

Amazing Animal Journeys: Exploring Migration!

Materials Needed:

- World map or globe
- Pictures or toy figures of migrating animals (e.g., monarch butterfly, Canada goose, humpback whale, caribou)
- Construction paper (various colors)
- Crayons or markers
- Scissors (child-safe)
- Glue stick
- Optional: Yarn or string
- Optional: Computer/tablet with internet access for short videos (parent supervised)

Lesson Activities:

1. Introduction: What's a Big Trip? (5-10 minutes)

Start with a question: "Have you ever gone on a really long trip, maybe to visit family or for a vacation? Why did you go?" Briefly discuss the reasons for travel. Then, introduce the idea that some animals take incredibly long trips every single year! Ask: "Why do you think an animal might need to travel a very long way?"

2. What is Migration? (10-15 minutes)

Explain migration simply: "Migration is when animals travel long distances from one place to another, usually at the same time each year. It's like a super important, planned trip for them."

Discuss the main reasons for migration:

- **Weather:** Moving somewhere warmer when it gets cold, or somewhere cooler when it gets too hot.
- **Food:** Traveling to find more food when it becomes scarce in one area.
- **Babies:** Going to a specific place to have and raise their young safely.

Show pictures of migrating animals (goose, whale, butterfly, caribou). Talk briefly about where they live and why they migrate. (e.g., "Canada geese fly south in the winter to find open water and food.", "Monarch butterflies fly thousands of miles to Mexico to stay warm.")

Optional: Show a short, age-appropriate video clip of an animal migration.

3. Mapping the Journey (15 minutes)

Bring out the world map or globe. Choose one or two migrating animals discussed.

- Show the student where the animal starts its journey (e.g., Canada/Northern US for Canada geese).
- Show them where the animal travels to (e.g., Southern US/Mexico for Canada geese).
- Use your finger, or yarn/string, to trace the general route on the map. Emphasize the long distance.
- Repeat for another animal with a different type of journey (e.g., Humpback whales migrating from cold feeding waters to warm breeding waters).

Discuss: "Wow, that's a long way! What challenges might these animals face on their journey?" (Weather, finding food, predators, obstacles like buildings or roads).

4. Migration Craft: Flying South! (15-20 minutes)

Let's make a migrating animal! The student can choose an animal (like a bird or butterfly).

- Use construction paper, crayons/markers, scissors, and glue to create the animal.
- Encourage creativity! They can make it colorful and add details.
- While crafting, review: "Why does your animal migrate? Where is it going?"

5. Wrap-up and Discussion (5-10 minutes)

Review the key points: What is migration? Why do animals do it? Name some migrating animals.

Ask: "How can we help migrating animals?" (Discuss simple ideas: keeping parks clean, reducing pollution, planting flowers for butterflies, not disturbing wildlife, turning off unnecessary lights at night during bird migration seasons).

6. Assessment/Check for Understanding:

Observe student participation in discussions and map activity. Ask questions throughout. Review the craft and the student's explanation of their animal's migration. For a slightly more formal check, ask the student to draw a picture of one migrating animal and tell you one reason it migrates.