

BIRDS & FORESTS

Teacher Discussion Guide

LEVELS

Grades 4-5

SUBJECTS

Science

Social Studies

Language Arts

Visual Arts

CONCEPTS

Forests, as well as other ecosystems, contain numerous habitats that support diverse populations.

Organisms are interdependent. They depend on other organisms and nonliving components of the earth.

SKILLS

Classifying

Categorizing

Comparing

Contrasting

Identifying Relationships
and Patterns

Interpreting

Observing

Organizing Information

Predicting

Researching

OVERVIEW

Birds and forests share a symbiotic relationship. Forests provide birds with food, nest sites and protection. Birds, in turn, help the forest by scattering tree seeds and eating insects that may harm trees.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY TOPICS

The study of birds can be used in the context of many different areas of learning.

Here are some suggestions:

Science

- **Bird pen pals.** Assign a student or a group of students a bird. Where does the bird live? How does it live? What type of plants grow in its habitat? What does the bird eat? Have students use the information they find to write a letter to a pen pal from the bird's point of view. Read the letters out loud to the class and see if they can guess what type of bird is writing the letter. (*class activity, research project, writing project, class discussion*)
- **Bird journal.** Have students keep a journal of the different birds they see in the course of a day. What type of birds do they see in their daily lives? What do the birds eat? What did they observe the birds doing? Are there different birds during different seasons? Do the birds act differently at different times of the year? (*research project, class presentation, essay topic*)

Social Studies

- **Birds of the world.** Assign student teams different countries around the world. Have each team research the types of birds found in their country. What type of birds are there? What do they eat? What is their habitat like? What types of plants and trees are found in their habitat? Create a map of the country that includes pictures of the birds, plants and natural habitats. (*research project, essay topic, class presentation, art project*)

Visual Arts

- **Bird mobile.** Create a mobile from pictures of birds students either draw or cut out from magazines. Discuss the different birds in the mobile. How are they different from each other? How are they the same? (*art project, research project, essay topic, class discussion*)

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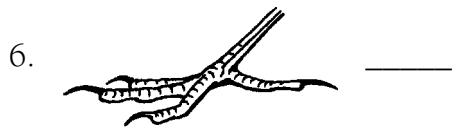
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Activity Sheet

MATCHING GAME

A careful study of a bird's beak or feet will provide clues about its lifestyle, from what it eats to where it lives. Try matching the beaks and feet below with the correct description in the opposite column.



A. Perching birds have long toes for holding tightly to small branches.

B. The sparrow's beak is compact and strong for cracking seeds.

C. A hawk's beak is heavy and curved for tearing meat from bones.

D. A warbler's beak is sharp and pointed for picking insects from plants.

E. Climbers like woodpeckers have claws for gripping the sides of trees.

F. Birds of prey have feet with sharp talons for capturing their food.

G. A woodpecker's beak is strong and long for chiseling holes in trees.