Activity: RACE FOR BORDERS

Subject: U.S. Geography

Knowledge: Connect the locations of states within the United States through physical movement

Skills: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Oral Communication

Grade Levels: 2-8 (Ages 7-14)

Time: 20-30 minutes

Objective: Students will create groups of states that border other states through movement.

Standards: Varies by state

Preparation: One box of GeoPlunge cards per class.

Cards Used: GeoPlunge cards

Players: Divide the class into two teams. Play outside or in an open space.

Objective: This game is a race and is similar to GeoPlunge's Border Up™. Each team tries to find winning groups of cards as fast as it can. The border states of each state determine the winning groups, as described below. Teams earn 1 point for each win. Play until a team earns 3 points.

Step 1: Hand each player 1 GeoPlunge card. Players may not look at their cards until the teacher (or class) says, "Ready, Set, **GeoPlunge!!**"

Step 2: The teams then look at their cards and the race begins. Each team tries to create 2 winning groups from their cards. A winning group of cards consists of 3 cards where one state in the group borders both of the other states in the group. For example, the states Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina are one group because Virginia borders both Maryland and North Carolina. A team cannot use the same card in more than one group.

Step 3: When a group forms, it sits down. When the second group from a team forms, it sits down and shouts "GeoPlunge". If the first team to shout GeoPlunge proves that it has two winning groups of cards, it wins this game. Otherwise, the other team wins this game. If both teams shout at the same time, the game is a tie unless only one team proves it has the winning groups.

Step 4: After determining who wins, collect the cards, shuffle, and play again.

Strategies for Success:
Because classes sizes vary, there may not be enough cards in the game to create the winning groups. Options to consider:
- The teacher can use a subset of the cards and confirm ahead of time that each team will find two sets of 3 bordering states.
- Use a subset of the cards, for example, use just the cards from states east of the Mississippi
- Allow students to return a card to the teacher and get the next card off the top of the deck.
- Give each student 2 cards and they can trade with a teammate. Each player must have 2 cards when the game ends.

In addition, you could:
- Have a U.S. map available for student reference during the game
- Require the students to find 3 pairs of two bordering states or two groups of 4 bordering states to make it harder
- Make this a silent game!

How many states are EAST of the Mississippi? Answer: 26

Activity: BORDER AMOEBAS

Subject: U.S. Geography

Knowledge: Connect the locations of states within the United States through physical movement

Skills: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Oral Communication, Physical movement

Grade Levels: 2-8 (Ages 7-14)

Time: 10 minutes

Objective: This is a team building activity for an entire class. Students will create groups of states that border other states through movement.

Standards: Varies by state

Preparation: One box of GeoPlunge cards per class.

Cards Used: GeoPlunge cards

Players: All students in a class.   Play outside or in an open space.

Objective: This game is a race against time. The students link arms to form groups of bordering states until everyone in the class is in a group.

Step 1: Hand each player 1 GeoPlunge card. Players may not look at their cards until the teacher (or class) says, "Ready, Set, **GeoPlunge!!**"

Step 2: Start the timer. The students then look at their cards and the race begins. The players search for other classmates who have a GeoPlunge card that borders their state. If they find someone, they link arms and try to find other people they can add to their group. They may add anyone who has a state that borders any state in the group. The group continues to grow and change shapes as it connects more players. Once everyone is in a group of 2 or more, stop the clock. Establish a length of time that it takes to connect everyone and try to beat that time during every subsequent race.

Strategies for success:
- Set a goal! Try to beat the clock each time you play!
- Once the players stop the clock, spend a little time trying to connect some of the groups
- Use a subset of cards to make it easier to find a partner
- Require a minimum of 3 or 4 players in a group
- Have a U.S. map available for student reference during the game
- Challenge: Is it possible to connect the entire class?

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