Title: Larry the Lion on the Loose

Overview: Students are faced with a situation involving Larry the Lion escaping from a visiting circus. Various types of local government try cooperate to capture Larry the Lion and keep the community safe.

Grade Level: Elementary

Time: 1 hour

Colorado Civics Standards Evidence Outcomes
*identify and explain the services local governments provide and how those services are funded.
*identify and explain a variety of roles leaders, citizens, and others play in local government.

Preparation and Activities:
1. Tell students they will each be appointed to a government role. They will imagine themselves in that role and how they would respond to the problem of Larry the Lion. Details about the role will help them make that decision.
2. Four groups meet to offer assistance in catching Larry the Lion and making sure it does not happen again. Appoint roles or have students volunteer.

- City Government. Because Larry is in Peakville city limit the city government has primary responsibility in keeping people safe. Peakville Police and Animal Control are the first people on the scene. The police can help catch loose dogs and cats, but lions are too big. The city has rules about circuses and the use of wild animals in city limits.

- County Government. Peakville is in Star County. Star County has wild open space including in the mountains. They have a Wildlife Division that helps protect wild animals and people from hurting each other. They have captured and returned to the wild bears, skunks and other animals.

- Dawson Fire Protection District. Peakville and the surrounding area created a special district for fire protection. Dawson Fire Protection District also provides emergency ambulance service. They have long ladders and have helped to capture other animals, but certainly none this dangerous.

- Adler School District. Adler School District has an emergency response team designed to help keep students safe and to deal with major problems. It includes the principals, counselors, the transportation director and teachers.

3. Read the story.
4. Ask students to brainstorm how their group can help keep kids in school and the community safe, but also do what’s best for Larry the Lion.
5. Have students in their roles share what they can do to help catch Larry. They should offer reasons for their choice.

**Discussion Debrief:**
- What types of local government are involved in trying to catch Larry the Lion?
- What how can each type of government help?
- What are some different ways the Larry the Lion could be located?
- What solutions will be the most effective in capturing Larry the Lion?
- What should happen with the circus that Larry escaped from? Why?
- What do you think would be the best solution from your role’s point-of-view?
- How does local government work to keep you safe?
The town of Peakville and its community members have just elected a new mayor and city council. The new city council is set to meet and discuss an urgent matter. The problem: A lion was seen near Peakville Elementary School. Excited and scared kids reported the sighting to the teacher on recess duty who immediately sent the kids into the school. The school was put on lockdown until parents arrived to pick up students. The local citizens in the neighborhood are anxious about the safety of their families. The traveling circus reported to the city police that Larry the Lion has been missing from his cage for last three days. Why did they not report the matter earlier? The school district is requesting the city increase patrols in the area during school. Students are frightened and teachers are worried about how school will occur each day while the Larry the Lion is on the prowl in the neighborhood. Teachers are concerned about the safety of the students during recess, and the principal is worried that school may need to be on continuous lock down until the lion is captured. Peakville School District’s Emergency Response Team is called into action. The city animal control officer is concerned that his truck is not adequate for a real lion, and he hasn’t been trained to capture wild African animals, like a lion, so his office calls the County Department of Wildlife. The TV reporters, the city, and neighboring city newspapers are interviewing local government officials about the solutions or the strategy that is being considered to capture the lion.

The circus owners of Larry the Lion are extremely upset and nervous that Larry has escaped. They want Larry back and do not want him harmed in any way. They are offering to help local law enforcement to help find Larry because they know him best. They want to be the first to find him. Larry is the star of the circus; without Larry the circus would not be successful. What will they say about capturing Larry? Will they mention that Larry escaped while uncaged? What will their plan be to capture Larry?

The Peakville city police chief has called for an emergency meeting of public safety groups in the area. The police chief is concerned that the lion might travel to nearby farmlands looking for food. The rural areas surrounding Peakville are managed by the county. The police chief knows this matter is not just a city problem.

Is the whole city in danger? A plan must be put into place immediately. The mayor will listen to anyone who might have a solution to the problem. They have asked your group to offer ideas on how to keep people safe.