

## **BIRDS OF A FEATHER**

**Lesson By:** John Rarick

**Grade Level:** First

### **Focus:**

The students will be exploring what birds are, their habitats, and what their homes look like.

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will know the role of nests in birds and identify nests of different bird species.
2. Students will be able to understand the meaning of carrying capacity.

### **Standards:**

#### **MA 1.1 2000**

Students understand symbols, objects and pictures used to represent numbers up to 100 and show and understanding of fractions.

#### **MA 1.5 2000**

Students learn how to measure length, as well as how to compare, order and describe other kinds of measurements.

#### **SCI 1.1 2010**

Describe objects in terms of the materials that compose them and in terms of their physical properties.

#### **SCI 1.3 2010**

Observe, describe and ask questions about living things and their relationships to their environments.

### **Background:**

Birds are animals that have feathers and that we typically find flying in the air. Because the sky is their home most of the time, we typically find them building homes way high up from the ground. These homes are made out of anything that the bird can use such as sticks, mud, and other materials scattered on the ground. Sometimes these homes also hold baby birds and when that happens we call it a nest. The nest is very important because it needs to be big enough for the baby bird to move around and rest and also out of the reach of other animals that might want to try to eat the baby birds.

### **Materials:**

1. Bird Nests (provided by Camp Adventure)
2. Bird Poster (provided by Camp Adventure)
3. Open Area

### **Procedures: (40-45 Minutes Total)**

#### **Part 1 [7-12 Minutes]**

1. Gather the students outside to play a game.
2. Have the students make their own nests by splitting the students up into groups.
3. 3-5 students will make up the “eggs.” As eggs they should be in a tight group with arms wrapped around their legs.

4. There will be another groups of students of 8-10 that should kneel down facing away from the “eggs” in the center and should have their arms linked together. These students will be known as the “nest.”
5. There should be a group of 2 students that will be known as the “parent birds” that patrol outside the “nest.”
6. There now needs to another 2-3 students that act as “predators” that need to try to get over or through the students forming the nest without being tagged by the “parent birds.”
7. If they do get across the nest are able to tag one of the “eggs” then that student must leave the nest and is out of the game until the next round.
8. There is nothing the “eggs” can do to prevent being tagged neither can the nest do anything. The only children that have any way to protect the eggs are the “parent birds.”
9. If one of the “parent birds” tags one of the “predators”, then the “predator” is out.
10. The game is over if either all the eggs have been tagged or if all the predators have been tagged.

### **Part 2 [15 Minutes]**

1. After one or two rounds of the game have the group go back to the cabin.
2. At the cabin there should be a cabinet with various bird nests.
3. Bring out the bird nests and put it near the poster titled “Birds of Indiana.”
4. Discuss with the students what nests could go with what possible corresponding bird. For example the Northern Cardinal or Blue Jay would go with the large nest and a smaller bird like a finch or a hummingbird would have a small nest.
5. Students should measure the nests to see which one of the nests is the biggest and which one is the smallest.

### **Part 3 [15 Minutes]**

1. The point of this activity is to give the students a basic understanding of the concept of biological carrying capacity, even without trying to teach them the idea directly. In this case the concept is being demonstrated by showing how a set amount of forest can only sustain a set number of birds.
2. Students could be first told that if 2 acres can have 10 of the same bird and you cut down 1 acre you are left with only 5 birds.
3. With this information ask what will happen if the half of the forest goes away and there is still the same number of birds.
4. You can also ask what would happen if you had 4 acres with 20 birds and you cut down 2 acres, 8 acres, 40 birds, and ect.

### **Evaluation:**

1. Students will be evaluated based on their participation and comments as they try to figure out which nests go with which bird.
2. The measurements of the nest will be recorded to see if they measured it accurately.