PELICAN PRETENDERS

Do you know just how hard the life of a pelican in Utah can be? This game will teach students the various challenges that pelicans face in their effort to migrate and breed each year.

Materials:
- 1-3 dice at each station (Dependent upon number of participants)
- 6 printed station cards for various locations that pelicans might visit (Available in Appendix I of this document)
- 4 “lives” per student (use beads or some other small object to represent lives)
- Optional: 6 printed location name cards (Available in Appendix II of this document)
- Optional: 6 storage containers (small bowls work well) for students to discard lost lives into.

Setup:
1. Print out the 6 station cards. (Appendix I of this document)
2. Optional: Print out the 6 location name cards. These can be used as a marker for each station. If hung up, they will allow students to find locations with ease.
3. Choose a physical location for each station. The stations can be spaced out for more of a scavenger hunt feel, organized based on their relation to one another on a map, or can be simply organized around a classroom.
4. Place 1-3 dice at each station.
5. Place a storage container at each station.
6. Determine what you will use to represent pelican “lives” and prepare enough that each student can have 4.

The Game:
1. Distribute 4 “lives” to each student.
2. Explain to students that they are about to become pelicans. Each of them will get the chance to learn about the challenges that pelicans face when trying to migrate and reproduce.
3. Lead students to the nesting grounds and explain that this is where their lives as pelicans begin. Students will then roll the dice to determine where they go next. Ask students to follow the instructions on the card that correspond to the number they roll on the die at each station. If they lose a life, they should place the lost life in the storage container at that station.
4. Allow students to play for 15-30 minutes or until most students have run out of lives.
The Debrief:

1. Ask students to reflect on their experience. You may want to prompt discussion with the following questions:
   a. What was the most surprising thing you learned about pelicans?
   b. Was anything frustrating about the game?
   c. Pelicans travel close to a thousand miles each year just to survive! What’s the farthest you’ve traveled?
   d. What was the craziest way you died as a pelican?
   e. What can people do to keep pelicans from dying?
      i. Possible answers: don’t litter, recycle, don’t feed wild birds, maintain healthy, critical habitat for birds, etc.
Appendix I: Station Cards
Gunnison Island - Nesting Grounds

1. Congratulations! You made it out of the nesting grounds and you are hungry! **Go to Farmington Bay** and eat fish.
2. Your nest was eaten by a coyote that got on the breeding grounds during low water levels. **Roll again.**
3. Your egg hatched! Unfortunately, your brother got more food than you and you did not make it out of the nest. **Roll Again.**
4. Your mom was not able to find enough food for you. You did not make it out of the nest. **Roll again.**
5. Congratulations! You made it out of the nesting grounds and you are hungry! **Go to Strawberry Reservoir** and eat fish.
6. This was an unusually wet summer and your nest was flooded. **Roll again.**

Farmington Bay

1. You were captured by the Utah Division of Wildlife. You were banded, tagged and got a radio tracker! **Roll Again.**
2. It’s a HOT summer and you are too dehydrated to forage for food. **Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.**
3. You got caught in a balloon in the wetlands and were not able to get food or water. **Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.**
4. You were found injured by a bird nerd on a field trip. **Go to Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge.**
5. You found lots of food here and you are ready to head south but you’ll need to stop and rest. **Go to California.**
6. You are ready to head south for the winter. **Go to Mexico.**
Strawberry Reservoir
1. You were able to get lots of food this summer and you are ready to migrate! Go to California.
2. You are not quite ready to migrate for the winter. Go to Farmington Bay to bulk up for your long journey!
3. Your dead body was found by a scientist at Strawberry Reservoir. Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.
4. The division of wildlife put a radio tracker on you. Unfortunately, your radio tracker stopped moving. Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.
5. You developed the avian flu and did not make it. Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.
6. You were spotted by scientists travelling to Gunnison Island to arrive for the new breeding season! Go to the nesting grounds. Collect a life!

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge
1. Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge gave you a healthy habitat. You are ready to leave the grounds and find a mate. Go to the nesting grounds. Collect a life.
2. You were able to migrate this winter and now you are ready for the new breeding season! Congratulations! Go to the nesting grounds. Collect a life!
3. You were fed junk food by a tourist and got sick. Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.
4. Your flight wings were injured during a flight. You will live your life at the Tracy Aviary but will likely not be able to breed. Find a nice place to rest while your fellow birds struggle in the wild.
5. You took a good rest here at the Bird Refuge and are ready to migrate. Go to Mexico.
6. You ate a deflated balloon that was at the refuge. Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.
Mexico

1. You made it to Mexico where you spent the winter. You are healthy and ready to head back to North for the breeding season! **Go to the nesting grounds. You’ve made it! Collect a life.**
2. Unfortunately, you were too weak and were not able to make the migratory journey all the way south. **Lose a Life. Start over at the nesting grounds**
3. While wintering in Mexico, you were caught in a fishing line and did not survive. **Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.**
4. You had a great winter here in Mexico, but it’s getting hot! Time to return home for the breeding season. **Go to the nesting grounds. Collect a life.**
5. While migrating you collided with an airplane. **Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.**
6. Your beak is growing a bump on top of it! You are ready to for the new breeding season. **Go to the nesting grounds. Collect a life.**

California

1. After a successful winter, you were spotted by a group of birders on your way home to Utah! **Go to Strawberry Reservoir.**
2. You stopped at the Salton Sea for some food on your way home to Utah. **Go to Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge**
3. You stopped at the Salton Sea for a snack on your way South for the winter. **Go to Mexico**
4. Your beak is growing a bump on top of it! You are ready to for the new breeding season. **Go to the nesting grounds. Collect a life.**
5. You ate a fish living in polluted water and don’t feel well. **Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.**
6. You got stuck in some old fish nets off the coast of California. You starved. **Lose a life. Start over at the nesting grounds.**
Appendix II: Location Name Cards
Gunnison Island Nesting Grounds
Farmington Bay
Strawberry Reservoir
Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge
Mexico
California