

Themed Activities: **Art Inspired by Birds**

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A peacock with handprint feathers on its tail

Learning Objective

To create art inspired by birds.

Starting Points

- Provide food on a bird table or in hanging feeders to attract birds. Talk to the children about the types of food that birds eat, showing them different types of nuts, seeds and fruits.
- Talk about the size, colour and shape of the birds they see and ask the children to make observational drawings or paintings. If possible, take photographs of the birds for the children to refer to when drawing. Provide books and help them to identify the different birds.
- Talk to the children about the ways in which birds find their food, other than from foods which we provide. Explain that birds eat growing plants and fruits from gardens or fields and that sometimes people make bird scarers such as scarecrows to frighten them away and save their crops.

Make

- Teach the children rhymes about scarecrows such as 'Dingle Dangle Scarecrow' or 'I'm a Little Scarecrow'. Read the poem The Lonely Scarecrow by James Kirkup. Show them pictures of crows and scarecrows. Explain to the children that you want them to make their own scarecrows.
- Provide straw, lollipop sticks, thin card and fabrics such as hessian and felt. Show the children how to make a simple scarecrow by gluing a triangle of hessian onto a lollipop stick and adding a face made from card. Add a felt hat and straw for the arms and hair.
- Ask a child to draw and cut out a large scarecrow. Glue on pieces of fabric for the clothes and straw for the head, hands and feet. Complete the figure with a hat and scarf. Refer to the pictures of crows and ask the children to paint crows to use in their display. Decide together which crop is growing in the field or garden and paint the appropriate plants.

Activities

- Teach the children 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' and role play the actions. Tell the children that you want them to make a large picture to illustrate the song. Find picture of blackbirds and ask the children to refer to these before painting and cutting out twenty-four blackbirds for the picture. Paint and cut out a large pie. Glue the paintings onto backing paper.
- Show the children pictures of peacocks and talk about the colours and patterns in their tails. Ask a child to draw a peacock's body and suggest that they all help to make the tail. Ask the children to all make a handprint using green paint. When this is dry, make another print on top in a different colour, by painting a circle on the base of the palm of the hand. Make a third print by painting a spiral on the hand in another colour. Cut out the handprints and use to make the peacock's tail.
- Secure a small branch in a pot to use as a tree. Provide card, beads, glue, felt-tipped pens and collage materials such as foils, papers and Cellophane. Ask the children to draw and cut out a bird shape in card to add collage materials and beads to make a fantasy bird. Attach the birds to the branch with glue or thread.

Develop and Extend

SCIENCE: Observe birds in the local environment or by looking at pictures and photographs. Name the different parts of a bird's body. Ask the children to draw a picture of a bird and point to, or label, the different parts of the body. Give the children the opportunity to observe the great variety of birds throughout the world by using books, pictures or the Internet.

LITERACY: Read or tell traditional stories to the children such as The Little Red Hen, The Ugly Duckling and Chicken Licken. Ask one or two children to retell the stories, with the rest of the group role-playing the different parts. Also read the amusing story Up With Birds! by John Yeoman illustrated by Quentin Blake.

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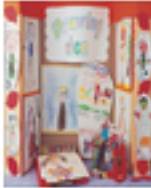
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Belair On Display - Art Inspired by Nature

Useful Links

- <http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birdidentifier/>
- <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/life/birds/index.html>
- <http://www.wwt.org.uk/visit-us/slimbridge/seasonal-birding-guide>
- www.rspb.org.uk/schoolswatch/