

Introduce students to butterfly migration by participating in a movement activity. Set up 12 numbered stations in the hall. Station 1 will be Canada and Station 12 is Mexico. For example, one scenario would have students start in Canada, travel over the Great Lakes (station 1), then New York (station 2), Pennsylvania (3), West Virginia (4), Kentucky (5), Tennessee (6), Alabama (7) Mississippi (8), Louisiana (9), Texas (10) and end in Mexico. Another path might travel through Midwestern states. Choose states that will help your students learn regional geography. The purpose of this activity is for students to simulate the monarch's annual fall migration south. All students start in Canada and roll a dice at each station to determine the next stop on their journey. Each butterfly might make it to the next station, it might have a narrow escape, or it might be eaten by a bird! Give students a total of 14 rolls to make the entire trip before winter sets in. Those that make it to the winter roosting site in Mexico will survive. Some will not make it the entire way, as not all butterflies survive the journey. Students should keep a journal of their migration and add illustrations to it. Integrate writing and art by having them write a narrative of their journey either in story or comic form. To integrate geography, make sure the states along the route correspond to those along a path of migration near you. The table below provides a sample of the activity. To save space, the entire game isn't provided in the Table, but you can easily see how easy it is to develop a variety of potential scenarios at each station. Get creative and set up some events that help your students to learn about regional geography as they play the game. This activity may be best for intermediate age students (grades 2 – 5) and to manage this activity, you'll want to pair students up with their own dice and stagger the start of their journeys. As each pair finishes they can start journaling about their experience to keep students on task.