**Giant Traveling Map Lesson**

**TITLE / AUTHOR: Discovering Colorado Ecosystems** / Carmen Moyer

**COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS / SUITABLE DISCIPLINES:**

* Social Studies 2.1.d
* Science 2.1.a

**OBJECTIVES:**

Students will:

* Locate Colorado habitats on a map, using map features and habitat details.
* Explain why plants grow and animals live in different parts of Colorado.

**RECOMMENDED GRADES:** Second Grade

**TIME NEEDED:** 45 minutes

**MATERIALS:**

* Giant Map keys
* Habitat Posters from the Colorado Department of Wildlife
* Habitat cards (7)
* Animal cards (11)
* Landform cards (14)

**PREPARATION:**

* Landform cards
* Habitat cards with description of habitats/zones
* Animal cards with description of some aspects of the habitat in which they live

**RULES:**

* Shoes are not allowed on the map. Please have students remove shoes before walking on the map.
* No writing utensils on the map.
* No sliding on the map.

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Break students into four groups, one for each color dot in the corners of the map.
2. Find different features on map based on key (10 minutes)
   1. Ask students to find interesting features on the map features
   2. Ask what they see and notice. Have them use the key to figure out what different details mean. Make sure to discuss mountains, rivers, plains, desert, and continental divide. When discussing one of those features, have one of the four groups go stand on that feature on the map.
3. Match habitats and animals to map landforms.
   1. Pass each group a set of cards (1 landform and 2-3 animal cards). Mix the cards, so each group has cards from various habitats.
   2. Place landform cards (10 minutes)
      1. **I do:** Teacher shows a river card. Teacher reads the description aloud. Teacher thinks aloud what types of features the river has and what the map feature might fit. Has students help find the river feature to stand on.
      2. **We do:** Teacher has a student help with the lake card. Student and teacher read the description. Student figures out that the card is a lake (with teacher help if needed) and stands on a lake.
      3. **You do:** Ask groups to find their landform card. Have students discuss what kind of land features their landform card describes and compare those to the features on the map to figure out where the landform belongs on the map. One student from each group should take the landform card and stand where the group decides it goes.
      4. Have students work in their groups to read the descriptions on the back of their cards and use what they know about the different landforms to decide where each animal and plant may live and what kind of weather might be in each area.
      5. Have each group explain why they chose that location on the map, allow questions, and then ask class for thumbs up/down if they agree with location
   3. Place animal cards (15-20 minutes)
      1. **I do/we do:** Teacher shows a fish card. Teacher reads the description aloud. Teacher thinks aloud what type of habitat the fish needs to survive. Teacher decides the fish should be in the mountains. Kids protest (hopefully). Then help teacher decide on the river.
      2. **We do:** Teacher enlists student to show a duck card. Student and teacher read the description aloud. Student decides the duck should live on a lake.
      3. **You do:** Groups now work through the rest of their cards, placing a student with each card on the map.
      4. In the last 5 minutes, have each group give 2-3 details, describing why they chose that location.
         1. Discuss any misplaced cards.
         2. Discuss any cards that might be in additional zones.

**MODIFICATIONS:**

Some students will need help reading the descriptions on the cards. Either a teacher or another student can help. Perhaps assign a reader for each group.

**EXTENSIONS:**

Students can work on group projects on the various life zones in Colorado prior to the Giant Map visit. With the map, each group briefly explains their life zones (2 to 3 minutes). Then, students can determine in which habitat each animal described on the cards lives.

Additional information can be obtained from this website:

http://shelledy.mesa.k12.co.us/staff/computerlab/ColoradoLifeZonesInformation\_Elevation\_Climate.html