



ANIMALS & HABITATS

Objectives:

- Students will learn about several animals that live in South America.
- Students will connect the animals to the specific habitats in which they live.

Recommended Grades: 3-5

Materials (all included in the trunk):

- 24 colored poly spots (6 purple, 5 blue, 4 orange, 9 green)
- 24 menu holders
- 24 Animals and Habitats picture cards

Teacher Preparation: 10 minutes

- Place the 24 colored poly spots on the specific map locations (provided on the map key)
- Place one menu holder on top of each poly spot
- Review picture cards to be acquainted with the animals and their habitats

Rules:



Shoes are not allowed on the map. Please have students remove shoes before walking on the map.



No writing utensils on the map.

INTRODUCTION & STUDENT PREPARATION

Students may first need a general introduction or tour of the South America map. This teacher-led activity can serve as an introduction or review of some of the major physical features of South America. Walk over the map and show (or direct selected students to stand on) the following:

Pacific Ocean

Atlantic Ocean

Caribbean Sea

Andes Mountains

Amazon River

Equator

Galápagos Islands

South Georgia Island

Falkland Islands

Lake Titicaca

Cape Horn

Atacama Desert

Remember to note the colors on the map that represent countries, elevation (or relief), and water. Direct some students to stand on and name each country. Have students face north on the map by using the compass rose located in each corner and then turn and face each of the other three cardinal directions (south, east, west) before starting.

PLAYING THE GAME

Divide the class into 4 groups – red, yellow, green, and blue – and instruct each group to gather next to their “Base Camp” (the colored circles in the corners of the map). Make the teams as even as possible with six to eight students in each.

Quickly review the following information about the four habitats they see represented on the map by the colored poly spots. Physically show these areas on the map.

Mountain Habitats: Purple Poly Spots (6) Includes forests and special high-altitude habitats with low plants and grasslike alpine tundra.

River & Wetland Habitats: Blue Poly Spots (5) Includes lakes, swamps, and flood plains in lowland areas.

Island Habitats: Orange Poly Spots (4) Vary in climate by latitude, but usually support unique animals well adapted to the environment.

Rain Forest Habitats: Green Poly Spots (9) May be Tropical or Temperate with at least 80 inches of rain per year and support the largest diversity of plants and animals on Earth.

Make sure the colors of the animal picture cards are mixed up and count out six for each group. Place them (picture up) in a stack at the base camps.

Tell students they are competing with the other teams to accurately place their cards on the poly spots. Their first clue is the color of each card because that color corresponds to the color of the poly spots (habitats) on the map. When you tell students to begin, one or two students from each group will pick up the first card and go onto the map and try to discover its correct location using the two clues on the back of each card. When they decide on a location they place the card in the menu holder on the poly spot and then return to their base camp line. At this point, the next student or students proceed with the next card. This will continue until all teams have finished their six cards.

There can be more than one card placed in each menu holder, but only one will be correct (to be revealed later).

Students who run, touch, impede other students, or knock over a menu holder will have to leave the map, return the card to the bottom of their pile, get back in line, and wait for another turn.

When all the groups have finished, ask individual students to sit by each animal and read its description out loud to the class. If pressed for time, choose to read the descriptions yourself. If there is more than one card in a menu holder move the incorrect animal to the correct location and then read its description to the class.

In conclusion, ask the students these questions:

- Is there a pattern to where the animals are and where they are not?
- Why do these patterns exist? This may lead to a discussion about the competition between humans and animals for space and resources (food and water). In general, animals will tend to live and survive in less populated areas and away from cities.

Give students time to explore the map with all the animals present before collecting the picture cards and menu holders.

POLY SPOT LOCATION GUIDE

