



Matching Animals to Continents

Many human activities, such as manufacturing products and driving cars, release greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change (the gradual warming of our atmosphere which could result in many negative outcomes for people and animals around the world).

In this exercise, students are introduced to the effects of climate change and increasing temperatures on wildlife. By cutting and placing each animal in its appropriate continent based on the descriptions provided, students will practice their geography, reading comprehension, and motor skills.

Preparation

- Print out a copy of the map and animal cutouts for each student (or for pairs)
- Make sure every table has some scissors, glue and color pencils

Starting the activity

Have each student begin by reading the descriptions provided. This can be done individually or as a class. Each student should then colour each continent on the map with a different colour and cut out the animal cutouts. Then, they should carefully stick them on the continents where they believe the animal lives.

Review their work with the answer key below and, as a class, discuss some of the ways these animals are impacted by climate change using the discussion point below.

Answer key

- Moose: North America
- Glass frogs: South America
- Fire Salamander: Europe
- Hippopotamus: Africa
- Tiger: Asia
- Koala: Australasia



Climate change is making the homes of many animals warm and difficult for them to live in. This can be due to intense heat during the summer months and less predictable extreme weather that can lead to floods or fires.

Moose, for example, become stressed due to the higher temperatures in the summer and have started moving further north to more suitable and cool locations as temperatures continue to increase..

Hotter temperatures also make some areas more suitable for diseases. Glass frogs are currently being affected by diseases that they usually don't interact with in South and Central America. Fire Salamanders are also exposed to similar temperature-sensitive diseases, not to mention the changes in humidity and dryer temperatures.

Drier weather also affects the Hippopotamus as higher temperatures dry up bodies of water needed to cool and hydrate these animals.

Increasing temperatures is also leading to rising sea levels which means animal habitats like that of tigers can become smaller. Finally, droughts can force animals like koalas to travel farther to find water and cause forest fires.

To end on a more positive note, we recommend discussing all the ways we can limit these rising temperatures and help protect these animals by lowering the amount of “nasty gases” (emissions) we release. Below you can find a list of things everyone can do to help!

- Saving energy (taking shorter showers, turning off the lights and appliances when we don't need them)
- Walking and biking instead of driving
- Eating less meat
- Talking to your friends and family about what you learned today
- Repairing things instead of throwing them away
- Writing letters to our representatives asking them to take more climate action

We welcome feedback and would be delighted to hear your thoughts on this activity. Feel free to send an email to schools@climatescience.org and we'll be sure to get back to you soon :)