MORE challenging, have the kids carry "fat" with them on migration. Explain that long distance migrants must carry 5 balloons, while short-distance migrants must only carry 2 balloons. If they drop any balloons, they must forage for food (stop to pick up balloons at the beginning)!
5. Students must also land in and defend their own territory at the end of migration. They must select a type of habitat that is compatible with the bird they are. Only one student may be on a piece of paper. If you do not find habitat, you are unable to reproduce, and you lose.



Adjust this lesson for different age groups:

Less Challenging:

- Start with the story about bird migration for elementary students. The pictures and story will help engage them, and you will repeat some of the material in the presentation.
- Use the easy questions for the trivia game.
- Use fewer obstacles for the obstacle course, or use “fat” that is easy to carry (empty milk jugs)

More Challenging:

- Use all of the details/facts for the presentation.
- Use the hard questions for the trivia game.
- Use more obstacles for the obstacle course, or use “fat” that is hard to carry (soccer balls)

Resources:

Gans, Roma, Mirocha, Paul. 1996. How do birds find their way? Let's Read-and-Find-Out-Science. Harper Collins Publishers Inc. New York, NY.