

Lesson Plan

Avalanche!

Book: *Mountains*

Series: Landforms

Level: Beacon

Objective

To help students practice retelling the key details of a text.

Supplies

- *Mountains* book
- Table
- *Jenga* game (or other set of stackable wooden blocks)

Before the Activity

Stack the wooden blocks on the table to create a tower, placing three blocks in each layer and alternating the direction they face, similar to the start of a game of *Jenga*.

Activity

Read the *Mountains* book out loud to students. Then ask the following questions:

- What does the word *avalanche* mean? (Answer: a large amount of snow, ice, and rocks falling down a mountainside)
- What is one reason an avalanche may happen? (Answer: An earthquake may cause large pieces of rock to break off the mountain.)

Ask students to imagine that the tower at the front of the room is a mountain. Students will take turns removing blocks from the tower, similar to the way an earthquake can cause rocks to fall away from a mountain. Divide students into two teams. On each team's turn, one student on the team should say one fact he or she remembers about mountains from the book. Use the book to check the student's answer.

If the answer is incorrect, the student must try to remove one block from the tower without causing an avalanche and collapsing the tower. If the answer is correct, the student can choose someone from the opposing team to be an "earthquake." This other student must remove a block from the tower.

Evaluation

Continue choosing students to recall facts from the book until someone causes the tower to collapse. When this happens, the opposing team wins.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.2).