

About Birds

by Cathryn Sill

Basic information on general bird habits with crisp illustrations highlighting the physical markings and sizes. A treat for bird lovers.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *Why are birds important to us?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder how long it will take that baby to learn to fly?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words (from the Afterword) in *About Birds*

- elements: the weather (wind, cold, rain, sunshine)
- dome-shaped: shaped like the top of somebody's head
- elongated: long and narrow in shape
- migrate: to move from one area to another because of weather or lack of food
- hover: to flutter in the air without moving very far from the same spot
- webbed: joined together by skin
- reluctantly: showing no enthusiasm to do something
- territory: an area of land
- prey: an animal caught, killed and eaten another animal as food
- solitary: alone
- preen: to clean, smooth and arrange the feathers with the beak
- pollinate: to transfer plant grains from one plant to another
- disperse: to scatter in different directions
- rodent: a small animal with large teeth like a rat or squirrel

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Have you ever seen any of these birds in your back yard?
- Why do birds need feathers?
- If a bird builds a nest on the ground, what other animals might bother it?
- Why does the eagle build such a big nest?
- When birds (especially geese) fly, they fly in a shape – what is it?
- Do owls hunt for food during the day or at night? What do you think they like to eat?
- Do you think it would hurt if a bird pecked you with their bill or beak?
- Which bird is bigger – an eagle or a cardinal? An owl or a duck?
- If you could be one of these birds, which bird would you want to be?

Do

Pipe Cleaner Bird Feeder

Give each child a pipe cleaner and turn one tip into an L-shape. Then string the pipe cleaner with Cheerios, leaving a short length to be bent over so the cereal won't fall off the pipe cleaner. After shaping the pipe cleaner into a candy cane, hang it outside for the birds. When the birds have eaten all the food, the children can restring the pipe cleaner with more Cheerios.