



Title: Oh Moose!

Adapted from *Project WILD*, <http://www.projectwild.org/>.

Theme: Animals need food, water, and shelter to survive.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to name three habitat necessities for animal survival: food, water, and shelter.
- Students will understand that there will be fewer animals when there are fewer habitat resources.

Duration: 15-30 minutes

Age Range: 2nd-8th Grade

Materials:

- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- Dry erase or colored markers
- Notebooks (optional)

Background:

This fun activity is meant to introduce students to the concept that animals need certain habitat resources, specifically food, water, and shelter. When those resources decline, the animal population will decline as well. The game pairs well with more focused learning about habitats through activities like "Stake A Claim" and "Habitat Models."

Preparation:

Clear a large area in the classroom, move to the gym/multi-purpose room, or head outside to the playground.

Introduction:

Ask students to think about what they need to survive. Brainstorm a list that includes water, shelter, and food. Explain that all animals require some sort of food, water, and shelter to survive.

Activities & Procedures:

Divide students into two groups and line them up along opposite edges of the playing area. One group will represent resources; the other will start as moose. Have the class make up a sign for food (i.e. rubbing your belly), for water (i.e. sticking your tongue way out), and for shelter (i.e. using your arms to make a roof overhead). When you say “Oh Moose,” students in the resource group will individually show one of the three signs indicating that they are food, water, or shelter. Students in the moose group will simultaneously each show one of those three signs, indicating what they are in need of that round. A “moose” student who shows the sign for food must run (or walk, shuffle, skip, etc.) to the other side and gently tag a “resource” showing the sign for food before that resource is tagged by another moose. Resources that are tagged support a moose population that can raise healthy calves. They become moose and join the moose side. Moose that cannot find the resource they need perish, are recycled through the ecosystem and become new resources and join the moose side. As the game progresses, graph the number of moose in each round on the whiteboard. Play for at least 5 rounds.

Wrap-up:

Examine the graph. Ask students what happened to the moose when there were a lot of them. (*The population declined.*) Ask students what happened when there were few moose and lots of resources. (*The population increased.*) Figure out what the carrying capacity of the ecosystem is – when was the population most stable? (*Usually this number is about half the size of the class.*) Ask students what else moose need to survive. Discuss other ecosystem factors that might affect the moose – hard winters, competition from other animals, increase in predators, new roads or more car traffic, etc.

Evaluation:

Assess student responses during wrap-up discussion, or have students write the responses in their notebooks. Note student behavior during the activity to assess their following of directions.

Oh Moose Standards

Science As Inquiry and Process: Students develop an understanding of the processes and applications of scientific inquiry.

SA3

Students develop an understanding that culture, local knowledge, history, and interaction with the environment contribute to the development of scientific knowledge, and that local applications provide opportunity for understanding scientific concepts and global issues.

The student demonstrates an understanding that interactions with the environment provide an opportunity for understanding scientific concepts by:

[4, 5] SA3.1 identifying the local limiting factors (e.g., weather, human influence, species interactions) that determine which plants and/or animals survive

Concepts of Life Science: Students develop an understanding of the concepts, models, theories, facts, evidence, systems, and processes of life science.

SC2

Students develop an understanding of the structure, function, behavior, development, life cycles, and diversity of living organisms.

The student demonstrates an understanding of the structure, function, behavior, development, life cycles, and diversity of living organisms by:

[4] SC2.2 describing the basic characteristics and requirements of living things

SC3

Students develop an understanding that all organisms are linked to each other and their physical environments through the transfer and transformation of matter and energy.

The student demonstrates an understanding that all organisms are linked to each other and their physical environments through the transfer and transformation of matter and energy by:

[3] SC3.1 identifying and sorting examples of living and non-living things in the local environment

[4] SC3.1 identifying examples of living and non-living things and the relationship between them(e.g., living things need water, herbivores need plants)