

hands-on lessons that

Eggs in a Nest

Make like a bird and build a nest! Engage students in an exploration of different birds and how complex some nests really are. Bring science to life with this fun project kids will love!

Grade Level: K-3

Objectives

Students will identify the habitat, diet, and life span of birds. Students will understand the different types of nests and the adaptive reasons birds build them.

Literature Selections

Mama Built a Little Nest by Jennifer Ward and Steve Jenkins
Discover More: Birds by Penelope Arlon

Skills

life cycles, adaptations, fine motor skills

Set up and Prepare

Begin the lesson by introducing the book, *Mama Built a Little Nest*. Show the students the cover and ask them to predict what the story is about. Engage them in a discussion about bird nests and create a KWL chart to record their comments. Read the story aloud and take time to share the wonderful illustrations. Revisit the KWL chart to add new information that students have discovered from the story. Next, read *Discover More: Birds* aloud to the students. Again, take time to discuss and share the photographs. (This book includes a free digital companion with videos and other activities available for download. See details on page 2 of the book.) Continue to add new learning to the KWL chart as students discover more about different bird species and the nests they build.

Explain to the students that they will be creating their own nest. As they enjoy the project, ask them to think about how different birds create their nests.



Materials

Elmer's® X-TREME™ School Glue or Elmer's® Glue-All, plastic wrap, a small bowl (to serve as the mold for the nest) scissors, jute or yarn

Preparation

Cover the work space. Provide each student with a bowl to use as the mold for their nest and a piece of plastic wrap. Yarn will create a more colorful nest, while jute will create a more realistic nest.

Directions

Instruct students to turn the bowl upside down and place a layer of plastic wrap over the bottom of the bowl. Next, drizzle a generous amount of glue on to the bowl. This will create a foundation that will enable the first layers to adhere properly.

Pour a generous amount of glue into a bowl and add a small amount of water to thin it slightly. The ratio of water to glue should be approximately 1 part water to 4 parts glue. More water than that will require a much longer drying time and will affect the adhesion of the layers.

Cut lengths of jute or yarn about 12 inches in length and dip them into the glue/water mixture. Instruct students to layer them on the bowl and mold with their hands as they build the nest.

When the entire bowl is covered with jute, place it on another piece of plastic wrap. The glue/water mixture will drip down from the nest, and the plastic wrap will reduce the mess and clean-up later.

Finally, drizzle another layer of glue on the finished nest. Leave the nest in a place where it will be undisturbed to dry (at least overnight).

When the nest is completely dry, gently peel the plastic wrap from the bowl and remove it from the inside of the nest.

Lesson Extensions

Write a story about a bird that built this nest. What type of bird is it? Where did it build the nest? What adventures does the bird take as he builds the nest?

Compare the nest that the students built with the nests that birds build. Create a Venn diagram to capture the similarities and differences between their nest and a real bird's nest.

Create papier-mâché eggs to add to the nest. More advanced students can research different types of birds and the various colors and patterns of their eggs.

