

Title: I'm Thinking of a Bird Game

Objective: Notice variations in bird adaptations and reinforce the functions of various bird adaptations.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Several large, labelled bird pictures to display or pull up on whiteboard from computer.

Activity

Theme: Birds

Topic: Adaptations

Suggested Grade Level: 3-5

Indoors or Outdoors: Either

Extension: Outdoors

Directions:

1. Pair students up for discussion sharing and viewing of bird photo display.
2. Teacher begins "*I am thinking of a bird that...*" and after each scenario the pairs discuss which bird that might apply to and explain which structure on the bird guided their decision. Example statements:
I am thinking of a bird that hunts at night; soars high in the sky; lives in water most of the time; eats bugs found in trees; attracts a mate with its body coloring; catches and eats fish; clings to branches; has camouflaged coloring to protect itself; tears flesh with its beak; catches mice with its feet; cracks hard seeds with its beak, etc.
3. Then share, as a class, the bird choice, the adaptation and how this structure helps it survive.
4. Pairs can then create new "I am thinking of" statements for class to continue activity.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some birds you have observed?
2. How does a bird's adaptation(s) help them survive in their environment? Explain.

Extension:

Take a bird walk and notice special adaptations.

Science and Engineering Practices:

6. Constructing explanations (science).

Crosscutting Concepts:

6. Structure and function.

Disciplinary Core Ideas:

Life Sciences: LS1: From molecules to organisms: Structures and processes; LS 3: Heredity: Inheritance and variation of traits.

Background Information:

- The structure of a bird's bill is adapted to its method of feeding. Varieties include chisel bills, prober bills, cracker bills, scoop bills.
- The size and shape of a bird's claws/feet vary according to the ways the bird obtains food. Common variations include grasping foot, scratching foot, swimming foot, perching foot, running foot and climbing foot.

Additional Resources:

- The remarkable adaptations of birds to their environment, National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/cabr/blogs/the-remarkable-adaptations-of-birds-to-their-environment.htm>
- *Wild About Minnesota Birds* by Adele Porter
- *What It's Like To Be A Bird* by David Allen Sibley

Correlates with:

Greeting - Beak Adaptations (p. 3)

Interdisciplinary Lesson - Create a Bird (p. 90)