



Birds

Spot and shout

Age: 7-14

Topic: Biology

Time: 1 hour



What should learners already know?

- There are many different ways to identify animal species.

What equipment will I need?

- Paper
- Colouring pens and pencils

How will learners explore this?

1. Head outside into the school grounds (or a nearby green space) and tell children to take a seat in different locations in pairs.
2. If you have binoculars, bring them!
3. Now children should sit and wait for a bird to come into view. They might want to face towards the trees or towards a bird feeder if you have one (but they must sit far enough away so not to scare the birds).
4. Each time children see a bird, encourage them to try to record all the different identifying features they can before it flies away. How will they classify and order these observations?
5. Children should describe to their partners what they saw. Children could also draw what they see, mark down colours and patterns, or write a description.
6. If the bird is making a call, encourage children to listen out and see if they can repeat it back to their partner.
7. Encourage children to look for the bird's size, its colours, the patterns around its face, the shape of its beak, the way the bird moves, the sounds it makes. All of these characteristics can be useful in identification.

How can we show the learning?

- This activity relates to the science curriculum through encouraging pupils to develop basic scientific observation, identification, and classification techniques.
- This exercise will teach children to describe how to identify birds; looking for differences in bird behaviours, appearance, and song.
- Key identifying categories include: size and shape, colour pattern, behaviour, and habitat.
- Encourage children to describe all of the different identifying characteristics they noticed in the birds they saw.
- Challenge children by asking them which characteristics they thought were the most important for identification.
- Were some characteristics easier to notice from a long distance than others? Which of their senses were most important to use when trying to identify birds?
- Did children see multiple individuals of any bird species? Did these individuals look very similar, or could they notice some anatomical differences? What about differences in behaviour?
- Extension: encourage children to create a recording sheet to categorise these identifications. How will they structure their sheet in order to include all the important information in a logical order?



If you would like to develop your outdoor learning knowledge and skills, take a look at our range of training courses: ltl.org.uk/outdoor-learning-training

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