



Raptor Resource Project Lesson Plans

To find more plans, go to www.raptorresource.org

Lesson Plan: Just Passing Through

Grade/Level	Intermediate/Middle School
Time Allotment	1-2 class periods, will include homework, or research time
Content Area(s)	Life science, animal behavior, animal migration

Objectives

To understand what a flyway is and to investigate one bird species found on the Mississippi Flyway and its migration.

Curricular Connections

LS-1: From Molecules to Organisms
LS-2: Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy and Dynamics
Social Studies: Locations on a map, map reading

Instructional Materials

Maps of North America, Central America and South America, or possibly world maps; blank maps for students to draw on. Maps are included with the downloadable lesson package.

Resources

Use the RRP Video Library to choose a species. Click on the menu icon in the top right of either the Sandhill Cranes or Waterfowl and Shorebirds Videos:

- <https://raptorresource.org/waterfowl-and-shorebird-videos/>

Follow these links for a look at each species:

- Sandhill Cranes: https://youtu.be/3G_sMyw6eU8
- Great Egret: <https://youtu.be/6USVnN6ySiQ>
- Female Mallard: <https://youtu.be/b2ZkoThFjIM>
- View of area where cam is located: <https://youtu.be/LU11WxLwNyl>
- American White Pelicans and Bald Eagle: https://youtu.be/B_JsHbnEig

- Tundra swans, northern pintails, and a Great Horned Owl:
<https://youtu.be/q3XaxUW7Quo>

Background Knowledge

Basic knowledge of the Upper Mississippi River; understanding of the word “migration”, location and background on this bird cam.

<https://www.raptorresource.org/birdcams/flyway-cam/>

Opener

Ask students: What is the longest trip you’ve ever taken? How did you travel? (car, train, plane, etc). What your reason for the trip? Optional: Have students trace on a map the route they took; figure the mileage

Procedure/Method/Activity

1. Students will do a quick “search and find” on flyways, particularly the Mississippi Flyway. Here is one possible starting site with basic facts and a map:
<https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/flyways.php>
2. Students will locate the RRP Flyway cam on a map
3. Students will view one or more of the videos listed in the Resource section to acquaint themselves with the flyway and some migratory species.
4. Students will select one of the birds from the videos in the Resources section and will conduct research on their selected bird. They will find out: where and when the bird travels, and what happens in their life cycle at their summer and winter locations and how far they travel. <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/> is an excellent place to find information about birds. The site incorporates peer-reviewed information, including range maps, vocalizations, and life histories.
5. Students will share their findings in one of the following ways:
 - a. Label a map of the migration pattern and identify the location of the RRP Flyway cam, winter and summer destinations, a brief description of what happens at those locations (breeding, resting, nesting) and approximate timing of events
OR
 - b. Assume the role of the bird and write 4-5 Facebook, SnapChat, or text entries of the migration, including dates, location, and activity. Include stopping at the RRP Flyway cam on Lake Onalaska.

Assessment

Students compare the route of their longest trip with the migration of their chosen bird.

Extension

How do bird migrations compare to the migrations of a chosen land animal?