

The Best Nest (Pre-K)

Science and Language Arts

Summary: Students study the nesting needs and habitats of birds, provide the community with an informative display about the nesting needs of birds, construct and maintain nesting stations for birds on the school campus.

Service and Learning Activities

Preparation: Ask students to describe a bird nest. Ask why birds need a nest. Read *A Nest Full of Eggs*, by Priscilla Belz Jenkins. Read other books about birds, and show students photographs that depict area birds. Invite a speaker from the Audubon Society, or take a field trip to a local bird sanctuary. Discuss importance of nests for birds. Show students boxes of supplies containing man-made materials that can also be used as nesting items: hair, string, yarn, etc.

Action: Groups of students build nests on cardboard squares. Each group shares their nests with the other groups. Discuss ideas for providing needed materials. Ask parents to send supplies from the list generated by the students. Students construct nesting stations containing supplies for birds to use in building nests.

Reflection: Create a chart: Making a nest is easy, making a nest is hard. Students place stickers on the side of the chart that agrees with their opinions. Ask students how we can help birds build nests. Students observe and share results of birds' use of stations. How could this project be improved? What are some next steps? What were the greatest challenges in doing this project? What impact(s) did the project have on those serving and served?

Demonstration: Display student nests in media center, local library, city hall, local environmental center, etc., and give presentations to peers or pre-schoolers about the importance of nests. Include chart of student ideas outlining the importance of nests for birds. Students can also create and present poems, public service announcements, songs, artwork, lessons, videos, skits, displays, or murals to teach other students or the larger community about the project, the need(s) it addresses, and the impact of their efforts.

Standards

Science: The student

SC.G.1.1 Understands the competitive, interdependent, cyclic nature of living things in the environment.

Language Arts: The student

LA.C.1.1 Uses listening strategies effectively.

LA.C.2.1 Uses viewing strategies effectively.

LA.C.3.1 Uses speaking strategies effectively.

LA.E.2.1 Responds critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

Visual Arts: The student

VA.A.1.1 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes.

Academic Objectives

- Describe a bird nest and its purpose
- Create a plan to help educate community about bird's needs
- Develop a plan to collect items for birds' nests
- Learn how to construct and maintain a nesting station

Assessment(s): Nests, nesting plan, response to stories and books

Service Objectives

- Provide the community with an informative display about the nesting needs of birds
- Construct and maintain nesting stations for birds on the school campus

Assessment(s): Supplies collected were appropriate and used by birds

Hungry as a Bird (Pre-K)

Science, Language Arts, Music, and Visual Arts

Summary: Students study eating habits of birds and work with senior citizens to create pinecone bird feeders for the seniors' homes, the school campus, and a senior retirement home.

Service and Learning Activities

Preparation: Students discuss the kinds of foods birds eat. How much food does a bird need to eat each day to survive? Where and how do birds find food? What natural and environmental dangers could endanger or kill birds (e.g., predators, fertilizers, pesticides, poisons)? Chart the dangers. Discuss how to provide safe food for birds. Where are the best places to position a bird feeder so cats and other predators cannot attack the birds, and so squirrels do not eat the food? Read books and stories about birds, such as *Burgess' Bird Book for Children*.

Action: The teacher arranges a field trip to a senior citizen home so students can create pinecone bird feeders with the seniors. The students prepare a bird-themed song to perform for the seniors. The students create pine cone bird feeders with the seniors. Take a pine cone, attach a string, cover with peanut butter, and roll in birdseed. The seniors and students go outside and hang the feeders, and the students take one to hang at their home and some for the school campus.

Reflection: Students discuss what they learned about birds. They create pictures of birds and send them to their senior friends. How could this project be improved? What are some next steps? What were the greatest challenges in doing this project? What impact(s) did the project have on those serving and served?

Demonstration: Students can create and present poems, public service announcements, songs, artwork, lessons, videos, skits, displays, or murals to teach other students or the larger community about the project, the need(s) it addresses, and the impact of their efforts.

Standards

Science: The student
SC.G.1.1 Understands the competitive, interdependent, cyclic nature of living things in the environment.

Language Arts: The student
LA.C.1.1 Uses listening strategies effectively.
LA.C.2.1 Uses viewing strategies effectively.
LA.C.3.1 Uses speaking strategies effectively.

Visual Arts: The student
VA.A.1.1 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes.

Music: The student
MU.A.1.1 Sings, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

Academic Objectives

- Learn what foods a bird needs to survive
- Create a plan to help create and distribute bird feeders

Assessment(s): Bird feeders and response to books and stories

Service Objectives

- Interaction with the senior citizens to providing them with entertainment, companionship
- Creation of bird feeders

Assessment(s): Increase in amount and types of birds observed in areas where feeders were placed and seniors' response to the activities with the students

Wear Your Seat Belt (Pre-K-2)

Language Arts, Visual Arts, and Theatre Arts

Summary: Pre-K students learn and model appropriate seat belt behavior and teach what they have learned to K-5 students and their parents.

Service and Learning Activities

Preparation: Invite a law enforcement officer to speak to the students on the importance of using seat belts. Students practice using seat belts by buckling dolls and teddy bears into seats. Demonstration and activities for students: count seatbelts in pictures of cars; role play the “driver” telling all his passengers to “buckle up;” put an egg in a toy car and show how it breaks if not buckled in when the car hits a wall; make seat belts with duct tape and strips of poster board; make life-sized cutouts of children wearing seat belts.

Play “car, car, seat belt” (like “duck, duck, goose”). The students whose head is tapped with “seat belt” gets up and runs around circle saying, “I buckled my seat belt!”

Action: Students learn and practice a finger play to present to older students and their parents. Finger Play: Wear your seatbelt, don’t you know (pretend to buckle a seatbelt and point finger like you are reminding someone), It’s the rule before we go (pretend your hands are on the steering wheel); Seat belts help, oh yes they do (pretend to buckle a belt and nod); They protect both me and you (hug yourself then point to self and others.)

Reflection: Students discuss what they learned about seat belt safety and pledge to always buckle up and to remind family members to buckle up. How could this project be improved? What are some of the next steps? What were the greatest challenges in doing this project?

Demonstration: Students present their finger play to K-5 students and their parents. Hang the life size cutouts in the school corridor as a reminder to buckle up. Students can also create and present poems, public service announcements, songs, artwork, lessons, videos, skits, or murals to teach other students or the larger community about the project, the need(s) it addresses, and the impact of their efforts.

Standards

Language Arts: The student

- LA.C. .1 Uses listening strategies effectively.
- LA.C.2.1 Uses viewing strategies effectively.1
- LA.C.3.1 Uses speaking strategies effectively.

Visual Arts: The student

- VA.A.1.1 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes.

Theatre Arts: The student

- TH.A.1.1 Acts by developing, communication, and sustaining characters in improvisation and formal or informal production.

Academic Objectives

- Use speaking and listening skills effectively
- Convey a message through the arts
- Learn that seat belts keep people safe

Assessment(s): Participation in finger play, and life-size cutouts of students wearing their seat belts

Service Objectives

- Students teach others about seat belt safety through finger play and artwork.

Assessment(s): Response from K-5 students and parents