



The Feet Have It

Bird Adaptations



Summary/Purpose:

The student will describe five different types of feet and legs and explain how each is adapted to feed on different foods and /or live in different habitats.

Grade Level: K - 6th

Time: 20-30 minutes

Standards:

- LS4: Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

Materials:

All materials are included in the bird kit.

Student Materials from Student Kits

- 1 Bird Specimen
- 1 Nest

Teacher Materials

- 1 Mount of several bird legs and feet
- Pictures of bird legs and feet
- Additional bird specimens for examination
- The Feet Have It Student Worksheet

Objectives:

- Students will:
 - Describe how different bird feet are adapted to different habitats.
 - Identify the purpose different bird foot types serve.
 - Predict the way different bird feet are used by observing mounted specimens.

Procedure:

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin by reviewing findings from “Fill the Bill”, and how a bird’s diet affects its beak shape.
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students what role a bird’s feet may have in finding, catching, and eating its food. (They function to move the bird through the environment to gather or hunt for its food. They may also serve to hold food or catch food, much like we would use our hands.) • Using the illustrations of the birds, have students predict how the feet of the various birds are used.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students should closely examine the bird contained in their kit and predict how its feet are used. After making predictions, have them research their bird in their field guides (or other bird books) to check their prediction.• Ask students to predict the way the feet shown in the mounting box are used.
Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using what they learned from “Fill the Bill” and this lesson ask students to summarize what they learned about bird adaptations and how they can apply this when observing birds in their natural habitat. (Students can talk in small groups or summarize in a journal entry)



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Key Vocabulary:

Adaptation
Habitat
Diversity

Assessment possibilities:

Collect the “The Feet Have It” worksheet, and check for completion. Have the students choose three feet types to illustrate. Explain how each type is different from the others, and what kind of action/situation it is specifically adapted for.

Background information:

Like beaks, the feet of birds serve many functions. This activity is designed to let students discuss and discover the various adaptations of bird legs and feet. Two important functions of legs and feet are to aid the bird in moving through its environment and sometimes to help find and gather food. The major types of feet include wading, raptorial, swimming, perching, bark clinging, and walking/running.

Links to other lessons:

Fill the Bill
Build a Bird
Flights of Fancy
Feather Flurry