

Birds in the Schoolyard

Objective:

Students learn about different bird species that live in their schoolyard.

Method:

Students learn to identify common bird species by coloring their own bird guidebooks. Then, bird feeders are placed outside the classroom window. The class keeps a list of birds that visit the feeder over a period of time. Then, they write a report on their favorite type of bird and present it to the class.

Materials:

Bird slideshow:

- Laptop
- Projector
- Projector screen
- "The Wild Birds" PowerPoint presentation
- "The Wild Birds Presentation Notes"

Bird guidebooks:

- "Birds in the Schoolyard" coloring pages
- Crayons
- Colored card-stock paper
- Hole punch
- Ball of yarn
- Scissors

Bird feeder, choose 1 of 2 options:

- Purchase a bird feeder
- Have students make their own bird feeders, see:
 - o "How to Make a Bird Feeder Out of a Pinecone" or
 - o "How to Make a Recycled Bird Feeder."

For the class bird list:

- Optional: bird identification book
- Large piece of butcher paper
- Tape
- Marker

Background:

Birds are some of the easiest wildlife to spot because they live nearly everywhere. Teaching kids about different kinds of birds teaches them to be aware of nature and helps them realize that wildlife lives in their community, not just out in the wild.

Procedure:

A. Bird slideshow

1. Preparation

- a. Request the “Wild Birds” PowerPoint presentation, notes, and coloring pages from Laura, if she has not emailed them to you already.
- b. Review the presentation and notes. The notes will outline interesting facts about the birds in the presentation.

2. Set up projector, laptop, and equipment.

3. Instructions for students

- a. Give them an overview of the project:
 - i. Tell the students that they are going to learn about the birds living in their schoolyard.
 - ii. Explain that each type of bird has its own name, and you can tell what bird it is by its colors and shape.
 - iii. Let them know that they are going to be making their own bird guidebooks. Explain that bird guidebooks tell us the names of different birds.
- b. Tell them the steps they will follow in making a bird guidebook:
 - i. They are going to look at photos of birds that you show them on the PowerPoint.
 - ii. Then, they are going to color the birds on their coloring pages with the exact same colors that they see in the photos.
 - iii. Next, they are going to label each bird.
 - iv. Finally, they will make a cover for their guidebook.

4. Hand out materials:

- a. Coloring pages
- b. Crayons

5. Start the slideshow:

- a. Go through the slideshow image by image.
- b. Tell the students the names of the birds and the interesting facts about them.
- c. Give students at least 5 minutes to finish coloring each bird.
- d. Give students a second look at the birds and quiz them on the birds’ names and characteristics.

6. Put covers on the guidebooks:

- a. Distribute supplies:

- i. 2 pieces of cardstock paper per student
 - ii. 3 short pieces of yarn per student
 - iii. Hole punchers
 - b. Stack papers together with the cardstock sandwiching the coloring pages.
 - c. Hole punch three holes down the left-hand side of the papers.
 - d. Tie string through each of the holes to bind the books together.
 - e. Write their name and a title on their guidebook's cover.
- B. Hang birdfeeder(s)
 1. Assemble or purchase bird feeders.
 - a. If your students are making their own feeders, please see the lesson plans titled "How to Make a Bird Feeder Out of a Pinecone" or "How to Make a Recycled Bird Feeder."
 2. Hang the feeders so that they are visible from your classroom window. If that is not possible, hang them near the door into your classroom.
 3. Set up a class bird list:
 - a. Tape up a large piece of butcher paper next to the window.
 - b. Title it "Bird List."
 - c. Each time your class sees a bird, write its name down on the list. If you see the same kind of bird more than once, put tallies next to its name.
 - d. Keep adding to the bird list for as long as you like. A minimum of two weeks is advisable.