

Lesson: Kids on the Edge

Students will experience mountain goat life through the simulation of walking the trails and finding food. While traveling to and from the grazing grounds and while eating, mountain goats attempt to avoid predators.

Background

Check out the [Mountain Goats Facts](#) page for background information on mountain goats.

Materials

- Mountain Goat course: The course may be made up of flat boards, balance beams, boxes, paper plates, and craft foam. Floor tape, lines in the gym, and cones may be used to fence in the grazing area. If using wood, we recommend you keep the wood on the ground. Flour or baby powder could also be used.
- Flagging tape, bandanas, or other material — to differentiate Nannies, Billies, and Kids.
- Food tokens (chips or construction paper). These should be placed along the trail and in the grazing area.

Objectives

Students will understand the hazards and perils of the life of a mountain goat.

Procedure

1. Students are tagged Kids, Nannies or Billies. Have about half as many Kids as Nannies and about a quarter as many Billies as Nannies. Two students will be given the role of mountain lions. Kids will have a handicap. For the first two years of life the mortality rate of Kids is very high. During this time the Kids will not be able to put their hands out for balance. If the arms go out while walking on the trail, then they have fallen and are out. The Kids are also not allowed to steal flags from predators.
2. Only Nannies and Billies can defend themselves and snatch the flags from predators.
3. Goats, with Nannies leading, proceed from one side of the course to the grazing area and back. They collect food tokens along the trail and in the grazing area. Each adult goat will need to collect at least 7 food tokens. Each kid will need to collect at least 5.
4. Goats are “out” if they fall off the course, get eaten by a predator, or if they do not collect enough food tokens.
5. While on the trail, goats cannot be preyed upon. Kids may be taken by an occasional Eagle.
6. Once the goats reach the grazing area, they are to collect food tokens and return to the start of the course.
7. Predators (mountain lions) are located in the mountain goat grazing area. A goat is captured when the predator steals the goat's flag. The predator must walk the goat to the “out of bounds” area.
8. Predators don't always get their prey. Predators have 2 flags attached to them. Goats can steal their flags indicating a successful attack by the goat. If the predator loses all flags, then they have had an unsuccessful hunt, and must leave the hunting grounds.



Thanks to Idaho Fish and Game and Project WILD for their help and information. All of the lesson plans and activity sheets are provided by Idaho Project Wild. Permission was granted to use this material for educational purposes.



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Evaluation

Use writing to explain the role you played in the activity from the point of view of that animal. What were your difficulties? What were your successes?

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