

## Topic of Study – Birds

### Introduction

Birds are a part of children’s natural environment. Children see and hear birds at home, on the playground, in the park, in the woods, and on the water.

This topic of study offers children many opportunities to focus on the unique characteristics of different types of birds. As children are engaged in a study about birds, they will become more observant of the birds they see and hear in their environment.

### Teacher Notes about STEM

- *Early Childhood Educators are now linking together science, technology, engineering, and math into what is called STEM curriculum.*
- *This topic of study, Birds, focuses on the science component of STEM.*

### Teacher Notes

*Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements (Rev. 1.1.15) requires the following:*

#### **400 PROGRAM – 401 Program Requirements for all ages**

5.a. The facility shall have an appropriate curriculum with weekly activity plans appropriate for the developmental needs of each group of children.

To assist your program in meeting this requirement, refer to Developing Weekly Activity plans for Adventures in Learning for information on how to develop your plans. Feel free to make copies of the plan sheet you select and use it each week. To help you in your planning, there are also 2 samples of completed plan sheets that you may use as guides when developing weekly activity plans for your group of children.

- ***Adventures in Learning** is an Arkansas approved curriculum.*
- *This curriculum guide is a collection of activities that support the Big Ideas listed below. Choose those activities that best meet the needs of the children in your group.*
- *Consider extending this topic of study beyond a one-week period of time. There is so much for children to learn about birds. Carry over activities from one week to another because children enjoy and learn best through repetition.*
- *If you do not have some of the featured books, refer to the Additional Books section for other books you can use.*
- *It is important to read the same book several times to children so that they can have a better understanding of theme, plot, characters and the sequence of events. In each of the readings presented here, there is a different focus on what is happening in the story.*

## Big Ideas

Here are seven big ideas about birds you can help children explore:

- We see many types of birds in our environment.
- Birds have feathers, two wings, two legs and a beak or bill.
- We can tell birds apart by characteristics such as the color and pattern of their feathers, the sounds they make and their size.
- Most birds fly, some swim, and some birds such as ducks and geese fly, swim and waddle.
- Birds build nests to protect their eggs from which their young hatch.
- Some birds build nests in bird houses built by people
- Birds eat fish, flying or crawling insects, worms, grubs, seeds, berries and small animals such as mice.

## Materials to Collect and Make

- Pictures of birds, bird nests and bird houses. Laminate or cover with clear adhesive to preserve
- Pictures of birds mounted on cardstock and laminated or covered with clear self-adhesive. Cut pictures in half to use in the Birds of a Feather transition activity.
- Wooden bird house (if available)
- Bird feeder
- Cards with pictures of birds and animals that are not birds. (See Attachment: [Is This a Bird?](#))
- Collection of feathers
- Chart paper and markers
- Children's books about birds:  
*The Bird Alphabet Book* by Jerry Pallotta, illustrated by Edgar Stewart  
*Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell, illustrated by Patrick Benson
- Felt or magnetic board
- Photos of Bird Nests and Houses (See Attachment: [Bird Nests and Houses](#))
- Song illustration poster (See Attachment: [The Green Grass Grows All Around](#)) See page19 for the song.
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *The Little Red Hen* (See Attachment: [The Little Red Hen](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *Hattie and the Fox* (See Attachment: [Hattie and the Fox](#))
- Build a Bird House Prop Box – Include: a real bird house, if possible, pictures of bird houses, craft sticks and small pieces of wood without splinters, folding ruler, carpenter's pencil, sandpaper, and small paint brush, connectors such as tape, glue, snap type clothes pins, and clay

## Resources

- Check with your local library for the availability of children's books.
- Children's books can be purchased online, from school supply catalogs or local bookstores.

## Introducing and Concluding the Topic

### Learning Goals:

**CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory** (*short-term and working memory and long-term memory*)

**CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking** (*abstract thinking*)

**EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print** (*print knowledge*)

### Introduction: Finding Out What Children Know about Birds

To introduce the topic of “Birds” you need to find out what children already know about the topic. This allows you to build on your children’s experiences. It also helps create an interest in the topic. Here’s how to begin.

- Gather the children in a group. Say, “For the next few days we’re going to be learning about birds.”
- Write on chart paper, chalk board or marker board the word “Birds.”
- Invite children to tell you things they already know about birds. You may have to ask questions to stimulate their thinking; questions such as, “Where do we see birds?” “What can you tell me about the birds you see?” “How do the birds move?”
- Make a list of all of the things children know about birds.
- Review the list with them and say, “You already know a lot of things about birds and we’ll find out even more.”
- Now ask the children what they would like to know about birds and make a list of what they say.
- Keep the two lists until you have completed the topic of study.

What We Know about Birds	What We Would Like to Know about Birds	Things We Learned about Birds

### Conclusion: Finding Out What Children Have Learned about Birds

- Gather the children in a group at the conclusion of the study about birds.
- Write on chart paper, chalk board or marker board, “Things We Learned about Birds.”
- Invite children to tell you some things they have learned about birds. You may have to ask prompt questions such as “In what ways are birds alike?” “How are they different?” “What are some things birds eat?”
- Make a list of all the things children learned about birds.
- Read the first two lists you made with the children. Then say, “Here are some new things you found out about birds” and read today’s list with the children.

**Teacher Note:** *This method of introducing and concluding the topic is known as KWL: What do children know, what they want to know and what did they learn.*

## Reading Books with Children

### Learning Goals:

**CD2.1 Focuses and sustains attention**

**CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory** (*short-term and working memory*)

**LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)** (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

**EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences** (*engagement in literacy experiences*)

**EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and print** (*book knowledge*)

**Book #1:** *The Bird Alphabet Book* by Jerry Pallotta, illustrated by Edgar Stewart

### First Reading of *The Bird Alphabet Book*

- Prepare to read the book, *The Bird Alphabet Book*
- Bring a feather to story time, keeping it out of children's sight.
- Introduce the first book about birds by having children close their eyes. Tell them that they will feel something brush against their cheek and will try and guess what it is.
- Brush the feather gently across each child's cheek. Hide the feather.
- Invite children to guess what they felt on their cheek.
- Show the feather and ask children what kind of bird they think the feather came from.
- Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the book and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by showing the pages and inviting children to name the birds and identify those with which they are familiar. Do they think the feather that brushed their cheek came from any of the birds in the book? If it did not, have a picture of the bird from which the feather came and show it to the children.

**Trainer Note:** *Review the book before reading it to the children. Based on your children's attention spans, you may decide to omit details about some of the birds.*

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### Second Reading of *The Bird Alphabet Book*

- Show the cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the second reading by showing the pages and focusing on the food that some of the birds eat. For example, on the first page, one of the Atlantic Puffins is eating fish. The Crocodile Birds eat leftover food around crocodile's teeth.
- Invite children to discuss what they have observed about the food that birds eat.

### Additional Learning Goal:

**ST3.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things, the earth's environment, and physical objects and materials** (*living things*)

### **Third Reading of *The Bird Alphabet Book* (Small Group)**

- Show the cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the third reading by involving children in looking closely at the pictures and discussing distinctive characteristics of each bird: colors, beaks and bills, size, how they move. For example, call attention to the distinct differences in bills (ducks, geese and spoonbills, for example) and the beaks of some of the other birds.
- Allow children time to look at each bird.

#### **Teacher Notes:**

- *This book is filled with information that can stimulate discussion and introduce many concepts about birds.*
- *Consider additional readings of the book either with small groups or children or with individual children who seem to be interested in learning more about birds.*
- *Focus on birds or characteristics of birds that seem to be of interest to the children.*

#### **Additional Learning Goals:**

**ST3.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things, the earth's environment, and physical objects and materials (*living things*)**

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### **Fourth Reading of *The Bird Alphabet Book* (Small Group)**

- Show the cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Invite children to recall the names of some of their favorite birds from the story.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by giving each child his or her name card.
- Show the featured letters on each page, say the letter, and invite children to look at their name cards. Does their name begin with that letter of the alphabet?
- Assist children as needed.

#### **Additional Learning Goal:**

**EL3.2 Shows knowledge of the shapes, names, and sounds of letters (*alphabet knowledge*)**

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**Book #2:** *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell, illustrated by Patrick Benson

### **First Reading of *Owl Babies***

- Prepare to read the book, *Owl Babies*.
- Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the book and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Ask children to look at the owl babies on the cover. Ask, "How do you think the owl babies are feeling?" Accept all answers, then say, "Let's read and find out."
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up by asking children if they were correct in their predictions about how the owl babies were feeling. Why were they worried/afraid? How did they feel when Owl Mother comes home?
- Invite children to share how they would feel if they were alone and did not know where their mother or father or another family member was.

**Teacher Note:** *Be sensitive to children in your group who may have experienced abandonment by a family member. Know your children and their family situation and plan follow up discussions based on that knowledge.*

#### **Additional Learning Goals:**

**SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions (*emotion expression*)**

**SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others (*emotion understanding*)**

**Second Reading of Owl Babies**

- Show the cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Recall with children the different feelings the owl babies had in the story. Prompt as needed.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the second reading by inviting the children to tell the story as you turn the pages.
- Involve them in repeating what Bill says: "I want my mommy!"

**Additional Books**

*Five Little Ducks* by Raffi, illustrated by Jose Aruego and Arienne Dewey

*Flora and the Flamingo* by Molly Idle

*Flora and the Peacocks* by Molly Idle

*Flora and the Penguin* by Molly Idle

*Have You Seen My Duckling?* By Nancy Tafuri

*I Heard Said the Bird* by Polly Berrien Berends, illustrated by Brad Sneed

*The Little Red Hen* by Paul Galdone

*Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey (Also available in Spanish)

*Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins (Also available in Spanish)

*There's a Bird on Your Head!* (An Elephant and Piggie Book) by Mo Willems

*We're Going on a Picnic* by Pat Hutchins

**Language and Literacy Materials and Activities**

**Learning Goals:**

**LD1.1 Understands and responds to language in child's home language** (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

**EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences** (*engagement in literacy experiences*)

**EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language** (*rhyme*)

**Mary Had a Pretty Bird**  
(Mother Goose Rhyme)

Mary had a pretty bird, Feathers bright and yellow, Slender legs – Upon my word He was a pretty fellow.	The sweetest note he always sung, Which much delighted Mary. She often, where the cage was hung, Sat hearing her canary.
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### Once I Saw a Little Bird

(Mother Goose Rhyme)

Once I saw a little bird  
Go hop, hop, hop.

(Extend left arm and let forefinger and middle finger of right hand make hopping motions to tip of left fingers)

And I cried, "Little Bird,  
Will you stop, stop, stop?"

I was going to the window  
To say "How-do-you-do,"  
But he shook his little tail  
And far away he flew.

(Wiggle thumb of right hand. Make fluttering motion with right fingers)

**Teacher Note:** Show the rhymes in a Mother Goose book as you are reading them to children.

### Five Little Birdies

(Five fingers on one hand up in the air, as verse is said other hand bends down each finger)

Five little birdies, flying around our door,  
The blue one flew away and then there were four.

Four little birdies sitting in a tree,  
The yellow one flew away and then there were three.

The little birdies didn't know what to do,  
So the red one flew away, and then there were two.

Two little birdies sitting in the sun,  
The brown one flew away, and then there was one.

The little green birdie said, "This is no fun,  
She flew away and then there were none.

#### Teacher Notes:

- Consider making birds, one per child, from construction paper in the colors included in this finger play: blue, yellow, red, brown and green.
- Laminate or cover the birds with clear self-adhesive.
- Give each child a bird and ask that children "fly" their bird when they hear their color.
- Consider using the birds for a transition activity.

#### Additional Learning Goal:

**MT1.2 Explores combining and separating groups (numerical operations)** (addition and subtraction)

### **If I Were a Bird**

If I were a bird, I'd sing a song  
And fly about the whole day long.  
And when the night came  
I'd go to rest  
In my cozy little nest.

### **Birds Are Different**

We all have feathers and we have two legs and feet.  
Some of us have a bill and some of us have a beak.  
And we all like different things to eat.

Some of us can swim and most of us can fly.  
Just like people, we're all different colors,  
And we really don't know why.

### **Two Little Black Birds**

Two little black birds  
Sitting on the hill.

(Hold up one finger of each hand)

One named Jack,  
The other named Jill.

Fly away, Jack!  
Fly away, Jill!

(Put a hand behind your back)  
(Put other hand behind your back)

Come back Jack!  
Come back Jill!

(Bring first hand from behind your back)  
(Bring other hand from behind your back)

### **Six Little Ducks**

Six little ducks that I once knew.  
Fat ones, skinny ones, fair ones too.  
But the one little duck with the feather on his back,  
He led the others with a quack, quack, quack.

(Hold up 6 fingers)  
(Hands apart, then close together)  
(hand behind back)  
(hands together, then move fingers  
apart like a duck's bill)

Down to the river they would go  
Wibble, wobble, wibble wobble, to and fro.  
But the one little duck with the feather on his back  
He led the others with a quack, quack, quack.

(wibble, wobble like ducks)  
(hands behind back)  
(hands together, then move fingers  
apart like duck's bill)



### Quacking Ducks

Five little ducks went out to play,  
Over the hills and far away.  
Mama Duck said, "Quack, quack, quack."  
Four little ducks came running back.

(Hold up five fingers)  
(Make fingers fun away)  
(Make quacking motions with thumb & 4 fingers)  
(Four fingers run back)

Four little ducks went out to play,  
Over the hill and far away  
Mama Duck said "Quack, quack, quack."  
Three little ducks came running back.

(Repeat motions with appropriate number of fingers)

Three little ducks went out to play,  
Over the hill and far away.  
Mama Duck said, "Quack, quack, quack."  
Two little ducks came running back.

Two little ducks went out to play,  
Over the hill and far away.  
Mama Duck said, "Quack, quack, quack"  
One little duck came running back.

One little duck went out to play,  
Over the hill and far away.  
Mama Duck said "Quack, quack, quack"  
No little ducks came running back.

(Shake head, No.)

No little ducks went out to play,  
Over the hill and far away.  
Daddy Duck said, "Quack, quack, quack."  
Five little ducks came running back.

(Strong emphasis on "Quack, quack, quack.")  
(Hold up five fingers)

#### **Additional Learning Goal:**

**MT1.2 Explores combining and separating groups (numerical operations)** *(addition and subtraction)*

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#### **Activity: The Green Grass Grows All Around**

- See the song on page 19. (See Attachment: [The Green Grass Grows All Around](#)) for the song illustration poster.
- Use the song illustration poster to guide children in the sequence of the song.

**Teacher Note:** *Allow the children to take turns pointing to the illustration as you and the children sing the song.*

#### **Additional Learning Goal:**

**EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print** *(print knowledge)*

**Learning Goal:**

**EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences**

**Storytelling Figures: The Little Red Hen** (See Attachment: [The Little Red Hen](#))

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the story, *The Little Red Hen*.
- Use the storytelling figures to tell the story.
- Explain to the children that the storytelling figures will be in the library/book area for them to use.
- Demonstrate and discuss with the children the correct way to use the storytelling figures.

**Storytelling Figures: Hattie and the Fox** (See Attachment: [Hattie and the Fox](#))

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the story, *Hattie and the Fox*.
- Use the storytelling figures to tell the story.
- Explain to the children that the storytelling figures will be in the library/book area for them to use.
- Demonstrate and discuss with the children the correct way to use the storytelling figures.

**Science / Discovery and Math**

**Learning Goals:**

**CD1.1 Shows curiosity and a willingness to try new things** (*exploration and investigation*)

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze, and communicate information** (*observations, questions, and predictions*)

**ST3.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things, the earth's environment, and physical objects and materials** (*physical objects and materials*)

**Activity: Drop the Feather**

- Provide a feather, a plastic egg and a plastic bowl.
- Challenge the children to hold the feather at nose level and drop it into the bowl.
- Observe and ask the children what happens to the feather on the way down.
- Challenge the children to hold the egg at nose level and drop it into the bowl.
- Observe and ask the children what happened to the egg. Which was easiest to drop into the bowl?
- Discuss with the children why the egg was easiest to get into the bowl. Guide them to see that the feather is lighter than the egg and that the air can move the feather but not the egg.

**Learning Goals:**

**CD1.1 Shows curiosity and a willingness to try new things** (*exploration and investigation*)

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze, and communicate information** (*observations, questions and predictions*)

**ST3.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things, the earth's environment, and physical objects and materials** (*physical object and materials*)

**ST3.2 Uses tools and engineering practices to explore and solve problems** (*engineering practices and thinking*)

**Activity: Moving Feathers:**

- Form a maze with blocks on a table.
- Place feathers on the table.
- Provide a variety of objects such as paper fans, straws, paper towel tubes and plastic squirt bottles.
- Explain to children that each of the items is an air mover they can use to move the feathers through the maze.
- Ask children to predict which item they think will move the feathers the best.
- Observe as they experiment with the different air movers.
- Ask them which moved the feathers the best. Were there predictions correct? Why do they think one air mover moved the feathers better than the others?

**Learning Goals:**

**CD1.1 Shows curiosity and a willingness to try new things** (*exploration and investigation*)

**CD3.1 Uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems and reach goals** (*problem solving*)

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze, and communicate information** (*investigation and hypothesis testing*)

**ST3.2 Uses tools and engineering practices to explore and solve problems** (*engineering practices and thinking*)

**Activity: The Thirsty Crow (Storytelling)**

- See story “The Crow and the Pitcher, An Aesop’s Fable” below.
- Gather a clear plastic pitcher or quart measuring cup, water, and pebbles or gravel.
- Make a mark on the pitcher to indicate the water level or show the children the 2 cup mark on the measuring cup.
- Fill the pitcher or the mark on the measuring cup to the 2 cup mark.
- Scatter the pebbles around the outside base of the pitcher or cup.
- Tell the first part of the story to the children.
- Stop and ask the children if they can think of a way to help the crow get a drink of water. Use the words “solution” and “problem.” Say, “The crow has a problem. Can we think of a solution to the problem?” If children offer solutions that can be tried, do so and see if they work.
- Continue with the story as you drop the pebbles into the pitcher, directing the children to observe the water level.
- Discuss with children their observations and the crow’s problem and solution.

**The Crow and the Pitcher  
An Aesop’s Fable**

Retold by Beverly C. Wright

Once upon a time there was a crow that was very, very thirsty. She had looked everywhere for some water to drink and she couldn’t find any. Finally, she saw a pitcher with some water in it sitting by a flower bed. The crow was so excited, and she dipped her beak in the pitcher to get a drink of water. She had a problem. Crows have very short beaks, and her beak could not reach the water. The crow was very upset and she was still very thirsty.

**Teacher Note:** *Stop and ask the children if they can think of a way to help the crow get a drink of water. Say, “The crow has a problem. Can we think of a solution to the problem?” If possible, try their solutions.*

The crow decided to think of a way she could get her drink of water. She looked around and found some small pebbles on the ground. Very carefully, using her beak, she began to drop the pebbles one by one into the pitcher of water. The more pebbles she dropped in the pitcher, the higher the water level became. Finally, the level of the water was at the top of the pitcher. The crow dipped her beak in this time and she could easily have a nice drink of water. The crow had found a solution to her problem.

**Teacher Note:**

- *Consider making a crow puppet from a black sock, using yellow felt for a beak. Buttons or felt can become eyes.*
- *The crow puppet can then tell the story and drop the pebbles into the pitcher.*
- *Allow children to have turns with the puppet as story is repeated.*

**Learning Goals:**

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze and communicate information** (*observations, questions, and predictions*)

**ST3.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things, the earth's environment, and physical objects and materials** (*living things*)

**Activity: Bird Nests and Houses (Small Group)**

- Invite 4 to 5 children to an area large enough to accommodate the children and the following materials:
  - pictures of bird nests and houses that have been laminated or covered with clear plastic (See Attachment: [Bird Nests and Houses](#))
  - A real bird nest inside a clear plastic jar (lid taped or glued so children are unable to open it) (if available)
  - New bird house (if available)
  - Collection of materials birds use to build their nests: twigs, sticks, stems, straw, bits of brightly colored yarn and string, grass, feathers
- Explain to children that they will have an opportunity to learn about bird nests and bird houses in which birds build nests to protect their eggs and baby birds.
- Invite the children to explore and discuss the materials and their experiences with bird nests and houses.
- Ask the children to look at the bird nests and identify some of the materials they see, and then look at the collection of materials birds use to build their nests. State that some birds use mud to build nests and that the one on the right bottom in the pictures looks like mud might have been used. Also, call attention to a baby bird in the nest.
- Explain that the materials will be placed on the playground to see if birds take any of them to build their nests.
- Talk with the children about the bird houses that people build so that birds can build their nests in them.
- Discuss with children that the bird house on the right bottom is built for a large number of purple martins.
- Encourage children to talk about anything they know about bird houses and what they notice about the photos.
- Tell children that they will find a collection of materials in the block center with which they can build a bird house.

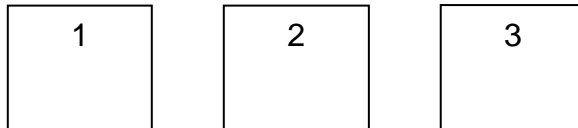
**Teacher Note:** Give all children in your group an opportunity to be involved in this activity.

**Learning Goal:**

**MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity** (*number names and count sequence, connection of number, numeral and quantity*)

**Activity: How Many Feathers? (Small Group)**

- Place an assortment of feathers in a basket.
- Make numeral cards from 0 to 10. Make each card  $\frac{1}{2}$  page in size.



- Invite children to place the correct number of feathers on the numeral cards.

**Teacher Note:**

- Consider that some children may not be ready for numeral cards from 1 to 10.
- Adjust the activity to meet the needs of individual children. For example, one child may only be ready to count up to 3 feathers, while others may be ready to count feathers up to 10.
- If some children are able to count feathers beyond 10, make additional numeral cards.

**Learning Goals:**

**CD1.1 Shows curiosity and a willingness to try new things** (*exploration and investigation*)

**CD3.1 Uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems and reach goals** (*problem solving*)

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze, and communicate information** (*observations, questions and predictions, investigations and hypothesis testing, and data analysis and communication*)

**ST3.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things, the earth's environment, and physical objects and materials** (*living things*)

**Activity: Do Bird's Feathers Absorb Water? (Small Group)**

- Collect feathers, sponge, paper towel, wax paper, small plastic containers, eyedroppers, magnifying glass and water.
- Gather a small group of children, three to five, for this activity.
- Pour water in the containers. Collect water in an eye dropper by squeezing the bulb and releasing it.
- Ask children to observe as you use the eye dropper to drip a few drops of water onto a sponge. What happened to the water?
- Repeat this process with a paper towel and again ask children what happened to the water. Use the word "absorb" as you and the children discuss your observations.
- Repeat this process with wax paper. What happened to the water? (It was not absorbed by the paper)
- Show the children the feathers, the eye dropper, and the water in the containers
- Ask children to predict whether or not the feathers will absorb water.
- Invite children to use the materials to find out, and as they experiment, to discuss what they discover. What do the water drops do after they are dropped onto the feathers?
- Discuss with children that when the water drops bounce off the feathers or just sit on the top of the feathers, this is called "water resistant." This means that the feathers resist the water. The feathers do not absorb the water; the water does not soak in the feathers. The wax paper is also water resistant.

**Teacher Note:** Developers googled "Why do bird's feathers resist water?" and learned the following:

- *Birds have an oil or preen gland at the base of their tail.*
- *They use their bill to spread the oil over their feathers.*
- *This makes the feathers waterproof in much the same way as the waxy coating on the wax paper keeps water from soaking into the wax paper.*

**Learning Goal:**

**MT2.1 Uses classification and patterning skills** (*classification*)

**Activity: Is This a Bird? (Small Group)**

- Create a classification chart.
- Provide a collection of animals that are birds and animals that are not birds.
- Discuss with children the characteristics of birds that distinguish them from other animals: two feet, feathers, wings, beak/bill.
- Show children a picture of a bird and ask them in which column it belongs and place it there. Repeat this with an animal that is not a bird. This sets the pattern for the activity.
- Allow each child to select an animal card and put it in the correct column. Invite children to state why they put the card in the column they did.

**Is This a Bird?**

Yes	No

**Teacher Note:** Consider placing this activity on the Science/Discovery table.

## Food/ Nutrition Experience

### Learning Goals:

**PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordinates movements to use tools** (*utensils*)

**PH3.1 Demonstrates interest in engaging in healthy eating habits and making nutritious food choices** (*exploration of food experiences*)

**MT1.2 Explores combining and separating groups (numerical operations)** (*early division and fractions*)

### Activity: Chicken Salad

- Gather measuring spoons, chicken in a can/pouch, sweet pickle relish, mayonnaise, and boiled eggs,
- Provide each child a small bowl, fork, spoon, and napkin.
- Help each child take 2 tablespoons of chicken, 1 teaspoon of pickle relish, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of mayonnaise and put in bowl. Use the words “2 tablespoons” “1 teaspoon” and “ $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon.”
- Cut the boiled eggs in quarters and give each child  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an egg. Say “ $\frac{1}{4}$ .”
- Invite children to mash the egg and mix with the other ingredients in his or her bowl.
- Provide wheat crackers and milk for a healthy snack.

**Teacher Note:** *Discuss with children that chicken and eggs come from chickens, which are a kind of bird.*

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### Activity: Turkey Wrap

- Provide each child a small plate, napkin, a washed lettuce leaf, slice of turkey, and a slice of cheese.
- Explain to children that they can make a turkey wrap.
- Demonstrate and discuss how to place the turkey and cheese on the lettuce and roll it up. Explain to them that this is called a “wrap.”
- Eat and enjoy the turkey wrap with the children.

### Teacher Notes:

- *Allow the children to do as much of the food experiences as possible.*
- *Teachers and children should always wash hands before participating in a food experience.*

## Movement / Physical Education

### Learning Goals:

**PH1.2 Shows stability and balance** (*jumping, hopping and leaping*)

**PH3.3 Engages in a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities** (*participation in physical activities*)

### Activity: Bird Hop

- Place four or five hoops on the floor or ground so that each hoop is touching at least one other.
- Designate each hoop as a particular kind of bird food: insects, worms, berries, seeds.
- Explain to children that often birds have to find food on the ground.
- Ask children, one a time, to hop or jump from one hoop to another until they are “full” from eating all of the bird food.

## Learning Centers

**Teacher Note:** *As children are involved in the learning centers, they are engaging in activities that support all or most of the domains of child development and early learning:*

- *Social and Emotional Development*
- *Cognitive Development*
- *Physical Development and Health*
- *Language Development*
- *Emergent Literacy*
- *Mathematical Thinking*
- *Science and Technology*
- *Social Studies*
- *Creativity and Aesthetics*

*However, there will also be activities included and these will have specific learning goals.*

### **Learning Goal:**

**CA2.1 Explores, manipulates, creates, and responds to a variety of art media** *(exploration of art)*

### **Art**

#### **Activity: Painting with Feathers**

- Collect an assortment of feathers or purchase feathers from a craft store. Make sure some of the feathers have shafts that are strong enough for painting.
- Involve children in examining the feathers. Discuss how they feel. Call attention to the shaft. How does it feel?
- Provide several colors of paint in flat tins. Vary the thickness.
- Invite children to experiment with painting with the feathers: the shaft or the feathers.

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### **Block Center**

#### **Activity: Build a Bird House**

- Create a Building a Bird House Prop Box. Include:
  - a real bird house, if possible
  - pictures of bird houses
  - craft sticks and small pieces of wood without splinters.
  - folding ruler, carpenter's pencil, sandpaper, and small paint brush.
  - connectors such as tape, glue, snap type clothes pins, and clay
  - paper and pencils, markers or crayons

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### **Library/Book Corner**

- Add books about birds.
- Add pictures of birds, bird nests and bird houses (lamineate or cover pictures with self stick adhesive).
- Add storytelling figures for the story, *The Little Red Hen*.
- Add storytelling figures for the story, *Hattie and the Fox*.
- Add a felt or magnetic board.

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### **Home Living/Dramatic Play**

- Add a feather duster to the area. Observe children to see what they do with it.
- Add feather boas.

## **Manipulatives**

### **Activity: Ideas for Making Bird Feeders**

#### **Idea #1**

- Mix vegetable shortening or lard with cornmeal until you can roll the mixture into a doughy, not too-sticky ball.
- Allow the children to help knead the mixture with their hands.
- Make sure there is enough cornmeal in the mixture so that the birds don't choke on the vegetable shortening or lard.
- Put a big ball of the mixture into a mesh onion or orange bag.
- Hang the bag outside.

#### **Idea #2**

- Cut clean, empty 6-ounce cardboard frozen juice containers so that are 1" in height.
- Punch a hole through the cardboard at the open end and tie a loop of string through the hole as a hanger.
- Allow children to press the mixture into the cans.
- Hang the containers outside.

#### **Idea #3**

- Provide pine cones, vegetable shortening or lard, and bird seed in a shallow pan.
- Cover the work table with newspaper.
- Involve children in spooning vegetable shortening or lard on pine cones.
- Help children roll the pine cones in bird seed.
- Hang pinecones outside.

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### **Learning Goal:**

**CD1.1 Shows curiosity and a willingness to try new things** (*exploration and investigation*)

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze and communicate information** (*observations, questions and predictions*)

### **Water table or tub**

- Add feathers to the water table or tub.
- Encourage children to observe what happens to the feathers. Do they float or do they sink? Do they resist water?

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### **Sand table or tub**

- Add plastic worms to the sand table/tub.

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### **Learning Goals:**

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze and communicate information** (*observations, questions and predictions*)

**ST3.2 Uses tools and engineering practices to explore and solve problems** (*knowledge and use of tools*)

### **Activity: Exploring Feathers**

- Display a basket of different kinds of feather. Add a magnifying glass.
- Encourage children to look at the feathers and discuss how they are alike and how they are different.

**Activity: Is This a Bird? – add this card game to the center.**



**Learning Goal:**

**SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions** (*emotion regulation*)

**Quiet Corner**

- Create a quiet corner in your classroom; a place where children can go to be alone and to get away from the stresses of group living.
- Place soft items in the quiet corner. Carpet on the floor, soft pillows, and soft and cuddly stuffed animals or dolls are examples.
- Discuss with children when they might want to go to the quiet corner. When they are angry and need to get away from the source of their anger? When they are sad and need to be alone? When the room gets too noisy and they need a quiet spot?
- Explain to children that the quiet corner is for one child at a time

**Learning Goals:**

**ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze, and communicate information** (*observations, questions, and predictions*)

**Outdoors**

**Activity: Watching for Birds**

- Invite children to look and listen for birds and signs of birds when they are outdoors. For example, they may see feathers or bird tracks on the ground, a nest in a tree, birds in a tree or flying overhead, and hear birds singing or calling to each other.
- Suggest that children draw pictures of their observations when they return to the classroom.

**Activity: Bird Bath**

- Locate a shallow plastic pan.
- Place it in an observable area in or near the playground. When the weather is really hot, locate the container in a shaded area if possible.
- Involve children in adding water to the container.
- Encourage children to observe birds taking a bath. Remind them to observe quietly so they don't frighten the birds away.

**Activity: Building a Nest**

- Involve children in placing materials such as small twigs, stems, sticks, straw, pieces of fabric, pieces of brightly colored yarn and string, and grass in an open container. Leave it on the playground in an area where children do not normally play
- Suggest that children check the container each day to see if any of the materials have disappeared. Discuss with them what they think happened to the materials.

**Activity: Feeding the Birds**

- Hang a bird feeder outside the classroom window if possible.
- Involve children in filling it with birdseed.
- Encourage children to watch for birds coming to the feeder to eat.
- Consider keeping a sheet of lined paper and pencil near the window. At the top of the paper write, **Bird Count**.
- Suggest that when children see a bird they make a line/mark on the paper. Demonstrate how to do this.
- Count with the children at the end of the day how many birds they saw come to the feeder. Write on the paper, "We saw 5 (how many) birds today."

## Transition Activities

### Learning Goal:

**CD2.2 Shows flexibility in adjusting thinking and behavior to different contexts** (*adjusting behavior to match context*)

### Activity: What Color Bird?

- Use the birds from the Five Little Birdies finger play.
- Give each child a bird.
- Use colors of birds to move small groups of children from one activity to another. Say, "If you are a blue bird" you may select a learning center." Children give their blue birds to you and transition to learning centers or another activity you indicate. Continue this with the other colors of birds.

### Activity: Bird Moves

- Discuss with children the different ways that birds move. For example, they fly, they soar (wings out and not flapping), they swoop down, they waddle.
- Involve the children in participating in each of the types of movement.
- Invite children one at a time to move like a bird and transition to the next activity.

### Activity: Birds of a Feather

- Mount pictures of birds on cardstock and laminate or cover with clear self-adhesive for durability.
- Cut each card in half.
- Distribute to each child a half, making sure that everyone has a match. Ask children to look closely at their half of the bird picture. Explain that another child has the other half.
- Ask children to move around the group area and try to find their partners; the person who has the other half. When they find their partner, the two of them sit together in the group area.
- Direct one set of partners at a time to give you their picture halves and transition to the next activity.

**Teacher Note:** *Use these cards for transition activities at times other than during this topic of study.*

## Family Connection and Engagement

Send home a note to parents stating for the next few days, the children will be learning about birds. Suggest some ways families can be involved in the topic of study:

- Collect and bring to the center pictures of birds, bird nests and bird houses.
- Suggest that families take their child on a Bird Watch or Bird Walk in their own backyard, in the neighborhood, or in a park. Talk with their child about characteristics of the birds they see; color and special markings on the feathers, how the birds move, their beaks/bills. Take paper and pencil and make a list of the birds they see and write down what the child says about the birds. When families return home, read their observations with the child.
- Include the titles and authors of some of the children's books about birds. Suggest that families look for these books in the library, check them out and read them with their children.

**The Green Grass Grows All Around**  
Author of Song Unknown

Now in the woods there was a tree,  
The prettiest tree that you ever did see.

The tree in a hole and the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And on that tree there was a limb  
The prettiest limb that you ever did see.

The limb on the tree, and the tree in a hole,  
And the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And on that limb there was a branch  
The prettiest branch that you ever did see.

The branch on the limb, and the limb on the tree,  
And the tree in a hole, and the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And on the branch there was a nest  
The prettiest nest that you ever did see.

The nest on the branch, and the branch on the limb,  
And the limb on the tree,  
And the tree in a hole, and the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And in that nest there was an egg  
The prettiest egg that you ever did see.

The egg in the nest, and the nest on the branch,  
And the branch on the limb, and the limb on the tree,  
And the tree in a hole, and the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And in that egg there was a bird  
The prettiest bird that you ever did see.

The bird in the egg, and the egg in the nest,  
And the nest on the branch, and the branch on the limb,  
And the limb on the tree, and the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And on that bird there was a wing  
The prettiest wing you ever did see.

The wing on the bird, and the bird in the egg,  
And the egg in the nest, and the nest on the branch,  
And the branch on the limb, and the limb on the tree,  
And the tree in a hole, and the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

And on that wing there was a feather  
The prettiest feather that you ever did see.

The feather on the wing, and the wing on the bird,  
And the bird in the egg and the egg in the nest,  
And the nest on the branch, and the branch on the limb,  
And the limb on the tree, and the tree in a hole  
And the hole in the ground  
And the green grass grows all around, all around  
The green grass grows all around.

**Try this!** *Sing the verses as an echo song with children echoing what you sing. For example:*

Now in the woods  
(Now in the woods)  
There was a tree  
(There was a tree)  
The prettiest tree  
(The prettiest tree)  
That you ever did see.  
(That you ever did see)