

Lesson Idea: Hungry Birds

Build an all-natural bird feeder and invite your feathered neighbors to a feast!

Activity Summary

We all love to greet people by their names, so why not greet our local birds in the same way?

Have your students make an all-natural bird feeder and invite your feathered neighbours to a feast!

Combine children's love of constructing with natural materials with the opportunity to be still in nature and make observations. To find success, students need to follow a set of instructions and muster patience, their powers of hearing and binocular vision. The Nature Passport App is a great starting platform for students to record observations of birds seen in the school grounds as part of a Science investigation.



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Predict which areas of the school grounds birds may visit and what they may eat
- Follow written instructions to create a bird feeder
- Observe birds that visit the school grounds
- Record observations in the Nature Passport App
- Share observations gathered with others

Materials Needed

- pine cone/tree branch
- string/twine
- peanut butter/sunflower butter
- birdseed

Introduce the Activity

1. Ask students which birds they know live in or visit the school grounds.
2. Ask them to elaborate with more detail about the birds. For example, where they like to visit, what they eat, where they nest and what calls they make.
3. Introduce the goal of the lesson: Get to know some of the seed eating birds around the local area.
4. Split the class into small groups and have them follow the Nature Passport App to create pinecone bird feeders. You need to supply pinecones, string, peanut butter or alternative, and birdseed



Hungry Birds Activity Steps *(Download the free Nature Passport App to complete this activity)*

- Tie string around a pine cone or branch securely and create a loop. Then, spread peanut butter all over your pine cone or branch (like cake icing!)
- Roll it in birdseed, and you're ready to go.
- Hang your feeder in a tree, or anywhere that looks appealing to birds!
- Now wait for some hungry birds to drop by.
- Keep count of how many birds you see. Are you quick enough to snap a photo of a visiting bird? Is your feeder attracting any other hungry guests?



5. Take the class outside to hang the feeders. Ask the class, "If you were a bird, where would you choose to eat?" Consider safety, availability of perches and abundance of food.
6. Instruct students to hang their feeder within a predefined area, then sit still in their chosen area to do a bird count, noting through the Nature Passport App the number of birds spotted, names of the birds recognised and capturing photos of birds where possible. Remind students to enter the date and time in their notes. You may like to provide binoculars if available.
7. If no birds visit during the allocated time, instruct the students to take a photo of their feeder hanging in the surroundings of their chosen location.

Lesson Reflection

1. Connect the students' devices to a SMART board or projector to use the Nature Passport App's journal feature for this class reflection.
2. Open a group's journal entry and ask students to share why they decided to hang the feeder in their chosen location and what they observed.
3. Create a class plan to journal the type and behaviour of birds that visit the school throughout the year using the Safari section of the Nature Passport App.

Extension Ideas

- Regular feeding of birds is generally encouraged in the Northern Hemisphere and discouraged in the Southern Hemisphere. Create a research project to discover how feeding birds assists or hinders birds in your local area.
- Create a field guide using the Nature Passport App and online resources to assist students to know their local birds. Include indigenous names used by the First Peoples of your area.
- Invite your local bird watching association to visit the school to share information, stories and observation experiences.
- Investigate symbiotic relationships between plants and birds and how they have both adapted to the local environment.

You can download the Nature Passport app for free on both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play Store](#) to complete this activity and many more! Visit the website at www.naturepassport.org, where you'll find lots of useful information for families and teachers on how best to use Nature Passport.

