

MUTUAL of OMAHA'S
WILD KINGDOM

Tune in Sundays at 7pm E/P

Where in the World?

Objective

To put content learned from *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* episodes into geographical context; to learn or review basic world geography; to introduce the concepts of habitat and range.

Grades

K-6

Part A: Wild Animal Atlas

You may wish to use the geography guide at the end of this lesson as a reference.

Materials

- Masking tape
- Push pins
- World map (poster or wall size)

Procedure

1. After watching each episode of *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom*, identify the geographic location of the animal's habitat as depicted in the episode (e.g., Wrangel Island, Kalahari Desert, Central African Republic) and locate it on your classroom's world map. For grades 3—6, ask for student volunteers to try to find the location themselves.
2. Mark with a pin flag or similar marker until the end of the unit. Optional: use masking tape to gently adhere corresponding animal card to the map.
3. Ask students the following questions:
 - Who can remember where the (animal name) in this episode lived?
 - Which country/countries?
 - Which continent is that on?
 - Which ocean or body of water?

Part B: Habitat and Range Lesson

You may wish to use the habitat and range guide at the end of this lesson as a reference.

1. Define and discuss the meaning of the terms Habitat and Range. Write terms and simple definitions on the board. Then elaborate and discuss the distinction between the two terms.

Habitat

The type of place where an animal or plant lives.

More detailed:

The type of natural environment—like a forest or desert or wetlands—where an animal or plant lives. This place has the water, food, climate (rainfall and temperature) and conditions that the animal or plant needs to live. In other words, the animal or plant is adapted to these conditions.

Range

The specific part of the world where a species of animal lives.

More detailed:

An animal's range can be small (like "the island of Madagascar"), medium size (like "Eastern United States") or large (like "throughout Africa and the Middle East").

Names of Habitats

You can divide habitats into half a dozen categories, or a dozen more specific categories, based on the age of your students.

General habitats:

- Forest
- Grasslands
- Desert
- Tundra
- Wetlands
- Marine

Examples of specific habitats, which older students can research:

Forest habitats:

- Coniferous or Taiga (evergreen trees)
- Deciduous (trees have leaves that fall seasonally)
- Tropical rainforest (high rainfall and hot or warm year-round)
- Temperate rainforest (high rainfall but mild temperatures; found only near oceans and mountains together)

Grassland habitats:

- Savannah – Africa (flat grassland found in tropical regions)
- Prairie – central North America, in states such as Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana (large area of flat or rolling, mostly treeless, grassland)
- Steppe – southeastern Europe (vast, semi-dry, grass-covered plain)
- Pampas – in southern South America, mainly in Argentina (extensive, treeless, grassland area)

Vocabulary

Tundra: dry, treeless land in the Arctic

Small vs. Large Range

Small range:

- The lemur has a very small range: It lives on the island of Madagascar.
- The Komodo dragon also has a very small range. It lives on a handful of islands in Indonesia, including the island of Komodo.
- The Giant Panda lives only in a region of western China.

Large range:

- The chipmunk lives throughout North America.
- The squirrel lives in every part of the world, except Australia.
- The jaguar lives throughout most of South America and Central America.
- The orca is found in every ocean in the world.

Part C: Animal Expertise

Ask students the following questions following each *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* episode:

- In what kind of habitat does this animal live?
- Can you describe the conditions in that habitat? (water, climate, food)
- What is the range of this animal?

Q: How can you research this to find out?

A: Let's start with general encyclopedias and animal encyclopedias. Many libraries also have an animal atlas. If we can't find our answer in a book, let's do an Internet search.

Part D: Where in the World...Does Your Pet Come From?

Using library books and age-appropriate research materials, have students research a common pet of their choice. Ask them to find information on the animal's natural habitat as well as range and to present their findings to the class. This is also an ideal opportunity to cover the topic of how species are introduced to non-native places.

Alternatively, students could research a common local animal that they've seen out the window, at the schoolyard, a local park, or near their homes.

Reference for Part A

Geography Guide for *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* episodes

Animal	Episode Location	Location Description
Orca	Crozet Islands	Off South Africa
Kalahari Leopard	Kalahari Desert	Southern Africa, mainly in Botswana
Polar Bear	Wrangel Island	Russian island in Arctic Ocean
King Cobra	India	
Anteater	Amazon rainforest	Covers nine countries in South America
Butaan Lizard	Butaan	Island in the Philippines
Wolf	Alaska	
Gorilla	Central African Republic	Southern Africa

Reference for Parts B and C

Habitat vs. Range

Animal	Habitat	Range
Orca	Ocean	All oceans, but mainly Arctic and Antarctic
Kalahari Leopard	Desert	Southern Africa, mainly in Botswana
Polar Bear	Tundra	Throughout the Arctic
King Cobra	Forest	India, Malaysia, Philippines
Anteater	Rainforest	Central to South America
Butaan Lizard	Forest	Philippines
Wolf	Tundra, forest	Alaska; Northwest and North-central U.S.
Gorilla	Forest	Central Africa

