



Watch the Birdie

ALABAMA OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Grade Levels

K-2

Overview

Make pretend binoculars and take a bird watching walk.

Subject Areas

Science, Language Arts,
Environmental Education

Duration

Prep: 10 minutes

Activity: 45 minutes

Learning Objectives

Students will describe two different kinds of birds, and name three characteristics that can help in identifying birds.

Alabama Course of Study Objectives Correlations for Science

Kindergarten: 3, 6, 7, & 9

First: 1, 2, & 4

Second: 2 & 6

Outdoor Classroom Connection

Students go bird watching in your outdoor classroom site.

Materials

- Empty toilet paper or paper towel rolls (2 per student)
- Masking tape
- String
- Paper
- Crayons
- Binoculars (*optional*)
- Field guides (*listed on page 2*)

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Background Info

Introduce young children to bird watching by having them “zoom in” on birds with homemade binoculars. Before you go outside, discuss some bird watching basics. Talk about some of the birds that live in your neighborhood. Explain that different kinds of birds have different colors, body shapes and sizes. Different birds also have special beaks and feet, and they live in different areas (habitat).

Preparation

Put together a sample pair of paper roll “binoculars”. (*optional*)

Procedure

1. Pick two volunteers from the group and have them stand up front so that everyone can see them. Ask the rest of the group to compare the two children. How are they alike? (Both have hair, two legs, brown eyes, blue sneakers, and so on.) How are they different? (One has glasses and the other doesn't, one has blond hair and the other has brown hair, one is tall and the other is short, one is wearing a red shirt and one is wearing a blue shirt, and so on.)

2. Explain that birds, like people, come in lots of different shapes and sizes. They might look similar from a distance, but when you get close to them, you can see that there are lots of differences between different kinds of birds (beak size and shape, feathers color, body size, etc.)

3. Now have the students make their own pretend binoculars to take with them on a bird watching walk. (The binoculars won't really work, of course, but they will help young children focus in on the birds they see.) Here's how to make them:

▶ First, place two paper rolls side by side. (Two toilet paper rolls work well. You can also use a paper towel roll that's been cut in half.)

▶ Second, tape the rolls together with a long piece of masking tape.

▶ Third, punch holes in the sides of the binoculars near the top of the rolls.

▶ Fourth, tie a piece of string to the holes. Be sure the string is long enough for the binoculars to hang around the child's neck.

4. Take the students outside to your outdoor classroom. Have them try to spot different kinds of birds and then look at them through their binoculars. Explain that they must walk very quietly and be very still when they see a bird. Point out different shapes, colors, and sizes. You can also let the students take turns looking through a pair of real binoculars as well.



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Outdoor Classroom Connection

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Literature Connections

⇒ *Bird* (DK Eyewitness) by David Burnie (ISBN: 10-0756606578)

⇒ *About Birds* by Cathryn Sill (ISBN: 10-1561451479)

Bird Field Guides

⇒ *National Audubon Society Field Guide to Southeast United States* (ISBN-10: 0679446834)

⇒ *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America* by David Allen Sibley (ISBN: 067945120X)

⇒ *Birds of Alabama Field Guide* by Stan Tekiela (ISBN: 1591931517) with *Birds of Alabama Audio CD* (ISBN-10: 1591931509)

Bird Magazines

⇒ *Birds & Blooms*

⇒ *Audubon Magazine*

⇒ *Wild Birds*

⇒ *Birder's Digest*

Discovering Alabama Video

⇒ *Wildlife Rescuers*

Assessment

- ▶ List the types of birds you saw in the outdoor classroom.
- ▶ How many birds of each species did you see?
- ▶ Draw a picture of your favorite bird you saw in the outdoor classroom.

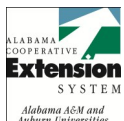
Extensions

Have the students look up one of the species they saw in a bird identification book (field guide) so that they can learn more about that species.

Notes

Page 2 of 2

The Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program is a partnership between:



Alabama Cooperative
Extension System



Alabama Wildlife Federation

www.alabamawildlife.org/classrooms/



Alabama Department of
Conservation & Natural Resources