

Animal Migration Obstacle Course

Some questions to ask students before they complete the obstacle course are listed below. The students could even help create the obstacle course after talking about migration and obstacles that animals encounter along the way.

What is migration?

To migrate is to travel seasonally (spring and autumn) between different and usually distant areas. Animals return year after year to the same summer and winter areas. Animals move from one area to another to find better habitat to survive and raise more young than they would otherwise.

What are some animals that migrate?

Animals from all groups migrate!!

Mammals— ungulates, bats, whales

Birds – songbirds, geese, Sandhill cranes, raptors

Reptiles – sea turtles, salamanders

Insects – monarch butterflies

Fish – catfish (415 miles into Montana), salmon, trout

Do you think it is an easy journey for them?

In Wyoming, we have the longest deer migration in the country. 150 miles from the Red Desert to Hoback Basin which takes them 4 months. What are some obstacles they might face in their migration?

Fences

Roads and cars

Rivers

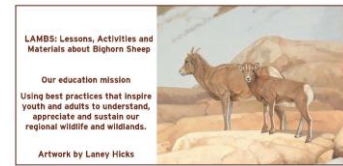
Predators

Adequate food

Homes and Development

Deep snow

Mountains



Activity: Students are deer migrating through obstacles between winter and summer ranges. These are ideas we have used but feel free to come up with your own ideas. Use something to designate the side boundaries of the obstacle course such as rope, ribbon, tape or chalk. We would love to see pictures of your obstacles course! If you have questions or would like to see what we have used as obstacles, please let me know karen@bighorn.org.

Predators	Have several pictures or stuffed animals that the student has to jump over or go around. If they touch a picture or stuffed animal, they have been eaten by that predator. Predators of bighorn sheep include bears, mountain lions, wolves, coyotes and golden eagles. Make this section 3-5 feet long.
River crossing	Students have to jump over a river which can be represented by a carpet remnant, tape outline, chalk outline, ribbon, pillow case, etc. This section should be a size they can jump over fairly easily.
Deep Snow	Students have to jump on one foot through this area to represent the difficulty animals can have moving through the snow. The snow can be represented by carpet runner, tape or chalk outline, sheet, etc. Make this section about 5 feet long.
Road crossing	Students have to cross the road without a collision with a vehicle. You can use pictures of vehicles, hot wheels or other toy vehicles that are staggered so the students have to find a way through them without stepping on one. Make this section 3-5 feet long.
Low fence	Students have to jump over a fence which can be represented by a ribbon or rope, taped or tied to a chair or other object on each side of the course. The ribbon or rope should be low enough that they can jump over it and flimsy enough that they won't trip and be injured if they can't jump over it.
High fence	Students have to go under a fence which can be represented by a ribbon or rope, taped or tied to a chair or other object on each side of the course. The ribbon or rope should be high enough that they have to crawl or bend to get under it.
Forest	Students have to hurry through the forest because bighorn sheep prefer open areas instead of dense forest so they can watch out for danger. We used a play tunnel that the students crawled through to show the limited vision sheep have when in dense forest.