



Crane Migration & Climate Change

The migration of the Sandhill cranes and their stop at the Platte River is close to home for Kearney students, but what many don't realize is how this phenomenon relates to climate change. The migratory patterns of cranes, along with other birds, shifts with the changing climate.

Cranes are amazing animals that provide a lot of fun areas of learning. This month's topic opens up opportunities to discuss everything from migration patterns and crane customs (like their famous dance moves) to endangered species and local habitat conservation. The ideas in this document are here to inspire you, but there are lots of resources available for students to learn even more about crane migration and climate change. Remember that the activities below are organized by grade level, but they may be applicable across grade levels.

Activity Ideas

Pre-School + Kindergarten

1. **Dance like the cranes.** In [this activity](#), students learn about the dance moves of the whooping crane and are challenged to act them out and come up with their own!
2. **Watch a video.** [This video](#) provides an introduction to cranes, including their special features and talents, along with an introduction to migration and how cranes do it.

Grades 1-3

1. **Learn about the challenges of rebuilding an endangered species.** [This activity](#) has students list factors that may affect crane populations at each stage of their annual cycle.
2. **Read about cranes.** Books like [Here Come the Cranes!](#) are a great way to introduce students to cranes and their migration.
3. **Watch a video.** [This video](#) explains ecotourism, including what it is and what must be protected. This is a good foundation to build off of for explaining how cranes may be affected by tourism.

Grades 4-6

1. **Play a game.** Check out [this website](#) for games like The Prairie Game and The Crane Game, which are great ways for students to learn more about crane migration while having some fun!
2. **Migrate like the cranes.** Using [this lesson plan](#), have students migrate back and forth, moving like the cranes, and throw in factors that limit or favor crane survival. Students will begin to see how the factors affect cranes in real life as they struggle to migrate in the simulation.
3. **Watch a video.** [This video](#) talks about how birds in general are threatened by climate change, along with what it is about climate change that actually affects them so much.

Grades 7-12

1. **Choose from these activities.** The New York Times has a [resource for bird migration activities](#), including one on local birds, one on urban bird habitats, one on migration maps, and more!
2. **Watch a video.** [This National Geographic video](#) shows the Sandhill cranes on the Platte River and discusses how their habitats are in danger because of climate change.

Let Us Know What You Did!

Report your progress and earn recognition for your school. Fill out your school's row in the [GSC Tracking Document](#) to let us know which activity you did for this month!

Questions?

We're here to answer any questions you may have, talk through ideas or provide further resources. Just email gogreen@kearneycats.com.

RECOGNITION LEVELS

All KPS schools have the opportunity to earn recognition for their participation in the Green Schools Initiative each year. The more activities you complete, the more recognition you receive! For 2019-2020, the following three levels of recognition are available:

- **Level 1 (Green Performance)** - Participation in 5 activities during the year. Schools receive a framed certificate of recognition, \$50 for Green Team Activities next year, and \$100 for the Principal's budget.
- **Level 2 (Green Achievement)** - Participation in 6 - 9 activities during the year. Schools receive \$150 for Green Team activities next year, an award banner, and \$200 for the Principal's budget
- **Level 3 (Green Excellence)** - Participation in 10 or more activities during the year. Schools receive \$300 for Green Team activities next year, a large award banner, and \$400 for the Principal's budget. In addition, all schools that achieve Level 3 participation are placed into a raffle; the selected school receives \$450 to spend on district-approved items. Approved items could entail smart power strips, vending machine energy misers, native landscaping/trees, rain barrels, native plants for classrooms, and indoor/outdoor recycling containers. All items must be approved by the district office prior to purchase.