Feathers for Lunch

By Lois Ehlert

About this book

Grade Level Equivalent: 1.9
Lexile Measure: 720L
Guided Reading Level: D
Age: Age 6, Age 7, Age 5
Genre: Animal Stories
Subject: Birds, Cats, Animals

Overview

Students enjoy learning about the various birds in *Feathers for Lunch*, and making connections to birds in their own communities. Students also enjoy imitating the various bird calls featured in the book.

Objective

Students will "identify the ways in which an organism’s habitat provides for its basic needs (plants require air, water, nutrients, and light; animals require food, water, air, and shelter)." — *Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework*

Materials

- *Feathers for Lunch* by Lois Ehlert
- shovels
- plants
- watering can or hose
- chart paper
- marker

Set Up and Prepare

Reading the book and discussing the gardening activity will take approximately 40 minutes, but you will need to budget time for the actual planting.

Make copies of the bird facts from the back of the book. They are entitled, "The lunch that got away." Be sure to enlarge them before posting them in your classroom.
Work with local gardeners or botanists to select appropriate plants. Try contacting a local university for help.

It's helpful to have parent volunteers to help with the actual planting. Make a morning of it, and invite parents to school for a "planting party."

If the plants are in a place where they will need to be watered during summer vacation, try to line up parent volunteers well before school breaks for the summer.

**Directions**

1. Identify some birds that are native to your area and discuss the habitat they need to survive. Have a conversation about what kinds of adaptations can be made to create a habitat that would be appropriate for a local bird species. Use the chart paper to record the thoughts of students.

2. Using plants students have grown, or have come from a local nursery, create a garden. This might take place in a corner of the playground, in planters by the entrance to the school, or perhaps at a local library, town hall, or recreation center.

**Lesson Extensions**

- Plant seeds that will grow into plants helpful to native birds. Have students take these plants home to transplant.
- Create a map of where the plants will be placed.
- Buy some bird calls from a naturalist shop and have children try to identify the various calls. A crow call is particularly fun. Or try buying a recording of birdsong.

**Related Resources**

Lois Ehlert has an extensive list of picture books. *Top Cat* is another title with a cat theme.

- **Subjects:**
  
  Birds, Story Elements, Basic Needs of Living Things, Plants

- **Duration:**
  
  2 Class Periods