DALLAS ARBORETUM
Education

Garden STEM at Home
Adaptation Artistry

WE GROW MINDS, TOO.

ADAPTATION ARTISTRY

OBJECTIVE:

STUDENTS WILL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT THEIR OWN BIRD, UNIQUELY ADAPTED FOR A SPECIFIC HABITAT.

SOURCE

Project WILD K-12 Curriculum & Activity Guide

BACKGROUND

All life forms are adapted to the specific environment they call home. These adaptations - from the spines on a cactus to the shape of a bird's beak - are the result of unique conditions in a specific habitat.

Common bird adaptations that are found universally include being warm-blooded, laying eggs, having hollow bones for a lighter body in flight and feathers. Some adaptations are quite varied between different species.

Bird adaptations, including beak and feet shape, wing shape and feather coloration provide many clues about the habitat that each bird calls home.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Use a digital or print resource to explore the most common types of shapes and functions of bird beaks, wings and feet. See additional resources below for some options!

2. Ask kids to design their own bird by making a list of what it will eat, how it will move, where it will live and how it will reproduce and raise its young.

3. Using the list of adaptations from above, create your bird. It could be a sculpture, a painting or even a digital drawing - whatever you choose!

4. Upon completing the work of art, ask kids to create a short report explaining the habitat and adaptations. Again, choose a method that works for you - a paragraph, a poem or even a labeled drawing could be a great option.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Explore the Project WILD STEM Resource Guide:
https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/step-stem-and-wild-work/adaptation-artistry

River Keepers Bird Adaptations Guide:
https://www.riverkeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Bird_Adaptations.pdf

Bird Feeding Adaptations: How Beaks are Adapted to What Birds Eat
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lFZ8NMBDCJw

Project Beak
http://projectbeak.org/adaptations/start.htm

Beaks! by Sneed B. Collard III, ISBN: 1570913889